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Israel prepares for possible Syrian attack

An Israeli soldier stands guard Sept. 9 at an Iron Dome battery near Jerusalem, part of the missile-defence system designed to intercept and destroy incoming short-range rockets and artillery shells, as the United States lobbied for domestic and international support for military strikes against Syria. *(Flash90 photo)*

Aaron Kalman
Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — An Iron Dome battery was deployed near Jerusalem for the first time Sunday as the Israel Defence Forces continued to prepare for the possibility that rockets or missiles will be fired at Israel as a result of a military operation against President Bashar Assad's regime in Syria.

In late August, some 1,400 people were killed – according to American numbers – by an apparent sarin gas attack allegedly perpetrated by the Assad regime. The attack prompted U.S. President Barack Obama to plan a "limited" punitive response that he hopes to obtain approval for from Congress this week.

The decision to deploy the missile-defence platform near Jerusalem was made by the army's top brass following an updated assessment of the situation. The move came only weeks after an Iron Dome platform was deployed in the north, and days after one was removed from the Tel Aviv area.

"The IDF doesn't provide information about its defensive array," the army said in a statement. "The missile-defence system is deployed according to updated assessments."

Sirens sounded in Jerusalem during the November 2012 Operation Pillar of Defence in Gaza, catching residents of the capital off guard. It was the first time in more than 20 years that air-raid sirens sounded in the capital – the last time was during the 1991 Gulf War. No missiles actually landed in the city, but two fell nearby.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other political and security chiefs have assessed a "low" probability of the Assad regime or its allies hitting Israel in response to a U.S.-led attack on Syria, though Syrian and Iranian leaders have repeatedly threatened to strike Israel if Obama goes ahead with military intervention. Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel remains an island of stability and safety in the unstable Middle East.

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Arab League backs peace talks

JTA

Representatives of the Arab League's peace initiative committee expressed support for U.S. efforts to promote Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, updated a ministerial delegation of the committee in Paris on Sunday on the ongoing talks between Palestinians and Israelis.

Kerry reiterated the commitment of the United States to pursue intensive negotiations to end the conflict through a permanent status agreement, the U.S. State Department said Sunday.

"The delegation expressed its full support for the Secretary of State's efforts and for the agreed upon nine-month timeline," according to a statement released by the State Department.

The ministers also expressed concern over Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank as well as "unilateral Israeli actions in Jerusalem that create a negative environment," the State Department said.

"The delegation hopes that the ongoing direct permanent status negotiations will lead to a resolution that achieves a just and lasting peace through resolving all permanent status issues as a major step towards comprehensive Middle East peace, which will contribute to regional security and stability," the statement said.

Continued on page 31

John Kerry

Erev Yom Kippur
Candlelighting: 7:13
Havdalah: 8:15
Greater Toronto Area

Singer/songwriter lives her dream

See Heebonics on page 39

Netanyahu rejects greeting from Iran — please see page 32

CANADA

Two Firsts In Ottawa

OTTAWA — Or Haneshama, Ottawa's Reconstructionist congregation, inaugurated two firsts in the capital's Jewish community this summer: its new rabbi is both female and gay. Montreal native Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton, 56, is the 75-family, west-end congregation's first full-tme spiritual leader. She was ordained at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and previously worked in Baltimore, where she was the first full-time rabbi for its Reconstructionist shul, Congregation Beit Tikvah, from 1999 to 2011.

Ambassador Named

JERUSALEM — The Israeli Foreign Ministry is nominating its director general, Rafi Barak, as Israel's new ambassador to Canada, the *Jerusalem Post* reported last week. Barak has been in his current post for three years. He replaces Miriam Ziv, who returned to Israel last month after five years in Ottawa. Barak has also served as the No. 2 in Israel's Washington embassy, as well as chargé d'affaires at its embassy in Paris and deputy director general for western Europe. The Israeli cabinet must approve his appointment.

WORLD

Boteach Threatened

NEW YORK — The New York Police Department investigated Kahane Chai, a militant Jewish group, for threats against former TV host Rabbi Shmuley Boteach. Israel's internal security service, the Shin Bet, asked the NYPD's intelligence division to monitor the group in the late 2000s after anti-Boteach comments were posted on Kahane.org, according to internal NYPD documents obtained by *Tablet*, the online Jewish magazine. "He commits incessant chillulei HaShem and for that IMHO deserves death," a website moderator on Kahane.org wrote in 2007, using the online name Doom777. "Someone shoot Shmuley Boteach," the person wrote a year later. The NYPD launched a "terrorism enterprise investigation" into the postings, enabling it to use informants and undercover officers to monitor Kahane Chai, which the U.S. State Department designated a terror group in 1994. Rabbi Boteach, who wrote *Kosher Sex* and ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Congress last year in New Jersey, told *Tablet* he was never informed of the threats. Nobody appears to have been charged in connection with the postings.

Britain's New Chief Rabbi Sworn In

LONDON — Britain's new chief rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, was installed in the presence of Prince Charles.

Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Some 1,400 guests were present at the Sept. 1 ceremony at St. John's Wood Synagogue in north London, where Rabbi Mirvis was sworn in as the chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth.

It was the first time a member of the royal family attended such a ceremony. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who retired after 22 years as chief rabbi, participated in the rite.

Rabbi Mirvis said he would work to enhance Jewish education, to build and strengthen Jewish communities and encourage social responsibility. He has said he'll make uniting the branches of Judaism a priority.

Rabbi Mirvis, a native of South Africa, is the former chief rabbi of Ireland. He's Britain's 11th chief rabbi since 1704.

Council Drops Plan

BUDAPEST — Budapest city council dropped a plan to name a street after anti-Semitic author Cecile Tormay, a Hungarian who died in 1937. Jewish groups said he "inspired" many anti-Semitic thinkers and leaders in Hungary.

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Ve'ahavta seeks help to aid Syrian refugees

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Ve'ahavta – The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee is calling on Canadians to aid around 500,000 displaced Syrians living in Jordan, which it hopes will also foster goodwill between Israel and its neighbours.

The humanitarian group is one of 15 organizations in the Jewish Coalition for Syrian Refugees in Jordan. A sub-group of the Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief (JCDR), the partnership already donated more than $200,000 to displaced Syrians.

The JCDR estimates that nearly 500,000 refugees have fled from Syria into Jordan since the start of the civil war, and that number could double by the end of the year.

Some of the Jewish organizations delivering the aid, such as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, will be transparent about how the money comes from the Jewish community, said Sarah Zelcer, director of international projects for Ve'ahavta.

"We think it's a gesture of tangible support that the Jewish community is offering Jordan at this time of crisis," Zelcer told *The CJN*. "It's very important to be transparent and open that the aid is coming from the Jewish community, because we want to leverage that goodwill for the sake of Israel's partnership with Jordan."

There have been some criticisms leveled at the coalition for helping enemies of Israel. However, these comments are not strong enough to interfere with the relief effort, according to Ve'ahavta president Avrum Rosensweig.

"I think the Jewish community generally understands that there's a huge crisis here," Rosensweig said. "It behooves a humanitarian organization to respond to it, particularly with the encouragement of the State of Israel."

Continued on page 14

The Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief estimates that nearly 500,000 refugees have fled from Syria into Jordan since the start of the civil war.

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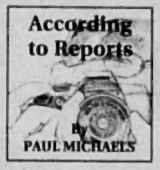
Mutual recognition is the path to Mideast peace



This column was written almost a week before Rosh Hashanah, at a time when the media were consumed with speculation about a pending U.S.-led military operation against Syria over its use of chemical weapons against its own civilians. At that point, what would happen was anyone's guess, which underscored the uncertainty to which we've become all too accustomed.

However, looking back at a piece on a very different subject, written by Hebrew University's Prof. Shlomo Avineri for *The CJN*'s special Rosh Hashanah supplement in 2011, one might conclude that not everything is wrapped in uncertainty.

Under the title, "The roots of the Israel-Palestinian conflict," Avineri, a thinker from the moderate left, looked at factors that have been, and remain, "the obstacles on the road to an eventual reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians."

Given that almost two years have passed since his article appeared (on Sept. 28 to be precise), it's appropriate, during a period of self-reflection, to revisit his message.

Avineri began with a look at the early development of the idea of a two-state solution for Jews and Palestinians. After recounting the story of the Jewish leadership's acceptance, but the Palestinian and Arab rejection, of the UN's 1947 Partition resolution calling for independent "Jewish" and "Arab" states in British Mandate Palestine as (in Avineri's words) the "only just and fair answer to the conflicting claims of both national movements," he drew attention to the following moral standard:

"[S]ince its own claim for a Jewish nation-state was founded on the principle of self-determination and since this principle is a universal tenet, hence one cannot deny to the other what one claims for oneself." In short, as a matter of principle, those who support Jewish nationhood have a moral responsibility also to support Palestinian nationhood.

A solid majority of Israeli Jews have long supported the idea of Palestinian statehood (as this column has noted on several occasions).

Yet, according to Avineri, "the roots of the Palestinian tragedy, their statelessness and the refugee problem" rest with their rejection of Jewish statehood.

By no means did Avineri absolve Israel of all responsibility for the enduring stalemate in the conflict.

He wrote: "There is no doubt, historical claims and strategic considerations notwithstanding, that the existence of almost 300,000 Israeli Jewish settlers in the West Bank makes it more difficult to reach an agreement than it would if the settlers were not there. While the Israeli settlement drive is not the major obstacle for peace, it certainly does not make it easier to move forward."

"And yet, despite this difficult reality, the major obstacle for peace is still the perception held by most Israelis that at the end of the day, the Palestinians are not yet reconciled to peace with Israel as the Jewish nation-state."

Even the *Economist* magazine, not known for its sympathetic depiction of Israel, acknowledged this reality back in 2008, when it observed: "It is ironic that the fundamental disagreement between Jews and Palestinians today is not about whether there should be a Palestinian state; most Israeli Jews accepted that long ago. It is about whether there should be a Jewish one."

Avineri explained the persistence of this attitude: "Part of the Palestinian rejectionist response has to do with a wider view current in the Arab consciousness that the Jews are not a nation, but merely a religious community. Part of it has to do with the hegemonic Arab national discourse, which views only the Arabs as legitimate claimants for national self-determination in the region."

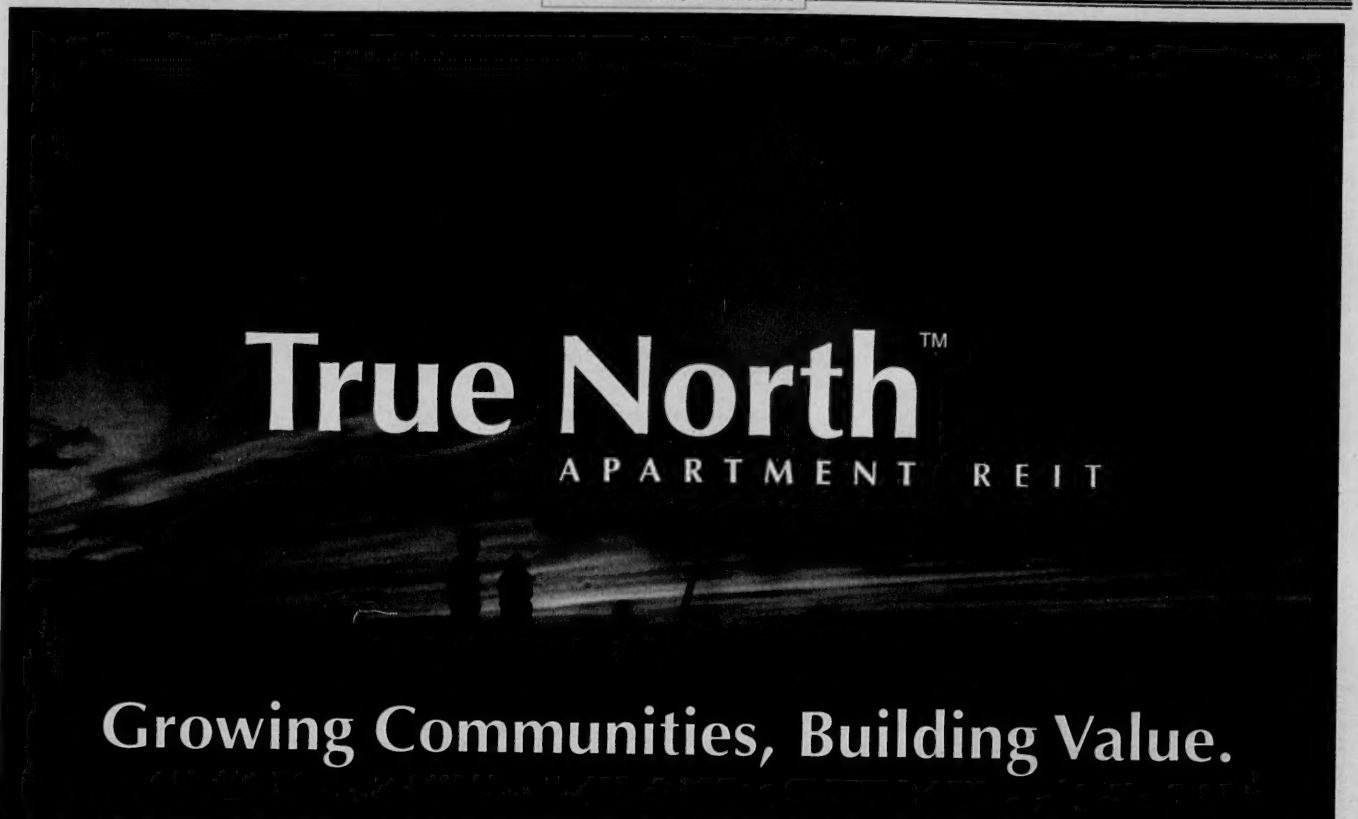
The rise of Islamists throughout the Middle East, who utterly reject the concept of Jewish sovereignty, only serves to entrench this attitude.

The task for those who yearn to see fairness and justice for both Jews and Palestinians is to try to create an atmosphere in which the concept of mutual recognition becomes the norm. Short of that, failure to resolve the conflict will unfortunately remain anything but uncertain.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

NEW YEAR GREETING: Senior kindergarten students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre started a new school year by creating and displaying a special New Year message.



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Preparing for the unlikely

As a new Jewish year begins, renewed U.S.-led peace talks continue between Israel and the Palestinians.

Much has been written about the low expectations surrounding these negotiations on both sides.

Certainly, Israelis and Jews have good reason to be skeptical. The resumption of Palestinian violence at the beginning of this century, as well as rocket fire and terrorist incursions following Israel's 2005 pullout from Gaza, are testament to this.

But as Jews, we must always be prepared for the possibility of peace, for the prospect that our enemies may surprise us.

And Israel should always be seen as being open to peace, even as it remains ready to defend itself.

In this vein, it's worth recalling the words of former Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, who said that Israel would pursue the peace process as if there was no terrorism and pursue terrorism as if there was no peace process.

Since Rabin's death, the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has largely been fought to a draw.

The Palestinians and their leaders surely must recognize that despite two bloody uprisings, Israel's resolve is strong and its economy robust. Furthermore, the ongoing campaign to delegitimize the Jewish state in various international forums and in the court of public opinion has been successfully countered by pro-Israel forces who have exposed the apartheid slur for what it is.

The bottom line: this startup nation isn't some Crusader state destined to fade into the mists of time.

Meanwhile, the outlines of a future peace deal have been in place for at least 20 years. They're well known to both sides and all interested observers.

But negotiations are the only way to end a conflict between two peoples who both see themselves as holding indigenous claims to one small slice of land.

Only Israel and the Palestinians can reach an agreement. A solution can't be forced upon them by outsiders.

It won't be what both sides truly want, but we hope it will be what each can live with – an accommodation that doesn't compromise too much of each side's distinct national narrative.

Like it or not, the Palestinians hold the key to Israel being fully accepted among the family of nations. A deal won't solve all the problems in the Middle East – not by a long shot – but it might help marginalize and isolate regional extremists such as Hezbollah, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

It could also fortify Israel for other challenges, such as the aftermath of Syria's civil war, continuing turmoil in Egypt and the Iranian nuclear threat.

The obstacles are many, not the least of which is the continued refusal of many Palestinians to accept that Jews have a strong historical claim to, and bond with, the Land of Israel. Another major roadblock has been the increased intrusion of Islamist ideology into a conflict that started out mostly as a dispute over a piece of real estate.

So while expectations are low, we should be ready for the possibility, however remote, of a breakthrough.

Consider, however, that if you had told a Jew in North Africa or Poland in the mid-19th century that there would be a Jewish state within 100 years, they likely would have laughed.

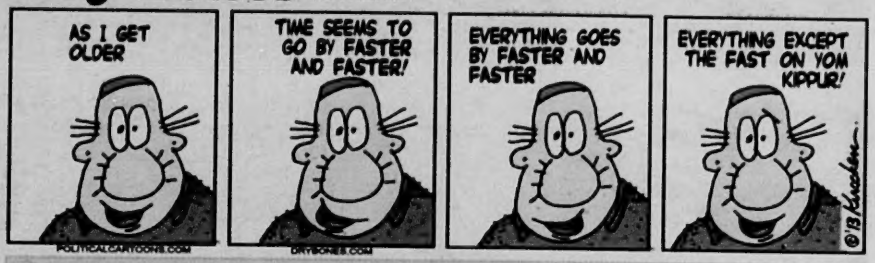
So could Mahmoud Abbas become the next Anwar Sadat?

Stranger things have happened.

We can only pray.

Daniel Wolgelerenter

Dry Bones ATONEMENT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Bring back the Kirshner File

Please bring back Sheldon Kirshner. His columns were always so informative.

Ruth Fainstat
Montreal

• • •

Allow all perspectives

I was distressed to read the letter to the editor "Columnist too jingoistic" (*The CJN*, Aug. 29) requesting that you stop publishing Paul Michaels. Obviously the writer "favour[s] coverage of a broad spectrum of opinion" only so long as the spectrum excludes opinions that he doesn't like. One of the strengths of *The CJN* is that it covers a broad range of opinions in the community. I don't always agree with the opinions expressed, but I would never suggest that they be suppressed. And to characterize readers who agree with the thoughts expressed in Michaels' columns as being "nasty" is *sinat chinam* – baseless hatred. (Also, some "Cubans in Miami" have legitimate complaints against the Cuban government.)

Stephen Weintraub
Toronto

• • •

'67 borders no solution

Many well-meaning people have decided that if Israel were to return to her borders prior to the 1967 war, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict would end.

When I ask advocates of this concept how they arrived at this conclusion, I receive answers such as that the Palestinians only want the area that was allocated to them in the 1947 UN vote. These people are either unaware of the Palestinian documents and speeches that call for the destruction of Israel, or they don't want to believe these very revealing facts. Neither the PLO's charter, created in 1964, nor Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party's constitution have ever been modified to eliminate clauses calling for the destruction of Israel.

Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) and Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) monitor PA media and TV. These two wonderful organizations have produced a continuous flow of fully documented translations of Palestinian leaders glorifying and praising Palestinian terrorists who have murdered Israeli and American civilians. PMW and MEMRI have presented us with evidence of Palestinian leaders comparing peace agreements with Israel to Muhammad's 10-year peace treaty with the Quraish tribe, which he destroyed two years after he signed the treaty. They also have presented evidence of Palestinian leaders' statements that a successful frontal attack against Israel is not possible. Therefore, they will destroy Israel in phases.

How can any objective person conclude that the 1967 borders are the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict when made aware of these salient facts?

William Langfan
Palm Beach, Fla.

• • •

Play should be tossed away

I attended the play *The Merchant of Venice* at the Stratford Festival, directed by Antoni Cimolino and starring Scott Wentworth as Shylock.

To begin with, let's call a spade a spade. William Shakespeare was a bigoted, virulent anti-Semite. Many defenders of Shakespeare have commented that when the play was written much of Europe, as well as England, was anti-Semitic. Therefore, he was no exception.

This theory is difficult to digest. How can a man of letters and intellect, a man who has written about justice, tolerance and freedom for all, write such a toxic play?

The director, Cimolino, decided to set this play in modern times, in 1930s Italy, at a time when Mussolini and fascism ruled the country. Bringing this play into an era of the greatest prejudice and intolerance the world has ever known is a bad mistake. It just perpetuates anti-Semitism to a new generation of bigots.

Shylock was played by a very distinguished actor, a true artist who has been with the Stratford company for many years and has done excellent work in other plays. Unfortunately, Wentworth did not capture the essence of the role of Shylock.

The lines of the play cannot be changed. But an actor of his stature should be able to interpret this role not as a beaten dog or a whimpering degraded character that accepts the curses, intolerance and hate without much protest.

I do not share the view of the defenders of this horrible play that it is presented today in order that the modern spectator, so repulsed and disgusted by it, will say "Never again." On the contrary, this play will encourage a lot more people to anti-Semitism.

Let's just throw this bigoted piece of trash in the dustbin where it belongs.

Philip Goldig
Montreal

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Leo Frank tragedy resonates a century later

Abraham Foxman
JTA

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the trial of Leo Frank in Atlanta, let's begin by stating for the record: no, the Leo Frank case was not the impetus for the founding of the Anti-Defamation League.

It is true that the organization, now celebrating its centennial, was founded the same year as the arrest and trial of Frank for the murder of one of his factory workers, a 13-year-old girl named Mary Phagan. But the idea for ADL, conceived by Sigmund Livingston, a Chicago attorney, preceded the case.

Abraham Foxman

Rather than being the catalyst for the organization, the trial served as a confirmation of the wisdom of Livingston that American Jews needed an institution to combat anti-Semitism.

America was a much different place in 1913. Compared to Europe, Jews here lived far more secure and stable lives, but stereotypes and name-calling were still common. That's what led Livingston to conceive of an ADL. As a Jewish immigrant from Germany, he assumed that in America, the prejudices he experienced in Europe would not exist. That was not the case.

Still, the trial – and two years later, Frank's lynching – were a shock to American Jews. Despite broad divisions between older immigrants from Germany and newer ones from Russia, the community rallied together in support of Frank and in anger at the biased trial.

Looking back, we can see this great tragedy as representing the two sides of America and the Jews that still exist today, but in a very different balance and form.

The trial and lynching demonstrated that America carried some of the historic stereotypes and conspiracy theories about Jews that had characterized European life for centuries. The blood libel charge – the idea that Jews murdered Christian children to use their blood for ritual purposes – was rare in America. But a related theme, of a Jewish predator attacking a young Christian female, surfaced in the Frank trial.

Also surfacing was the notion that in an extreme case like this, America's legal and constitutional system might not be able to protect a vulnerable Jew from violence.

In the long term, one can argue that the reaction to the Frank affair set the stage for a dramatic improvement in Jewish life in America. Newspaper editorials across the country overwhelmingly supported Frank. Opinion-makers commented about the degree of anti-Semitism surrounding the trial. Even early on, Jews understood that an influential public could be called upon for support when anti-Semitism reared its ugly head.

Leo Frank as seen in video from National Museum of American Jewish History [Screenshot]

The opprobrium did some good, leading Georgia governor John Slaton to commute Frank's sentence. However, the haters won out, as they so often did in those years in the case of African-Americans.

For American Jews, the Frank affair was seen as a low point in Jewish life in America. The truth is, however, that the most difficult years came later, particularly in the 1930s when anti-Semitic hate groups proliferated and when quotas in universities and other institutions abounded.

The lessons of the Frank affair played an important role in improving the quality of life for American Jews and in decreasing anti-Semitism.

If there were doubts about the need for an ADL, it evaporated among significant parts of the community after the lynching. And it set the stage for the fundamental practice used by ADL and others in combating anti-Semitism: get the information out and rely on the good will of public figures and institutions to delegitimize hate and prejudice.

Clearly, America has come a long way in the last 100 years. A Leo Frank incident is unthinkable today. Attitudes, legal protections, education – all these speak to a qualitatively different America for Jews.

Yet the Frank affair still resonates. Anti-Semitism in the extreme, a completely biased trial and the lynching, may largely be things of the past. But the stereotypes that underlay that extremism are still alive. ADL surveys show that 15 per cent of Americans – 35 million people – still have anti-Semitic attitudes.

One hundred years later, we are saddened by the memory that it could have happened here, pleased that America has come so far and recommitted to addressing those still living biases, some of which allowed the travesty that was the Leo Frank affair.

Abraham Foxman is national director of the Anti-Defamation League.

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Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat deserves our support

Gil Troy
in Montreal

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat is running an intense re-election campaign, and he deserves worldwide support. Anyone who can donate money legally – meaning legitimate, voting-eligible Israeli citizens, whether or not they live in Jerusalem – should. And non-citizens should lend their support in other ways, making it clear that Jerusalem already has the right mayor, whose term should be extended.

It is, of course, legitimate to ask why non-residents of Jerusalem should care, about a local municipal election 10,000 kilometres away. The answer, of course, has to do with the magic of Jerusalem and its link to the Jewish People. For 3,000 years, Jerusalem has been our capital, religiously and politically. This golden city is where our collective soul resides. When that city suffers, be it from Roman conquerors or Palestinian suicide bombers, we all bleed. And when that city thrives, be it under the legendary mayor Teddy Kollek or his worthy successor Barkat, we all rejoice.

Once, I was walking around Jerusalem with my dear friend from Montreal, Rabbi Pinny Gniwisch. As we wandered, I showed him the parks, walkways, schools and museums that had been built with donations from abroad – emphasizing the many Canadian-financed good works you can see wherever you wander.

"It's remarkable," I said, "to consider the generosity of Jewish people all over the world for a city so far away from so many of them."

Pinny responded: "But Jerusalem is the Jewish people's shared synagogue. Of course we all feel connected and committed."

Supporting Jerusalem is both a religious and secular act. Wherever one stands religiously, Jerusalem looms large in the Jewish soul. The very fact that it's a place with spiritual power, historical resonance and emotional meaning for so many Jews – and so many different kinds of Jews – attests to the broad bandwidth of Judaism itself as a world religion with a national dimension that consecrates both time and space.

But for all of Jerusalem's poetry – and there are many of us whose heart still beats faster when we drive up to the entrance of the city from Highway 1 – the prose of Jerusalem is about the challenges of managing a modern multicultural municipality that must run smoothly.

Barkat has mastered both these missions. He understands that the mayor of Jerusalem must be the custodian of the city's special heritage. But he also understands that the mayor of Jerusalem must be the manager of the city's thoroughly pedestrian problems. As mayor, he has worked hard to resurrect the city as a cultural centre and a destination for tourists, from the rest of Israel and abroad. At the same time, he has worked hard to restore the city's economy, clean the streets, fix the roads, tame the bureaucrats and raise morale.

In late October, Barkat won't just be running for re-election, but Jerusalem's vote will be seen as a referendum on the city's future. There's a struggle going on between haredi power brokers who want to bully city hall and a broader coalition of citizens supporting Barkat. And there's also a power struggle between national politicians trying to advance their partisan agendas and the coalition of those who care about their city who are mobilizing for their incumbent mayor.

That's why Jews from all over the world, and especially Canada, should endorse Barkat's re-election heartily, and as generously as they can, within the limits of the law. The mayor of Jerusalem automatically becomes a prince of the Jewish people. Although Jerusalem's citizens are the only ones who can and should vote in the election, it helps to hear from others that this man has been a worthy leader, honest and incorruptible, smart and insightful, visionary and activist. And given how many Canadian Jews are investing in Jerusalem, supporting the Jerusalem Foundation, and helping to build and beautify the city, the Canadian Jewish voice should be heard.

Hakarat hatov is a great Jewish value, and supporting a successful politician is a basic democratic value. Jews from all over the world, in Israel and beyond, should take this moment to say, "Thank you Nir Barkat, we value what you have done and will do what we can to support your re-election," be it symbolically or substantively.

Step up expression of chesed and tikkun olam

Urban Writer
Avrum Rosensweig

The Jewish People have a generous nature, and I am often encouraged by the kindness I see within our community. I urge everyone however, to step up your expression of chesed (kindness) and tikkun olam (repairing the world) activities in 5774 because there is an awful lot of work to be done, and lots of room for people to manoeuvre.

The Torah says, "*ani k'mait*," that a poor person is like a dead person. The "deadness" this phrase alludes to is the drained energy and a waning hope within the sprit of the impoverished. Worrying about your children's gloveless, cold fingers is numbing. And you are awake the entire time. Being poor might in some ways be worse than being dead.

I have met families in our community whose dinners are David Copperfield-sparse, void of greens and heaped with starch. They are *aniyim*. The Toronto Jewish community now has soup kitchens, an anomaly a few short years back. We have a fund to top off welfare for low-income families distributed by Jewish Family & Child. Our poor population is big, and our services reflect that. Poverty in general across the nation is growing as well. According to Statistics Canada, between 1980 and 2005, median earnings among Canada's top earners rose more than 16 per cent, while those in the bottom fifth saw their wages dip by 20 per cent.

(Compelling note: I've asked my colleagues what those with lots of money have that those with little do not, and vice versa. One said the rich can dream with the belief that [their dream] can come true. The poor must survive and shelve the life of their dreams. On the flip side, those with little money learn to move through the complexity of the human condition, which the rich don't do as much as because they are frequently ensconced in the management of things.)

In 5774, I therefore call upon you to work on eradicating poverty from the Canadian Jewish community, the State of Israel and the world in which we live. While this may seem naïve to some, know that lofty goals are the only ones to have. Our own Judy Feld-Carr saved Syrian Jewry, and Israel and the Diaspora rescued former Soviet Jews, Ethiopian Jews, Romanian Jews, former Yugoslavian Jewry and now the last vestige of Yemenite Jewry. Remember that the Rotary Club pledged to wipe out polio and is pretty close.

If eradicating poverty is simply too much to consider, fair enough. Find a family whom you can adopt as an equal, and figure out together how you can spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically barter what each of you have.

One of the greatest gifts we can give any human being is to truly appreciate and understand their journey and share what we have, including a story or a loving embrace. Find that family and ease yourself into their culture and allow them into yours.

Equality here is key. Nobody is a better human being because of what he or she owns, or do not own. We say that the poor are special. They are, it's said in Yiddish, "*pintala Yids*" (simple Jews, generally understood as grander), and we often honour the wealthy, showering them with accolades for having money. Both ideas are rubbish. People are not great or otherwise simply because of their economic status but because of what they accomplish with their lives, at whatever level they are at.

In 5774, hang out with a person who needs a friend. Who? Ask your rabbi. There are lots of people waiting to hold your hand as you listen, particularly seniors. In 5774, learn about those whose house is open to others. Mimic their behaviour until you get it. Be curious about the family who fosters a child and ask yourself, "Couldn't I do the same?"

Hachnasat kallah (helping a couple to be married). Native Canadians. Mentorship. The refugee issue. Jewish-Muslim relations. Israeli victims of terror. The Roma. Slavery and child labour. Advocacy. Religious-secular relations. Homelessness. The shut-ins. Reading to the blind. Shul committees.

Did you know Toronto has the only yeshiva for deaf youth in the world? Help them out.

In 5774, step up. Stretch your goodness. Done well, your job will be challenging and painful at times, but it will be purposeful. And therein lies the essence of being a Jew.

Good luck. Shanah tovah.

TTC considers anti-Israel ads

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The Toronto Transit Commission is reviewing a proposal by the group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) to run an anti-Israel ad that depicts the Jewish state as an insatiable occupier.

The development comes on the heels of a similar ad campaign sponsored by the Palestine Awareness Coalition that is currently running on Vancouver's transit system.

The Vancouver bus ad, titled "Disappearing Palestine," show four maps spanning 1946 through 2012, which suggest Palestinian land is being overtaken by Israel.

CJPME president Thomas Woodley did not immediately return a request for comment, but he told *Now* magazine that his group raised $35,000 from private donors to run the ads in Toronto and other Canadian cities.

Woodley said the group's ad would be similar to the one currently running in Vancouver. It will include the same four maps that ran in the TransLink ad, but with different text.

A TTC spokesperson confirmed that the commission "is still in the process of reviewing the ad in question," but did not elaborate further.

However, a 2009 Supreme Court ruling in another case, involving TransLink and political advertising sponsored by the Canadian Federation of Students and the B.C. Teachers Federation, struck down portions of the transit agency's policy against political advertising.

"Not liking an ad, or an ad being controversial, isn't grounds for removing an ad," the TTC's Brad Ross told *Now*. "The Supreme Court of Canada's been very clear on that."

Howard English, senior vice-president of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said the TTC has a lot to consider when deciding if it should run a political ad, especially one that marginalizes a community.

"The ads that ran in Vancouver take an extremist view of the Middle East and those ads are designed to question Israel's right to exist," English said.

"The TTC has to determine what is in the best interest of its passengers and the kind of precedent it will set by permitting ads like this," he added.

"As soon as the TTC approves one set of ads, which takes a far-reaching, and we believe, an extremist position on the Middle East, it will be under enormous pressure to approve other ads as well. That's one of the criteria they have to consider."

TTC policy dictates that if at least five people complain about an approved ad, a three-member advertising review committee will be forced to revisit the issue.

But English said the TTC also has to consider legal issues – whether it has the right to ban political advertising.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies president and CEO Avi Benlolo warned that his organization would use its resources to produce a counter-ad if the TTC approves the CJPME ad.

But he hopes it won't come to that.

"We are confident that reason will prevail and that the TTC will not permit the system to be used to promote hatred and lies, particularly against the only country in the Middle East that supports democracy and human rights for all its citizens," Benlolo added.

"The ads are so misleading," English said. "They're really historical fantasy. There is no resemblance between historical truth and the maps that are on the Vancouver transit system right now."

The Vancouver ad, which costs $15,000 to run for four weeks, is in a Vancouver SkyTrain station as well as on 15 buses.

Despite opposition from Jewish groups who contend that the ads are offensive, TransLink, the government transit agency that allowed the ad to run, said on its website that the ads don't violate human rights and comply with Canadian advertising standards.

Citing an article about the Vancouver ads that ran in last week's *CJN*, Toronto Councillor James Pasternak wrote on his Facebook page that he "will vigorously oppose these ads on the TTC and request their removal from SkyTrain in Vancouver.

"The messaging is false, deceptive, demonizing and discriminatory. We don't need the importation of world conflict zones on to public transit."

Rejecting an ad campaign would not be unprecedented for the TTC.

In 2011, it declined to run an ad by the Toronto Jewish Film Festival that depicted Moses stepping out of a limousine and inadvertently flashing his blurred out genitals to the paparazzi. In 2009, TTC rejected ads by Ashley Madison, a dating website that facilitates extramarital affairs, that said, "Life is Short. Have an Affair."

Shurman ousted as finance critic

CJN Staff

Ontario Opposition Leader Tim Hudak has removed Peter Shurman as the Progressive Conservative's (PC) finance critic, over a $20,719 housing allowance.

Shurman, a former talk radio host who represents the suburban Thornhill riding, lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Members of Provincial Parliament living outside a 50-kilometre radius of Queen's Park are entitled to a housing allowance for residences they occupy while working at the legislature.

Hudak said in a statement Sunday night that although the allowance did not violate regulations, it could become a distraction at a time when the PCs are promoting a message of respect for taxpayer dollars.

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Analyst sounds warning against 'creeping sharia'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Here are a few items you may have missed if your sole source of international news was the mainstream media.

In Tunisia, a France-based imam known for promoting Jewish-Muslim relations was assaulted and called a Zionist. In the United States, the Syrian Electronic Army hacked into an U.S. Marine Corps website and argued Americans should not take Al Qaeda's side in its war with Syria. And in Texas, legislators proposed a bill that would recognize Nidal Hasan's Fort Hood victims as casualties in a war, and not, as the Obama administration has asserted, victims of workplace violence.

The items appeared on Jihad Watch, a website operated by Robert Spencer as a program of the California-based David Horowitz Freedom Center. Spencer is author of a dozen books, among them two *New York Times* bestsellers, *The Truth About Muhammad* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*.

"The [mainstream media] has shown a general unwillingness to discuss the motives and goals of jihad attacks," Spencer said in an email interview with *The CJN*. "The Society of Professional Journalists has guidelines instructing journalists to dissociate Islam and jihad from stories about Muslim terrorists. This creates a peculiar and pervasive unreality."

Spencer started the website in October 2003, "because I was looking for a central location for jihad news and commentary. I didn't find it, so I started it myself."

Robert Spencer

He will be in Toronto on Sept. 17 at the Hilton Toronto/Markham Conference Centre and Spa along with blogger Pamela Geller. They're being brought to Toronto by the Jewish Defence League (JDL) of Canada. The hotel announced last month that it would not rescind the booking, despite receiving a letter from the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) – formerly the Canadian branch of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) – that called Geller and Spencer "notorious xenophobic activists."

Spencer and Geller are co-sponsors of Stop Islamization of America and the Freedom Defense Initiative. Both have been called Islamophobes, a label he rejects. There is even a website, Spencer Watch, dedicated to "exposing" him, questioning his credentials and calling Horowitz "a prolific builder of far right institutions and organizations."

"Government and media are complacent in the face of a growing jihadist threat and are far more concerned with stopping phantom 'Islamophobia' than with protecting the freedoms of their citizens and preventing the next jihad attack," said Spencer. "Hence the demonization of those resisting jihad terror."

One example cited by Spencer was the Boston Marathon bombing and the failure of the "politically correct FBI… to evaluate properly intelligence it received from Russia on Tamerlan Tsarnaev. They said he was a jihadi, but the FBI is forbidden to study what exactly that means. So they gave Tsarnaev a pass."

The Obama administration's record in addressing radical Islam is "abysmal," he continued. "Obama mandated the scrubbing of U.S. government counter-terror training material of all mention of Islam and jihad in connection with terrorism in 2011. I doubt the Canadian government is this wilfully ignorant, but it is unlikely to be significantly better."

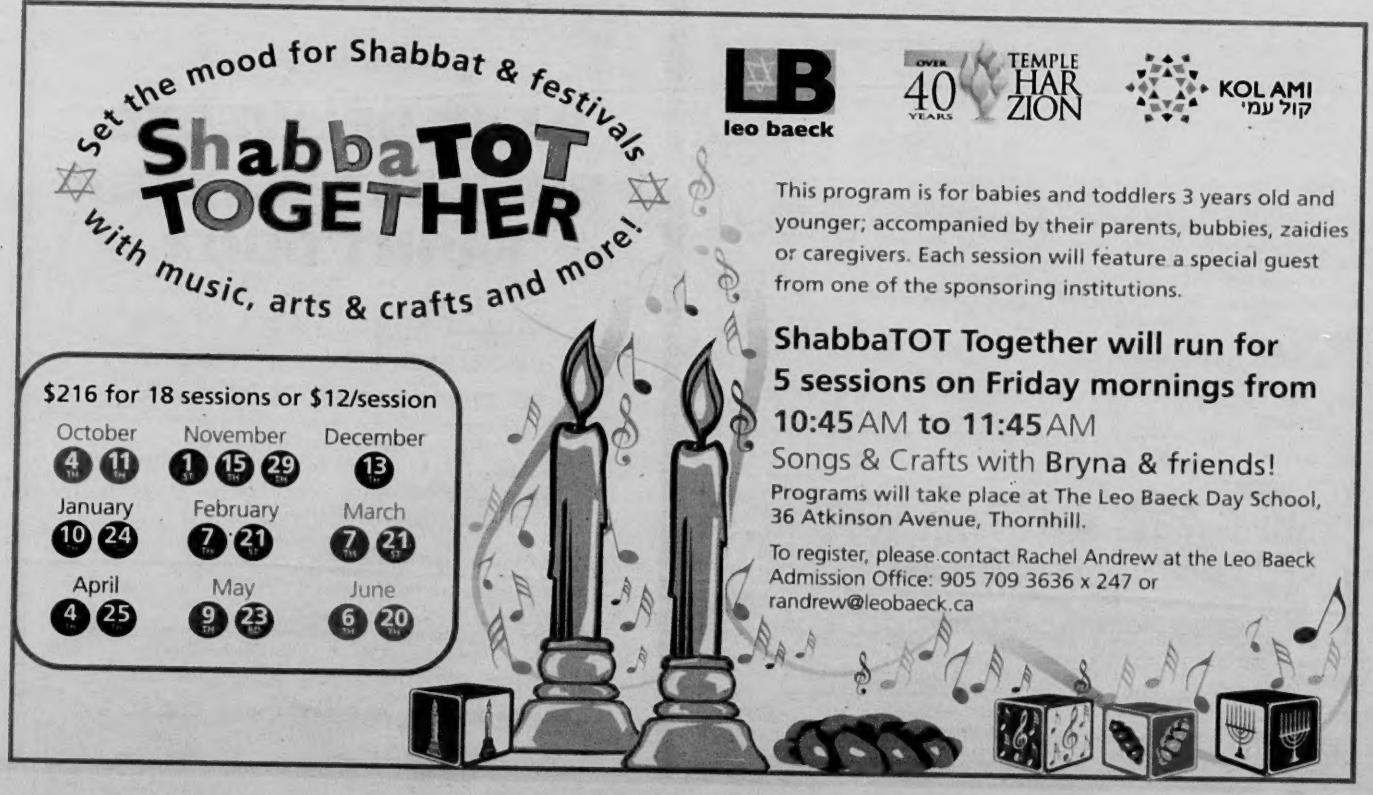
Spencer agreed with the premise there's an agenda of "creeping sharia" at play in which Islamic norms are being insinuated into western societies.

"The Muslim Brotherhood stated in a captured internal document that its work in the United States was a 'kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying western civilization from within' so that 'Allah's religion is victorious over other religions.' That's not an agenda of creeping sharia?" he asked.

Spencer said when human rights commissions in British Columbia and Alberta agreed to hear complaints by Muslim groups against journalists Mark Steyn and Ezra Levant, the "commissions were, wittingly or unwittingly, pursuing an agenda of placing criticism of Islam beyond the pale of acceptable discourse."

Asked whether he agreed with U.S. Mideast analyst Daniel Pipes' formulation that "radical Islam is the problem and moderate Islam is the solution," Spencer replied: "If moderate Islam existed, it would be the solution.

"Right now, while there are many moderate Muslims, there is no mainstream sect or school of Islamic law that teaches that non-Muslims and Muslims should live together peacefully as legal equals in a secular society, or that women should have equal rights with men, or that apostates from Islam have a right to live. Until such a mainstream sect or school emerges, moderate Islam cannot be the solution because it does not exist."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Sukkahville competition set for Sept. 22

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

An awards ceremony for the six winners in the Sukkahville 2013 design competition will be held Sept. 22 from 2 to 4:30 p.m. at Mel Lastman Square.

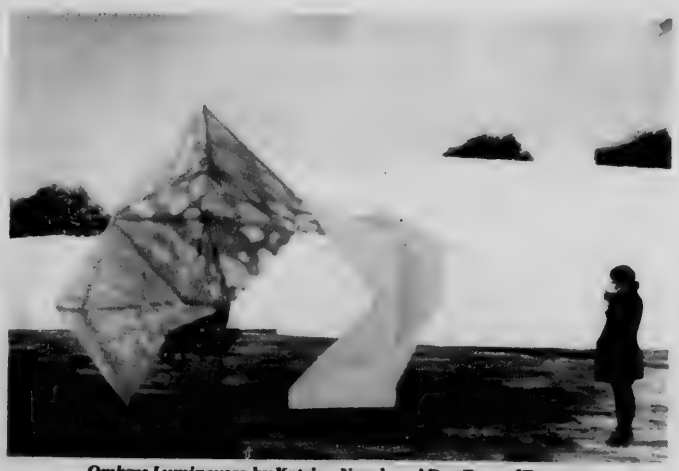
***Spiral Sukkah*, by Jason van der Burg, Dave Freedman, Duncan Sabiston, David Whyte, Jesse Hao of Toronto**

Sponsored by the Kehilla Residential Programme (KRP), the third annual competition invited architects, students, artists, builders and allied design professionals – there were 18 submissions – to design proposals for temporary, free-standing sukkahs to be built in Toronto. The sukkahs will remain on display until Sept. 24.

KRP is a non-profit housing agency whose mandate is to identify and champion housing initiatives responsive to the needs of the Jewish community in the Greater Toronto Area. It has been a leader in the development of many affordable housing initiatives, as well as offering property management services for community housing projects.

Sukkahville 2013 participants were encouraged to re-imagine the traditional notion of the sukkah with a contemporary design, language and approach.

All funds raised through the Sukkahville initiative will be used to supplement KRP's innovative rental assistance program, which bridges the gap between market rental rates and what the poor in our community can afford to pay.



***Ombres Lumineuses*, by Katrina Novak and Duc Tran of Toronto**

"Kehilla holds Sukkahville to highlight the housing needs of the vulnerable right here at home. The statistics are shocking," said Nancy Singer, KRP's executive director.

"Sukkahville is a fantastic, fun event. These are not your zaide's sukkahs. Everyone should come out and see them. You will be amazed.

The event includes the design exhibition, treats, family fun and music by Klezconnection.

For information, visit kehilla.com or sukkahville.com.

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Israel Parade, College Street, Toronto, 1948.
[John Ackerman/Ontario Jewish Archives photo]

Photo exhibit marks archives' 40th year

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

Forty years ago Stephen Speisman, then a history student at the University of Toronto, launched the Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA) in a room in the basement of Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue – a room that was sometimes used in the evenings by waitresses to change into their uniforms before synagogue social events.

This month the archives takes over a room perhaps only marginally bigger in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre to display an exhibit of 29 photographs on the occasion of the archives' 40th anniversary.

Director Dara Solomon chose the photos from the OJA's massive collection of about 100,000 photographs. "It took me quite a bit of time to narrow it down," she said. "I talked with the other archivists at the OJA and found out some of their favourites. We wanted to avoid showing the ones that get published over and over again, and show some that had never been seen before, including some new acquisitions."

Although small, the exhibit touches strategically on many important aspects of Jewish communal life, not only in Toronto, which is its main focus, but also in the towns of Hamilton, Peterborough, St. Catharines, Jackson's Point and Owen Sound, which are represented by one photo apiece. "Each photo was chosen to help tell a larger story," Solomon said.

Appropriately, considering the time of year, the earliest photo (1910) shows a large group of Jews lined up along the Toronto lakefront for the Rosh Hashanah ritual of Tashlich, symbolically casting one's sins into the water.

While there are no photos of the old Ward neighbourhood where most of the Jews of Toronto lived in the World War I era, there are numerous photos of Kensington Market in the 1920s, 1930s and later. Subjects include Perlmutar's Bakery, the Kiever Synagogue, a fruit market on Augusta Avenue, a creamery on Kensington and a picketer wearing a Yiddish-language sandwich-board for an Ontario Poultry Buyers strike in 1939.

Several photos of women and women's organizations trace changing fashions as well as the community's move northward in the postwar era. There is a group photo of Pioneer Women (later Na'amat) in stylish hats in 1940, a woman proudly showing off a cabbage roll at the Hadassah Bazaar in 1959, and ladies crowding the kosher meat counter at the newly opened Steinberg's supermarket at Sheppard Avenue and Bathurst Street in 1968.

The exhibit also includes samples from the works of photographers Al Gilbert, Nir Bareket, Sylvia Schwartz and John Ackerman, taken from larger collections in the OJA's holding. The late John Ackerman was a dentist who took his camera nearly everywhere he went; the OJA recently acquired hundreds of his photographs. One outstanding Ackerman photo shows a large celebratory parade on College Street in 1948, days after Israel declared its independence. Some 20,000 people joined the march and subsequent rally at Maple Leaf Gardens.

The exhibit is far too small to adequately reflect what's in the OJA's vaults, but it offers a nice foretaste. As many as 25,000 photos are expected to become viewable online after the OJA launches its new website, an event scheduled for next January.

The Ontario Jewish Archives at Forty: Four Decades of Collecting and Sharing Our Community's History continues at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Gallery, Bloor Street and Spadina Avenue, until Oct. 3. Admission is free. Prints of most of the photos are available for $10.

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Za'atari camp houses over 120,000 refugees

Continued from page 3

The coalition is giving $50,000 to Israeli Flying Aid to bring food and sanitation items to refugees in the Mafraq camp. It will also supply $50,000 to World Jewish Relief and Save the Children, which collaborated in an effort to offer food to 500 refugee children at the Za'atari refugee camp for one month.

Za'atari currently houses more than 120,000 refugees, its high population stemming from its close proximity to the Syrian border. Camps such as Za'atari are built to hold a certain number, but due to the high influx of refugees, there are overcrowding and health problems.

A UN report in April said children in the Za'atari camp didn't have enough to eat, while three in four young refugees did not attend school and lacked proper clothing.

The coalition will also give $50,000 to the International Rescue Committee, which plans to provide training to medical service providers.

The JCDR has responded to crises in Haiti, Sudan, Japan and Sri Lanka. Rosensweig said that when Ve'ahavta and other groups aided Sri Lanka's eastern province in the wake of the December 2004 tsunami, civilians who were historically against Israel ended up embracing the Jewish groups as they helped to rebuild hospitals.

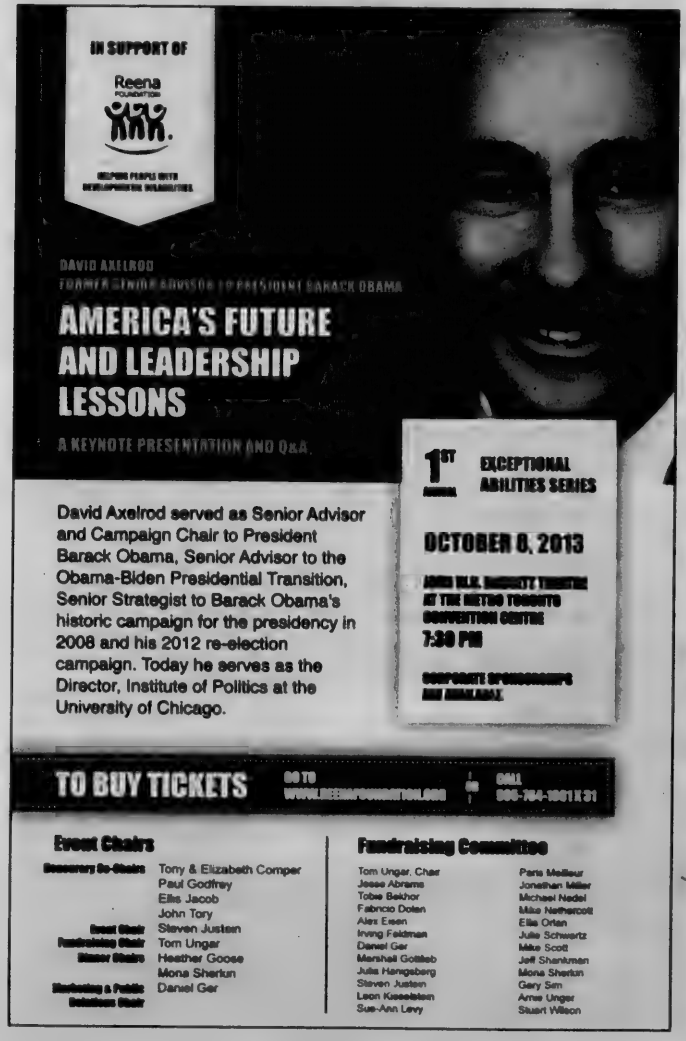
"By the time we had finished our work [in Sri Lanka], some of the little children were walking around wearing T-shirts with Israeli flags on them," Rosensweig said.

Although some Jordanians opened their homes to displaced Syrians, the nation of seven million will likely have a hard time absorbing too many refugees from a country with a population of 22 million.

"There's a lot of concern right now about Israelis being worried about an attack from Syria... you're providing aid to people who aren't supportive of Israel," Zelcer said.

"However, living in Jordan are extremely vulnerable members of the population. It's very important as a member of the Jewish community to stand up and say we're going to do this. This is part of who we are as a community."

Israelis and Arabs carry gas mask boxes outside a gas mask distribution centre in Haifa on Sept. 1. *[Avishag Shaar Yashuv/Flash90 photo]*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Montreal community pays tribute to good cop

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Jewish community bade a fond farewell to a police officer it considers a good friend: Sylvain Bissonnette, who was commander of Station 9 serving Côte St. Luc, Hampstead and Montreal West for nearly seven years.

A reception was held Aug. 27 for the well-regarded Bissonnette at Federation CJA just before he left the post to take up his new command of Station 8 in Lachine this month.

Sylvain Bissonnette

The federation's chief operations officer, Moshe Ben-Shach, spoke warmly of, not only Bissonnette's close co-operation with the Jewish community, but of his interest in and efforts to understand it.

Ben-Shach recalled that the first time they met was soon after Bissonnette came to Station 9. The federation's annual March to Jerusalem was departing from Cavendish Mall, and members of the anti-Zionist haredi sect, Neturei Karta, were holding a demonstration.

Bissonnette wanted to make sense of Jews protesting against Israel. "We talked for about four hours about the different facets of the Jewish community," recalled Ben-Shach, who was impressed by Bissonnette's quick grasp of the complexities.

From then on, the two worked closely together on many files – some public, some not – including the incidents of synagogue vandalism in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

"You were always available to listen and support, and you instilled that in your team," Ben-Shach said.

Bissonnette was a familiar figure at community events, such as the annual Yom Hashoah commemoration.

Ben-Shach described two important projects the federation completed with the help of Bissonnette over the past year. One is an emergency-preparedness plan developed in conjunction with Station 9 and Côte St. Luc's public security department.

"We hope it will never be tested, but it's comforting to have it in place," he said.

The other is conducting drills in schools to prepare students and staff for what to do if there is a gun shooting.

"This will go a tremendous way in making our community safer," Ben-Shach said.

"He was always there to offer security and reassurance when something was happening, whether at holidays or sad events, like vandalism," said Rabbi Reuben Poupko, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel Beth Aaron in Côte St. Luc.

"He was always thoughtful and considerate."

In a jocular mode, typical of the easy relationship between the two, Rabbi Poupko added, referring to the PQ government's proposed values charter and its possible ban on displays of religion by public servants: "You're getting out just before you have to arrest someone for wearing a kippah."

Bissonnette, a 24-year veteran, was visibly touched by the tribute. He thanked the federation for its constant collaboration.

He said he came to Station 9 with the belief that the police should serve all of the population and that it's important to form partnerships with local political and communal institutions.

"I knew the Jewish community was important. I wanted to know your needs, your ways, your history, your roots, your traditions," he said.

"I wanted to do everything in order that history not repeat itself. That was my mission, and I made sure my officers understood it."

As a history buff, he was already knowledgeable about the Middle East and conscious of the risk of a local reverberation when an incident happened there.

"It's important to be pro-active," he said.

As a token of appreciation, the federation has planted five trees in Bissonnette's name in Israel.

Indeed, the Jewish National Fund is an organization he is well aware of: its office is in the same building as Station 9.

The Côte St. Luc city councillor responsible for public security, Glenn Nashen, told *The CJN* that Bissonnette "showed great understanding and sensitivity to not only the Jewish community but the greater community, its multicultural and aging [characteristics]."

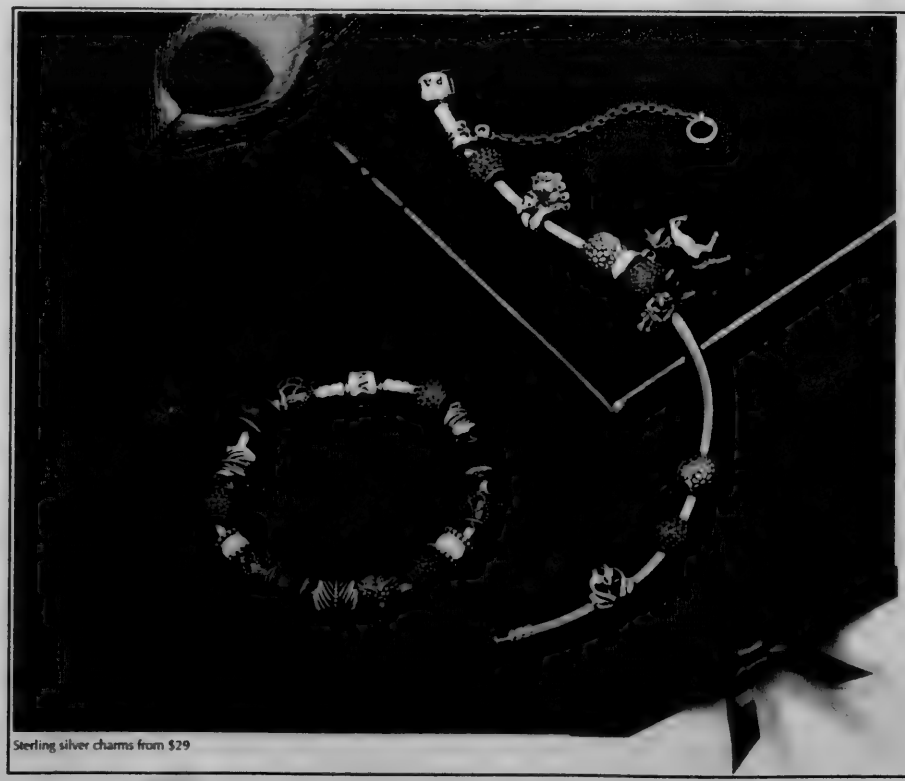
His co-operation with city officials was exemplary, he said.

"I've worked with five station commanders, and I'm saddened to lose him," Nashen said. "He's an outstanding leader."

One project that stands out for him is Bissonnette's encouragement and assistance in the launching of a volunteer citizens' patrol about six years ago.

Made up mainly of retirees, the patrol is the only one of its kind in Quebec, he said. Bissonnette recognized the vCOPS (volunteer Citizens on Patrol) as an asset, not a hindrance, to the work of the police.

"He was a partner in this project from day one, helping with the planning and training. It's in great part due to his vision and willingness that Côte St. Luc has the lowest crime rate in the Montreal agglomeration," Nashen said.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Last Winnipeg Conservative shul goes egalitarian

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Sky Kneller made history Aug. 24 when she became the first woman to receive an aliyah at the Chevra Mishnayes Synagogue.

"It was quite an honour," said the 22-year-old whose family are long time members of the Winnipeg congregation.

Four days earlier, the 105-year-old congregation voted overwhelmingly to introduce fully egalitarian services, becoming the last Conservative synagogue in Winnipeg to do so.

The Chevra Mishnayes Synagogue is an unassuming shul that has continued to go about its business over the years without ever having had the benefit of a rabbi or full-time paid staff. In an earlier interview, vice-president Robbie Waldman credited the synagogue's ability to continue to the strong sense of family and chevra that has always been fostered there.

"To my mind, it's all about continuity," Waldman said. His family has been part of the shul since 1926, while current president Marshall Kneller is the fourth generation in his family to be a member.

Last year, about 220 people attended High Holiday services. Treasurer Murray Greenfield said membership is currently about 200. At its peak about 10 years ago, the number was closer to 300.

The congregation began in a house in the old north end in 1908. In the early 1960s, the city expropriated the land the synagogue stood on to make room for a low-cost housing development.

In 1971, the members of another old north end congregation, Ohel Jacob, closed their doors and merged with the Chevra Mishnayes. In 1980, the congregation welcomed Gerry Daien as its cantor, a role he continues to fill to this day.

Ten years ago, the longtime Orthodox congregation voted to allow mixed seating. "It was a tough issue," Waldman said. "We polled our members twice. We even contacted all the people who only come for Yom Tov."

The decision to introduce egalitarian services followed the same pattern of extensive consultation and discussion over several years.

"Some of the women wanted to be able to play a larger role in the service," Marshall Kneller said. "Last year, the subject was brought up for discussion at our annual general meeting. We brought the issue to our board for discussion and sent our surveys to all our members before we put it to a vote."

He said the congregation has seen immediate positive results from the decision. For the first time in years, he notes, the congregation has had enough people for a Slichot service.

"In the past, we had women with us for Slichot, but not enough men for a minyan," he said.

Greenfield said community members who aren't part of the congregation have also expressed their approval for the change.

"We already have a few new people coming for [the High Holidays]," he said.

Kneller added that while High Holiday services will still be in the traditional style, women in the congregation are looking forward to participating fully.

"We will be having more English and more responsive prayers where women can lead the service," he says.

"We are beginning to see an increase in Shabbat attendance and are hopeful that attendance will grow over the year."

Chevra Mishnayes Synagogue (*Myron Love photo*)

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The GA will culminate as we celebrate the centrality of Jerusalem to all Jews when we walk from Safra Square at Jerusalem's City Hall to the Kotel, and on to our closing gala at the Davidson Center (adjacent to the Kotel).

In addition, the UJA's Mission will include spending 3 days in Tel Aviv and enjoying a unique Shabbat experience; taking part in exclusive briefings with some of Israel's leading politicians, journalists and philanthropists; attending a performance by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra; and travelling to UJA Federation's partnership region in beautiful Eilat where you will see how your UJA support has transformed this vital and flourishing region. Extensions are available. Enjoy luxury accommodations at the Carlton Hotel in Tel Aviv and the David Citadel Hotel in Jerusalem.

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Rights group keeps government's feet to the fire

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Israel resides in a rough neighbourhood where human rights, equality and democracy are pretty much absent from the political agenda.

Not so in Israel though, where a host of NGOs keep the government's feet to the fire, making sure it complies with the norms of a modern, democratic and pluralistic state.

One of the most notable among them is the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), an Israeli organization that has been advocating for human rights for more than 40 years. Over the years, the organization has addressed issues ranging from due process under the law, equal benefits and treatment for minorities, including Israel's Arab minority, gender equality, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and gay and lesbian rights.

It has also come under fire for its strident critiques of Israeli policy – so vocal that some say it is lending ammunition to Israel's enemies. According to NGO Monitor, ACRI has asserted that Israel illegally annexed Jerusalem after the 1967 war; it has referred to Route 443 as an apartheid road; it has used the word apartheid in reference to Israeli policy in Hebron, and it has called the security wall a violation of international law.

But the topic on the agenda of Hagai El-Ad, ACRI's executive director, during a visit to three Canadian cities will be the ongoing dynamic of Israel as a Jewish and a democratic state. He will speak in Toronto on Sept. 20 at the Toronto Reference Library and then address audiences in Montreal and Vancouver, under the auspices of the New Israel Fund of Canada (NIF).

Hagai El-Ad

NIF executive director Orit Sarfaty said that the "NIF funds [ACRI] programs that deal with domestic social issues." The "flagship program" is a legal hotline that provides advice to people who might otherwise not have access to legal support.

"It's fighting on behalf of marginalized communities in Israel," she said.

A second ACRI program funded by NIF is one that subsidizes lawyers working in the area of civil and human rights. These lawyers spend a year studying at the Washington College of Law – supported by the NIF's American branch – and then one year as a sort of apprentice in Israel. The Israeli leg of the program is funded by NIF of Canada.

"It's creating community civil rights lawyers in Israel," Sarfaty said. "This initiative has changed the face of the legal community."

ACRI's scope goes far beyond those programs. Recently, it has been concerned about a proposal that the Knesset consider legislation called "Israel as the Nation state of the Jewish People," El-Ad said.

While the proposed legislation's contents are in flux, ACRI is concerned that as a "basic law," it will shape future laws and require courts to make decisions that put Israel's Jewish character ahead of its democratic one, he said.

The tension between the country's democratic nature and its Jewish heritage "has always been a current theme in the context of the fight for equality in Israel," El-Ad said. "Every decade, every year brings new aspects and challenges to this question."

Today, there's a balance between the two tendencies, but attempts to change that would mean "the Jewish nature would take precedence over the democratic nature. We're dead set against that."

The debate, El-Ad continued, has been going on since the creation of Israel in 1948. "It's part of a lively conversation about the nature of Israel and democracy. It's a constructive tension. Sometimes it's less constructive."

"It's like breathing the air in Israel."

ACRI has been in the forefront of advocating for Israel's Arab minority, El-Ad continued. That community faces discrimination in the provision of services, housing, infrastructure, welfare services and other government benefits.

"We live in a reality where discrimination and the fight for equality is always present," he said.

Equal rights for all Israeli citizens are guaranteed in the country's founding documents, he noted.

El-Ad provided a detailed rebuttal to the NGO Monitor charges.

Like it or not, he said, "according to international law, unilateral annexation is illegal. Not one government, including the Canadian and U.S. governments, recognizes the annexation of east Jerusalem, which is why both [countries'] embassies remain in Tel Aviv. The fact that this simple judgment by Israel's strongest allies is ignored by many in the Jewish community does not make it less true."

As to the security barrier, "any state has both the duty and the right to defend its citizens," El-Ad acknowledged. "But the barrier, along many kilometres, was designed and eventually built within the West Bank. ACRI and others have petitioned the High Court in quite a few cases, fighting on behalf of Palestinian villagers who would have found themselves and/or their lands beyond the security barrier …if it were to be built as planned. Notwithstanding the fact that building the fence on Palestinian territories is indeed a violation of international law, Israel's High Court failed to recognize this.

"Still, in a number of cases, including ones litigated by ACRI, it was possible to convince the justices that the security claims presented by the State in order to justify the route of the barrier east of the Green Line, on Palestinian land, were false. In these cases, the court ordered a re-routing of the barrier, further to the west, closer [to] or on the Green Line [the 1949 armistice line].

"Still, as a result of building the barrier mostly within the occupied Palestinian Territories, 85 per cent is built within the West Bank itself, not along the Green Line. Approximately 10 per cent of West Bank land has been de facto annexed to Israel."

El-Ad defended ACRI's use of the term "apartheid."

"This term is far less controversial in Israel, where leaders including former prime minister Ehud Barak and President Shimon Peres have used it to warn of the eventual outcome of occupation… Indeed, Justice [Dorit] Beinisch expressed her dissatisfaction with regard to the fact that in ACRI's petition against the segregated Highway 443, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (article 3) and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid were mentioned. Still, in that case, our petition was accepted [and] little has changed with regard to Palestinian access to the road."

"One of the main challenges in [advocating for human rights] is that a growing number of people in Israel identify human rights with the other – the enemy. Hence, people become less fond of human rights. We hope to undo that process."

El-Ad said human rights apply to everyone: "This is about protecting all people, including people we dislike."

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NOTICE is hereby given that a Special General Meeting of Members will be held at 750 Spadina Avenue in Room 318, on the 17th day of October, 2013 at 7:30 o'clock in the evening to :

a) Accept as Members of the Corporation those Members listed in good standing tabled and delivered by the Secretary of the Corporation;
b) Receive the explanation of the new Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (CNCA)
c) Review and approve revised By-law to address the CNCA
d) Report on the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Strategic Plan 2013-2018

Proxy forms for those unable to attend the meeting may be obtained from the Business Office of the Corporation during business hours.

DATED the 10th day of September, 2013

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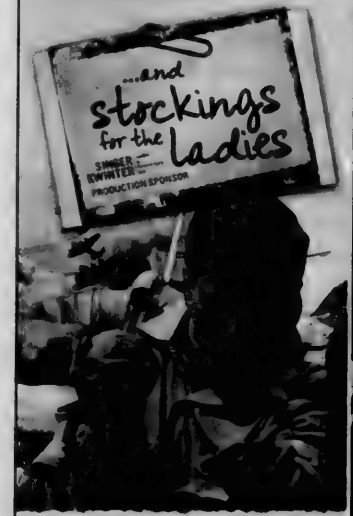

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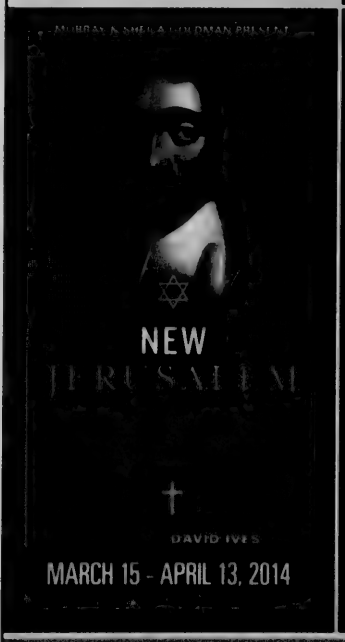

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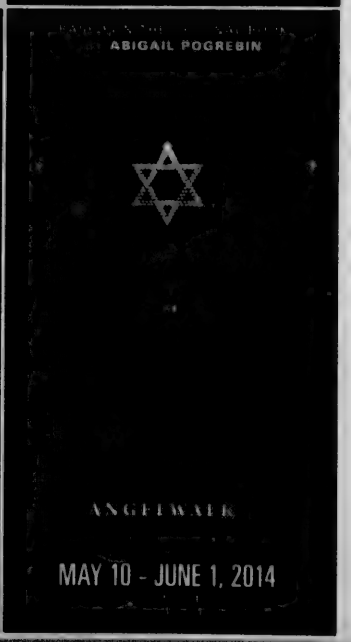

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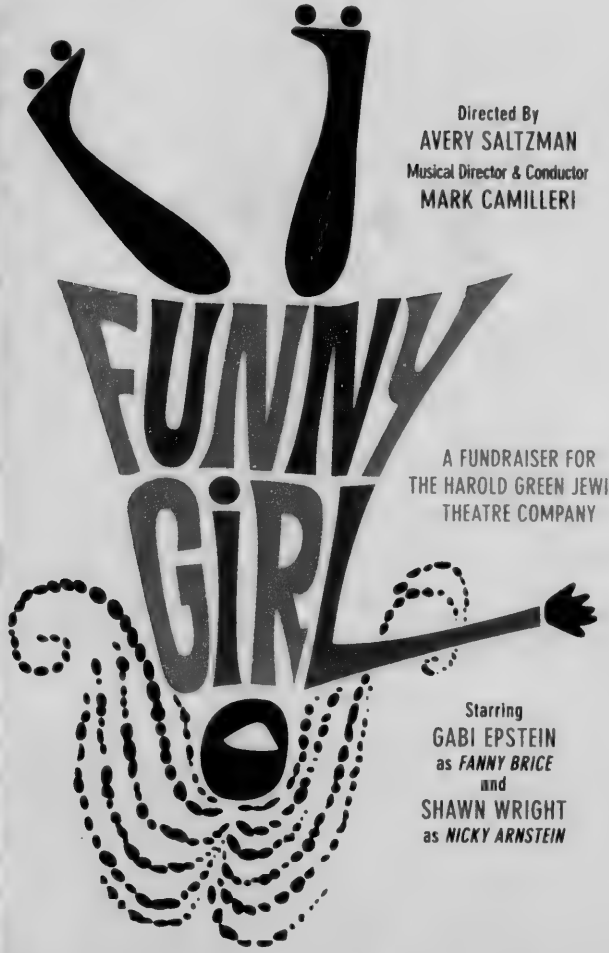

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Figure skater has eyes set on Sochi Olympics

David Grossman
Special to The CJN

Hard to believe, but even as a toddler, Dylan Moscovitch had a passion for success.

And now, just about a year away from turning 30, he's one of the bright Canadian stars on ice.

While there may be Jewish figure skaters – Max Aaron is the most notable as the current U.S. men's champ – this is not a sport that has caught the attention of young Jewish children in Canada.

You have to go back to the days of Louis Rubenstein to find a very competitive Canadian Jewish figure skater. Some people still refer to Rubenstein, who died in 1931 in Montreal, as the father of Canadian figure skating.

But the focus now is on Moscovitch.

His parents took him figure skating when he was an infant, and today he's not only the top Canadian Jewish figure skater – he's also eager to do well at the Winter Olympics just six months away in Sochi, Russia.

Moscovitch, who is of Romanian descent, doesn't spend much time off the ice. He practises at the Kitchener Waterloo Skating Club, and when he gets a rare day off on weekends, he returns to his home in Toronto.

As difficult as skating can be, it becomes quite a bit more challenging and demanding to have to work on routines and succinctly match strides with his partner, Kristen Moore-Towers, a St. Catharines, Ont., native who is eight years younger than him.

The talented duo placed fourth with a stunning performance at this year's world championships held in London, Ont.

Far better than an eighth place showing two years earlier.

"I have never enjoyed competing so much in my life as right now," said Moscovitch. "There is this urge, this passion to keep the success going."

While the easy part may be lacing up a pair of skates, figure skating requires precision, timing, practice, good coaching and commitment – between three and seven hours a day, and often six days a week.

Knowing that all good things don't last, Moscovitch is aware that his skating days will end one day and he'll want to move on "to a job that is fulfilling and challenging."

But for now, the focus is all on the world stage. "The Olympics are the priority," he said.

"I think of my age, and while 2018 is a possibility, the attention is now. There are aches and pains, but that comes with being an athlete. You just have to push the body a bit more."

It has been a season filled with many brilliant displays of athleticism and some tough struggles.

Moscovitch once competed in singles and moved on to pairs with his sister, Kyra, who gave up skating.

But magic started to happen when he teamed with Moore-Towers in the spring of 2009.

"The girls' job is to shine – they're the painting," Moscovitch said. "My job is to make my partner shine. It's really about showing her charisma. I'm the lucky one, skating with such a talented partner."

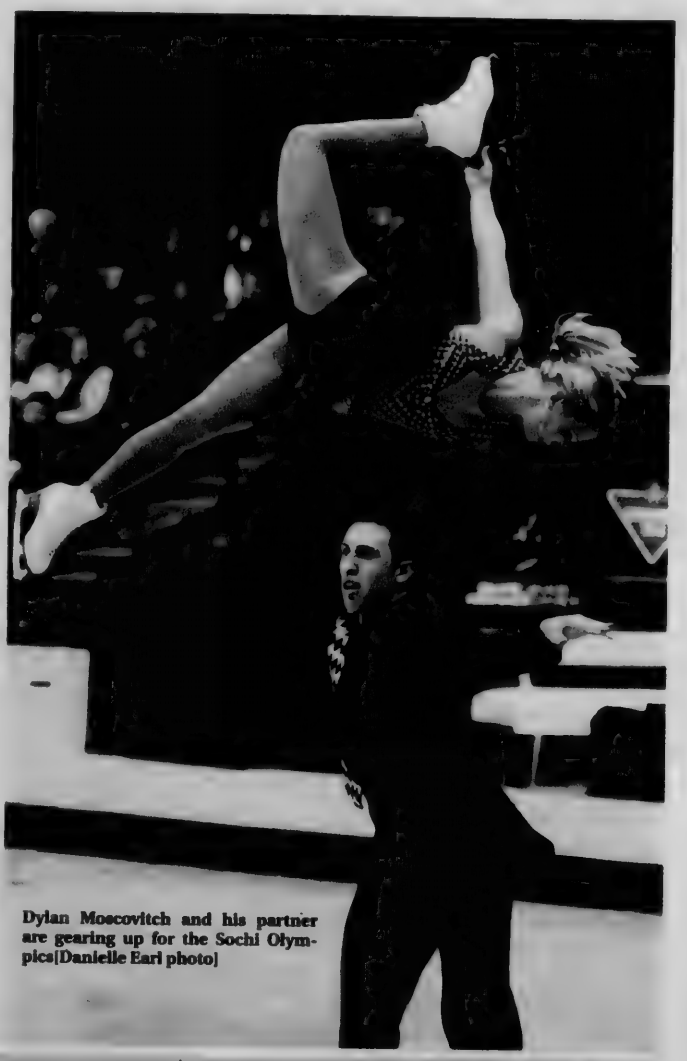
Moscovitch grew up in Parkdale, in the west part of Toronto. He attended Fern Avenue Public School and the Downtown Alternative School before taking his high school studies online, linking with sports specialty programs at Vaughan Road Academy and Northview Heights Secondary School .

"I didn't grow up with Jewish friends and [I had] little tradition," he recalled. "I attended a secular school and had my bar mitzvah with a group of others."

After one of his sisters went on Birthright, Moscovitch, the oldest of four children, decided he would learn more about his heritage and decided to do the same thing in 2011 – a few months before he and Moore-Towers won the Canadian championship.

"Life can be such a great journey, but it's also loaded with challenges," he said.

"Medals are great. Athletes want to win, and I am one of them, but making my friends and family proud of me – that's a huge award," he said.



Dylan Moscovitch and his partner are gearing up for the Sochi Olympics[Danielle Earl photo]

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A CALL TO

Dear Friends

As we approach the High Holidays, our thoughts often turn to family and to prayer with an appreciation we do not have the rest of the year. Through the outreach of young Israelis in communities around the world, we have the chance to connect with Yizkor.

Each gift to BGU is a transformative investment that supports students, facilitates scientific discovery and research, and contributes to development of the Negev. Every donation has the potential for significant impact – within the Negev, in the State of Israel, or around the world, now and in the future.

and prepares student volunteers to enter into community during times of crisis to offer physical, psychological and emotional help to those in need.

The project began several years ago and with the support and commitment of Prof. Rivka Carmi, the President of BGU, significant infrastructure has been put in place. Born in Israel with a universal application, this program not only prepares BGU students to work in Beer-Sheva and the surrounding areas but is also intended to be used in crisis situations around the world. It has been adopted by the World Health Organization and communities world-wide; many of the first responders at the July 15 Boston Marathon bombing were trained at BGU.

More than 600 students began the second semester of our Yizkor project at BGU already upon the conclusion of the bombing, returned to their studies and worked in their community helping those in need. Because of the preparatory work done during calmer times, within two hours, hundreds of student volunteers were equipped to offer immediate help and support.

Join us in supporting the most valuable project while honoring your loved ones at Yizkor this performing a double mitzvah. With you as our partner, we can show the students and staff at BGU, as well as the citizens of Beer-Sheva that the Canadian associates of BGU are here to support them.

With a thriving economy in the center of the country, the true pioneers in Israel today are those helping to develop the Negev, of which Ben-Gurion University is a critical component. Please take the time to fill in and mail the pledge form below or support this project online at

May the coming year bring health and nachat to you and your family and peace to the people of Israel.

Mark Mendelson, MSW

Gary Fine

CANADIAN ASSOCIATES OF Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
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ity. All of the schools below offer outstanding academic programs. They also create vibrant connections ues, allowing them to be proud Jews while thriving in the 21st century. These schools offer a variety of hool that's right for your children — and their future.

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Therapist explores connections to autism

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Andrea Axt is a study in contradictions.

The Belgian-born 76-year-old Holocaust survivor boasts a PhD in chemistry from the University of Warsaw, is cited in European scientific journals, teaches every year in Warsaw and/or Israel, has studied child psychology extensively and has a deep and abiding love for children.

She has also spent a lot of time scientifically researching the role she feels the human pineal gland may play in autism, Down syndrome, and other disorders.

In addition, she has participated in many conferences, among them an autism conference at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City.

But the scientific side of Axt stands in contrast with the Andrea Axt who, for the last 35 years, has used "polarity" and craniosacral therapies, both of which are alternative medicine, homeopathic techniques that incorporate massage and the mind to unleash "energy" in the human body and make people feel better physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Axt has used these techniques to treat a number of conditions, including childhood autism and depression.

Critics dismiss such "therapies" as pseudo-science and bunk. But not necessarily everybody. Even the Autism Canada Foundation lists craniosacral massage and homeopathy as therapies used treat autism, regardless of their scientific bona fides.

Serious influencers of Axt's work have included analytical psychology founder Carl Jung and child psychologist Bruno Bettelheim. And Axt, for her part, sees no contradiction between her scientific background and her sincere faith in "alternative" therapies.

"There is nothing wrong with seeking alternatives," Axt said. "I have always had a leaning towards spiritual things, and I have been doing these things – researching, teaching, therapy – successfully for many years."

Axt's website, www.securenet.net/members/aaxt, for example, clearly shows how she considers homeopathic medicine just as legitimate as any other.

In the case of the cause of autism, though, Axt has been more scientific in her approach, looking at the condition from a neuro-chemical perspective

It is Axt's theory, as it is described on her website, that autism is a "reversible disorder involving aspects of the body, mind and spirit.

"It is influenced by genetic susceptibility, but is not a genetically determined, unchangeable brain disorder. By systematically addressing all the factors that create disordered functioning in an individual's body-mind-spirit, autism can be reversed."

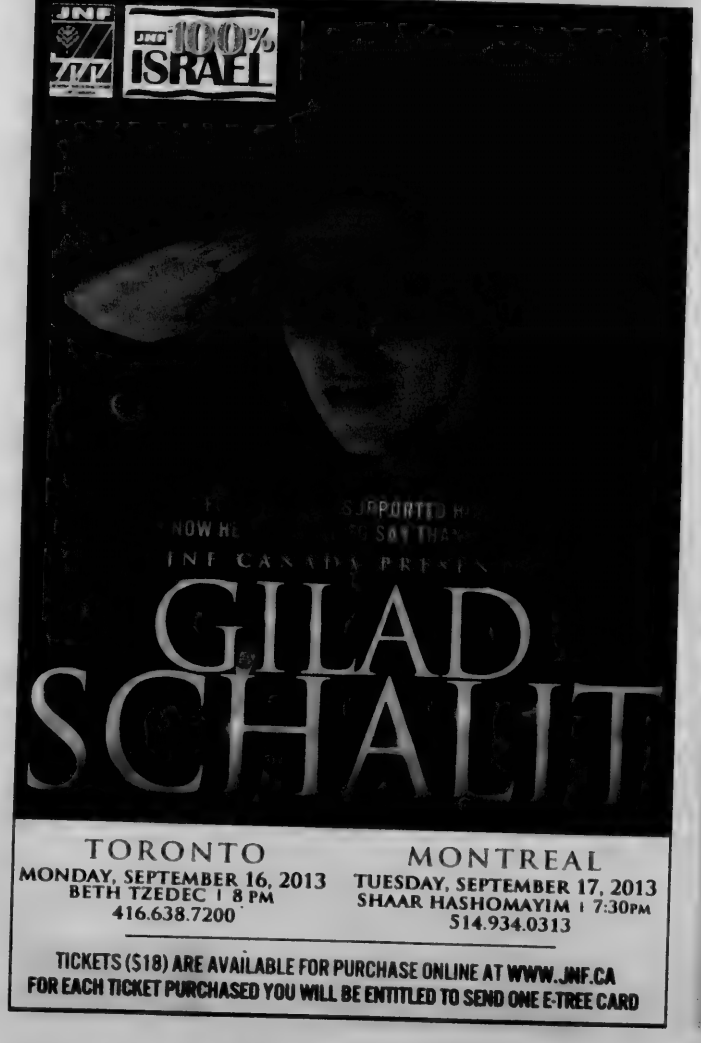
Axt puts a special emphasis on the brain's pineal gland, the first gland that forms in a developing embryo, and "which affects all the systems of our body."

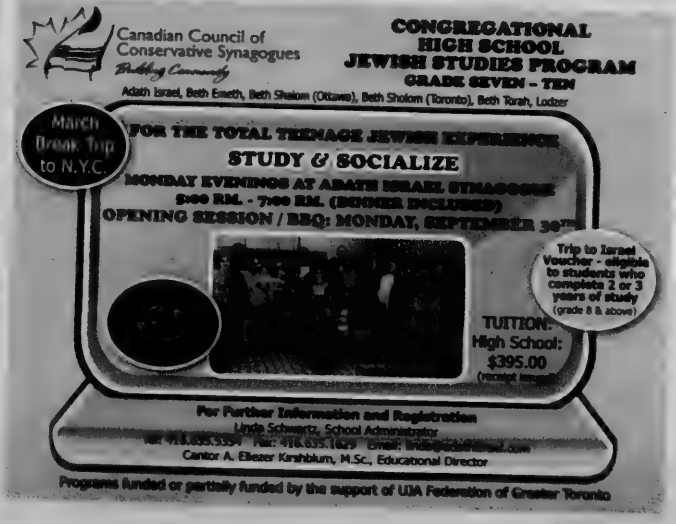
Axt contends that her research into autism has revealed lower levels of melatonin, the main neuro-hormone produced in the pineal gland.

"Problems in autism stem from malfunction of the pineal gland and a disturbed melatonin pathway," Axt wrote in a 2011 PowerPoint presentation she gave in Israel.

Whether the science world will end up supporting her theory is another matter, since that would require a large amount of funding and proof on a large scale.

Meanwhile, Axt continues her work, training, teaching and researching.

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Hillel at Western: chicken soup to your door

Jessica Pollock

Guest Voice

Dear parents and families of Western students: as the Hillel president at the University of Western Ontario for the 2013/14 school year, I want to take this opportunity to tell you my Hillel story, which began in the late summer of 2010.

I was moving to London, Ont., from Toronto to enter my first year at Western. I had a strong Jewish upbringing from my 12 years of Jewish schooling, six years at a predominantly Jewish camp and many years of involvement in my synagogue, where my great-grandfather, grandfather and uncles were founding members. At the time, I thought my Jewish identity – which was strongly based on my love of Judaism and the State of Israel – was complete and unlikely to develop even further.

Oh, was I wrong.

That first year, I was encouraged by some friends to join Hillel and subsequently became involved on the executive council as co-president of first-year students. Since then, I've held many different executive and council positions at Hillel.

When I first told my parents that I was becoming involved with Hillel, they were thrilled that I was going to continue my involvement with the Jewish community in London. As you may know, Western is home to a pluralistic community of approximately 3,000 Jewish students – many of whom are passionate about Judaism and Israel.

At Western Hillel, we are committed to providing meaningful Jewish experiences that serve the diverse needs and interests of the entire Jewish student population. Some of our latest initiatives fall under our new objective of bringing Hillel right to students themselves, and often, right to their front door!

Picture this scene: it's the peak of exam season, and your son or daughter is exhausted due to countless nights studying late at the library. He or she feels under the weather and dreams of Bubbie's chicken soup – the best kind of medicine – magically appearing at his or her front door. Well, before you can even say "matzah ball," Hillel will deliver a container of homemade kosher chicken soup right to your child's door, at no charge! Just sign up at www.westernhillel.com/csoo.

A second scene: you receive a call from your son or daughter complaining that his or her stress levels are through the roof. Worry no more. Hillel can help alleviate your child's stress by providing them with an exam survival kit. Upon request, we'll deliver a basket filled with exam essentials (pens, cereal, tea etc.) to your child's residence.

Another program we carry out is Shabbat Across London (SAL). The goal is to conduct, on a single night, scores of Shabbat dinners among Jewish students in London. Groups or individuals who sign up to host dinners are given a package filled with Shabbat candles, two loaves of challah, a bottle of grape juice and a specially designed prayer book. Through SAL, Hillel provides students of all denominations and backgrounds with the tools and training to bring Shabbat into their own homes.

Last year, as Hillel's vice-president of Jewish life, I was given the opportunity with others to plan and carry out one of the most successful Holocaust Education Week programs ever held at my university. Holocaust education and remembrance happens to be a cause very close to my heart, largely because three of my four grandparents are survivors with remarkable stories of fortitude and heroism. Without Hillel's backing and encouragement, I would never have had the opportunity to pay tribute to my grandparents while also educating Western's student population about the Holocaust and its lasting impact.

My involvement with Hillel during my first year at Western connected me with older Jewish students who had already grown accustomed to university life. Forming close friendships with these older Hillel members certainly eased my transition from Toronto to London.

For that reason, apart from our social, cultural, religious, charitable and Israel-related programming, my executive council and I will be focusing on increasing our outreach and engagement strategies. Based on my own experience, it's easy to recognize the value of creating meaningful and personal relationships with both new and returning Jewish students.

For that reason, whatever your child's passions or interests may be, the door of our Hillel House – conveniently located outside the university's gates – is open at all times, filled with an experienced support network of professionals at your disposal.

Whether your son or daughter is looking for the means to safeguard the name of our indispensable State of Israel or the opportunity to preserve and enhance Jewish values and customs, Western Hillel is available to ensure that every Jewish student's voice is heard on campus.

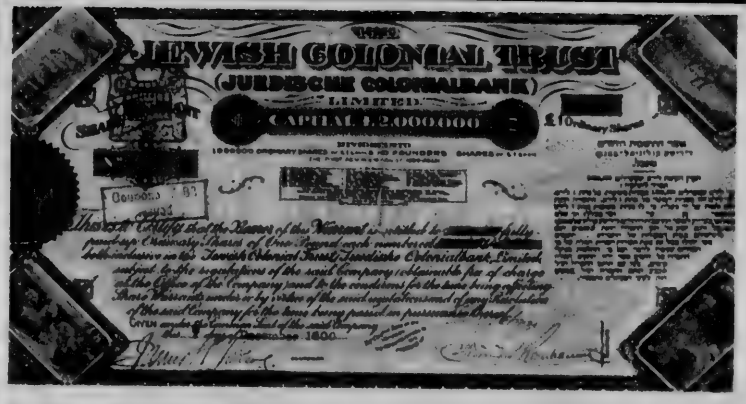
I look forward to the opportunity of welcoming your son or daughter to a new year at Western Hillel, one that's sure to be fulfilling, productive and rewarding.

Shanah Tovah!

HASHAVA
the Holocaust Restitution Company of Israel

Are you an Heir?

60,000 assets of Holocaust victims were located in Israel and are waiting to be claimed



Thousands of Jews across Europe invested in pre-state Israel before the Holocaust. These proud Jews believed in the dream of a Jewish state so they opened bank accounts and bought stocks, bonds and real estate. Many tragically perished at the hands of the Nazis. Their investment did not.

60,000 of these assets have been located by HASHAVA the Holocaust Restitution Company of Israel. HASHAVA is now seeking rightful heirs, many of whom live in north America.

Many of these assets are Jewish Colonial Trust (JCT) shares. JCT was founded in 1889 by Hertzl and the Zionist movement in order to create a financial instrument for the Zionist enterprise. Indeed, JCT had a critical role in the establishment of the State of Israel.

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Our Jewish day school closed – just before the new year

Karen Skinazi
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

Three years ago, I was living in Edmonton, and my oldest boy was in kindergarten at a Jewish day school. The school was fine – neither spectacular nor terrible.

I sent him there because, frankly, it was the only Jewish game in town. But in my mind, I was going to send my kids to a great Jewish day school one day, and, anticipating a move to the American Northeast, where Jews are far more numerous than in Canada's oil patch, I looked for an institution that matched all of my needs – a school that prioritized "mensch-iness," offered excellent academics and would provide peers from across the Jewish spectrum. It turns out there was just such a place, in a prime location in Manhattan. I called it up.

"How old are your children?" I was asked. I told the head of school that my oldest son was 5-1/2, my middle son was 3-1/2, and my youngest was irrelevant for the moment.

"I assume the oldest has taken his ERBs?"

"His huhs?" At that time I hadn't heard of the Educational Records Bureau assessment test for independent school admission.

"It's too late," she said, "if he's already 5-1/2. And we're full."

A flat rejection, before I'd even told her we were going to be a family of five living, at the time, on a pitiful academic salary and needing something in the ballpark of a 100 per cent tuition subsidy!

When we realized New York wasn't the panacea for our Jewish needs, we opted, ironically, for the WASPiest part of New Jersey: Princeton (as luck would have it, my husband and I both eventually got jobs at the university there). We found a lovely heimish day school that was kind of far, but it wasn't full and didn't require academic testing.

Instead, the school happily took us in – mid-year at that – gave us tuition assistance, sent a bus right to our door and made us a part of its little family.

It was Solomon Schechter Day School of Raritan Valley.

Our school called itself Conservative, but we were pleased to see it had a range of kids, from the tzitzit crowd to heretical types (like us). It's where my oldest learned to read and write Hebrew fluently in the first month of Grade 1 (before English!); where the kids in his class so loved the "Ariot" Hebrew curriculum that one hosted an "Ariot" birthday party (take that, Chuck E. Cheese!), and where everyone knew everyone's name, from kindergarten through Grade 8.

All was good. Only all was not good.

The school wasn't competitive – it couldn't demand ERBs or declare itself full – because, like many U.S. suburban Jewish day schools, it was low on students and high on debt. Behind closed doors, the same people who approved our tuition subsidy were realizing that it was impossible to run a school on the revenue they had. At its peak, the school, which opened its doors in 1981, had more than 300 students, and perhaps most of them had paid in full. This wasn't the case in 2013.

An email announcing an emergency meeting went out to parents on Aug. 6, three weeks and two days before the first day of the 2013-14 school year. Preoccupied with my own preparations for the year, I didn't pay much attention. But other parents, apparently recognizing this wasn't your typical "Here's the updated calendar" or "School supply lists can be found here" email, thought to ask what the hell was going on.

The next morning, a second email arrived. I read it three times, thinking I must be misreading it.

"Dear parents," it read, "I would like to apologize for the cryptic nature of the email that I sent about tomorrow's parents' meeting. I should have realized how unsettling it would be to receive such a message without any details… Unfortunately, I have to confirm what is, for all of us, the worst possible news for our school. Based on our current financial situation, the board has voted to begin the process of closing down the school, effective immediately."

What followed over the next week was a seemingly endless series of communications and miscommunications. First, the school was closed "effective immediately." Emails began pouring in about other Conservative options. Another Solomon Schechter school, 20 minutes further away from us (our school was already 35 minutes from our house – without traffic), was inviting our students to come. It would honour all financial aid packages and offer free busing. Then, a second Schechter school, more than an hour from our house, made a nearly identical offer. There was something vulture-like about how quickly the schools were moving in on our displaced students. Here in suburbia, we weren't competing to get into Jewish schools, the schools were competing for us.

I allowed myself a day of mourning, then I began to make some calls.

I found a school across state lines. "Hi there," I said. "I'm in the market for a new school. Do you do gifted and talented?"

"Of course," the head of school replied. "This is a Jewish school. I'm told all our kids are gifted and talented."

This sounded promising. "Can I come see the place?" I asked.

We arranged a time. An hour later, an email landed in my inbox. Another emergency meeting at Schechter. This would be the third of its kind. But for what? Weren't we closed? To wrap up loose ends? To berate the board for mismanagement? To sit shivah? Why go?

I went. There was a big crowd of parents, rabbis, community leaders, ex-board members and former parents. New plan: if we could pull together, we wouldn't close. Come Aug. 29 (or maybe Sept. 9), if we were all still around, we would open our doors. If we'd all work together, we'd find a way to be financially solvent, and we'd get back the students who had been eyeing other schools. Almost everyone was supportive. People pledged to raise money. People pledged money on the spot. Teachers agreed to take wage cuts. By the end of the night, close to midnight, I had hope: the school might actually be saved. The doors of the school might open after all.

We felt proud that we had banded together and saved a day school, an establishment that not only educates Jewish children in secular America, but also acts as the glue for the community.

Continued on page 27

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Funding they got, but loyalty they lost

Continued from page 26

The next day, I went to see the other school, just in case.

It was beautiful: purple walls in the girls' Sephardi-inspired beit midrash; an Israel room featuring computers representing Haifa's Silicon Valley, as well as more traditional Jerusalemite fare; a Holocaust library with the kids' own family photos, and a big indoor jungle gym for when wee ones want to blow off steam in the winter. Orthodox feminist Blu Greenberg is regularly consulted about meeting the demands of its religiously diverse student body. I told the principal I was impressed, and that I'd let him know if we'd be coming once we saw what happened with Schechter.

But what *was* happening with Schechter? No one knew.

We counted the kids who were saying they'd return. There were about seven in each grade. Six other kids for my kid to play with. Three other boys for each boy to do boy stuff with. The parents had scattered, with many registering at that other Schechter school, which stressed that it would not only honour financial aid and offer free busing, it was also stable.

Another emergency meeting was scheduled for Aug. 15, exactly two weeks before school was supposed to start. This one was announced with an email saying the school would be opening.

Come on in!

But by then, the school, which boasted more than 120 students in 2012–13, had only about 40 students saying they'd be coming back. The meeting ran long and late, and again, the optimism was heady. The next morning, emails and phone calls abounded: the doors will open! We did it! We raised lots of money and ruach (spirit)! It's a go!

And yet when pushed against a now-open door, my husband said what too many other parents were also saying: we couldn't do it, because the school was no longer the school of 2012-2013.

We couldn't send our kids there, not without critical mass for our kids' classes. Not without the teachers we'd be coming back for. Not without the bus that would save us three hours of driving each day.

By the time Shabbat rolled in – a mere 13 days before the first day of school – another message came. Dear parents, our doors won't open after all.

Funding they got, loyalty they lost. Open and shut, open and shut, open and – because people could never be sure the doors wouldn't shut yet again – forever shut.

Solomon Schechter of Raritan Valley is no more.

I'm a little jealous of those schools in Manhattan that have more demand than they can meet. That's not the case in most of New Jersey, nor in Pennsylvania. And it's probably even less so as you get further away.

Here, Jewish friends look at me with disdain as they ask why I'm sending my kids to Jewish day school. I want to ask them: "Don't you want your children to know where they come from? To be able to pray with a minyan? To know how to sing *Od Yishama* at a wedding, or read from the Torah at their bar and bat mitzvahs in non-transliterated Hebrew? To dream through the stories of I. L. Peretz and S. Y. Agnon? To explain the differences between the destruction of the two temples?"

But I don't say this, because this isn't New York. There, the doors on the Jewish schools – heavy, solid, stable – open narrowly and only admit those who meet their criteria. Here, the doors fling open wildly, admitting everyone, but they're flimsy, without enough will, belief or funding to give them strength. With a gust of wind, they slam shut. For good.

Toronto-born Karen Skinazi is a lecturer at Princeton University and the mother of three boys. Printed by permission of The Forward, where a longer version of this article appeared on Aug. 23.

Seven-year-old Lucas Ludvig, left, and his friend Elan Ronen were forced to find new schools after the Solomon Schechter School of the Raritan Valley abruptly announced it would not reopen this fall. [Karen Skinazi photo]

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To play or pray: Yom Kippur and sports

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Yom Kippur is a time for soul-searching for all Jews, and that has certainly been true for a number of Jewish athletes from the worlds of baseball, football, tennis and even chess who have grappled with the question: to pray or to play?

Baseball

Let's start with the most famous dilemma: the Los Angeles Dodgers' Sandy Koufax. Would he pitch against the Minnesota Twins when Game 1 of the 1965 World Series fell on Yom Kippur? To get a real taste of what Koufax's decision to sit out the game meant to North America Jews, don't miss a lovely clip from the documentary *Jews & Baseball: An American Love Story.* **[http://bit.ly/ksports1]**

Decades earlier, the Detroit Tigers' Hank Greenberg made headlines in deciding not to play on Yom Kippur while his team was in an American League pennant race. His decision was immortalized by poet Edgar Guest in the *Detroit Free Press*: "We shall miss him on the infield and shall miss him at the bat/ But he's true to his religion – and I honour him for that!" **[http://bit.ly/ksports2]**

Football

For University of Wisconsin Badgers left tackle Gabe Carimi, the question was whether to fast just before an evening game against Iowa in the Big Ten Conference opener. Carimi fasted. He then played. And he won. "Religion is a part of me, and I don't want to just say I'm Jewish. I actually do make sacrifices that I know are hard choices." **[http://bit.ly/ksports3]**

Carimi credits another Wisconsin player, Matt Bernstein, who also decided to fast right before taking on Penn State. Bernstein then chose a very unorthodox method to get rehydrated for the game. According to ESPN, "The Wisconsin junior feasted on a pregame IV bag, and during the game, moved on to turkey slices, fruit and the Penn State defence." **[http://bit.ly/ksports4]**

Tennis

Last month, the Israel Tennis Association refused to play a Davis Cup match against Belgium on Yom Kippur. The International Tennis Federation ordered the Israelis to pay more than $13,000 to cover the cost of adding a day to the tournament. The Israel Tennis Association proclaimed, "As an institution that represents the State of Israel and its values, we... stand proud, before all those who refuse to recognize the importance of the Jewish tradition, on behalf of Israel and Jews world over." **[http://bit.ly/ksports5]**

Chess

Things went a bit smoother for Israeli chess grandmaster Boris Gelfand. Last year, he was scheduled to compete at the London Grand Prix Chess Tournament on Kol Nidrei evening, so the game was moved up several hours. The tournament concluded in a three-way tie between Gelfand and his opponents from Azerbaijan and Bulgaria. **[http://bit.ly/ksports6]**

Most of us will probably never face the dilemma of deciding whether to pitch at the World Series on Yom Kippur. Our temptations are more prosaic like the one in this apocryphal tale:

Sidney telephones Rabbi Levy. "Rabbi, I know tonight's Kol Nidre, but tonight the Yanks are in the playoffs. I'm a lifelong Yankee fan. I've got to watch the Yankee game on TV."

Rabbi Levy replies, "Sidney, that's what TiVo is for."

Sidney is surprised. "You mean I can record Kol Nidre?" **[http://bit.ly/ksports8]**

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This year, try the middle path

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

I had an interesting conversation with someone recently about Rosh Hashanah. They explained to me that because of a long history of family troubles and unfortunate events, they find it too painful to attend a synagogue and, therefore, this year, they decided not to celebrate Rosh Hashanah.

I listened carefully and questioned their conclusion that it was "synagogue or nothing." Somehow they had concluded that Rosh Hashanah could only happen in a formal place of ritual. It was an either/or situation, a black-or-white scenario – an idea that brought our thoughts right back to the Garden of Eden and the first Rosh Hashanah.

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is the day we believe God created humanity. On that same day, Adam and Eve were created and sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Since that first generation, we have wondered why eating from that tree was so bad as to warrant the resulting consequences: ultimate death and banishment from Eden.

The *Zohar* offers an interesting insight. It suggests that by eating from that tree, Adam and Eve introduced the concept of either/or into a world of harmony. If we think about it, this is the only tree whose name signifies this either/or approach. It is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. No other creation bears that distinction within its name. The other tree that's named is the Tree of Life, not the Tree of Life and Death. Only the Tree of Knowledge intimates a stark distinction between things, rather than a flow, a harmony.

By eating from this tree, Adam and Eve bring into the world the kind of philosophy that yields a statement such as, "It's my way or the highway." This approach is contrary to nature, which offers blends and waves, and waxing and waning. We have evening before night and we have dawn before daytime. Nature teaches us to blend our lives with everything that's around us. We must not live in the extremes, nor should we approach our Judaism with an "either/or" mentality.

According to this blended view, there will be times when the atheist admits there are miracles in life that we can't explain and times when the religious person admits there are questions of the Divine we can't understand.

Judaism doesn't tell us to have a definitive answer to things, but rather to form the questions that blur the answers – to create the grey zone.

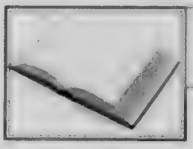
My friend could have created a positive Rosh Hashanah experience in an informal spiritual setting. It didn't have to be "synagogue or nothing." At the same time, it's possible to sit in a synagogue and dream of the year to come without necessarily following the prayer and not be considered negligent.

The sages brought us this idea long ago when they stated, "Torah is like two paths, one of fire and one of snow. If you follow one path, you will die of heat. If you follow the other, you will die of cold. What should you do? Take the middle path."

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

A gash in the body of Israel

Rabbi Debra Landsberg



Rabbinic Reflections

My memories tend to be impressionistic, not detailed – for instance, I recall the warm glow of my childhood and the storm of my teen years. Consistent in my memory, however, are the High Holidays, which shone with joy.

But this year, I am overcome by one memory that stands forward, vivid and frightening: I was very young, and it was Yom Kippur. I think that the news must have spread first among the congregants. When the rabbi heard, he looked ashen-faced. I say without hyperbole that to see the rabbi so afraid was the most terrible thing I had ever beheld. I must have asked what was wrong. He explained: "The countries surrounding Israel have attacked. Israel is in mortal peril. No one knows what's going to happen."

For a little girl raised in a conventional liberal Zionist home, where Israel was the scaffolding for our postwar security, this was the earth giving way.

I will never forget the following days, with elderly Jews visiting our house asking, "Rabbi, what will happen?" My father was a young American rabbi. He had experience in family disputes, congregational controversies and fighting for justice. But he had no experience looking old Jews in the eye – Jews who had lost innumerable relatives in the Shoah – and being asked: "Will the Third Temple fall?"

That phrase stayed with me, though only later did I discover its origin was not in my father's study.

In a spasm of fear days after the war's onset, then-Israeli defence minister Moshe Dayan said to prime minister Golda Meir that the Third Temple may fall. (Meir, according to the records, prevented him from sharing his assessment with the press.)

Fast-forward 40 years. A lot has changed. As a community, we're deeply divided when discussing Israel's vital interests. Any talk of the Third Temple does not refer to the human-built State of Israel (as it did for Dayan), but to a rebuilt God-sanctioned sanctuary on the Temple Mount.

But now is the 40th anniversary of that day when men took off tallit to pick up arms, when machzor and heart were in complete alignment – with mothers and daughters, sons and fathers pleading that their loved ones be inscribed in the Book of Life, knowing that the Malach Hamavet was close at hand, when the future itself seemed full of dread.

I am all too aware that the events of yesteryear have taken on a sepia hue for many who pass through the synagogue gates. But we must oppose this all-too-human desire to smooth over the trauma in our collective stories. The Yom Kippur War was a gash in the body of Israel. Nothing less.

So this year, recollect for yourself what took place. Whisper the terrible details to your children, not to cause alarm but to honour the past. Clasp the machzor and open your heart to those whose last words of prayer are written therein. Recite *Yizkor* for the thousands we know only as names on the casualty list from 40 years ago this day. As we pray for our future and that of the Jewish People, we should do so humbly.

Rabbi Debra Landsberg is spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El in Toronto.

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The voice of the chazzan

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

The untimely passing this past summer of Cantor Moshe Schulhof, whose illustrious career began in Montreal and who had frequently delighted Canadian audiences during concert appearances, calls to mind the role of the chazzan in traditional Jewish worship, especially during this High Holiday season.

In recent years, the Toronto community lost cantors David Bagley and Louis Danto, while Montreal witnessed the end of a cantorial era with the passing of cantors Solomon and Hyman Gisser. The loss of these great chazzanim saddens me, not only because of my having known them and having been privileged to experience the stunning, inspiring quality of their renditions of our liturgy, but also because it reflects a transition in our patterns of synagogue worship that I fear may not be for the better.

It's not a well-guarded secret that the cantorate as a profession is challenged by modern times, as typified in Sholom Secunda's comedic spoof, *Hazzanim oif Probe* (*Cantors Auditioning*), in which a synagogue cantorial search chairman rejects classical cantors by saying: "*Dos is nisht vos der public vilt!*" ("This is not what the people want.") The sense that "this is not what the people want" has led to a widespread departure from classical cantorial tradition in our communities, towards a preference, in Orthodox congregations, for a simple ba'al tfillah, a prayer leader, and in non-Orthodox communities, to popular melodies that can be easily sung together by congregants, but have no resemblance to the chazzanut that inspired earlier generations.

There is something to be said, of course, for a service led by a competent and pleasant-voiced prayer leader who is not a professional chazzan, just as the melodies popularized by gifted composers such as the late Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and Debbie Friedman are beautiful and captivating. Participatory services in which their tunes and other engaging melodies are sung together by all in attendance have understandably, and rightly, been embraced by communities throughout the Jewish world.

But I would hope that a place remains in our synagogues for the haunting chants of the classical chazzan. Most would agree that a "jazzed-up" *Kol Nidrei* recitation departing from the traditional melody would not satisfy the throngs that will fill our shuls this week. We hunger for the very same melody, chanted three times, in the classical, profoundly moving voice of the traditional chazzan. Many of the other prayers of the machzor, and of our Shabbat and Yom Tov siddur, call out for the voice of the cantor, conveying not only the power of the words, but the emotion of the Jewish heart in a way unlike even the most appealing popular melody or tune.

In commenting upon how one determines whether or not a movie succeeds in reaching its audience, director Steven Spielberg once suggested the question to be asked is "Did it make you cry?" If our traditional Jewish worship services are going to retain their hold on our communities, they must, in some way, continue to make us cry.

In other words, they must connect with our inner emotions, touch us, and elevate our spirits. In addition to uplifting sermons, and spirited congregational singing, in order to penetrate the Jewish heart, as they have done through the generations, our services require the voice of the chazzan.

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U.S. president seeks approval for limited strike

Continued from page 1

He attributed that to what he called sober policies and unspecified actions by the security hierarchy, some of which are not known to the public.

Meanwhile in Washington, officials with the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) reportedly said the pro-Israel group will lobby U.S. lawmakers to authorize a retaliatory strike on Syria for its alleged use of chemical weapons.

The unnamed officials told several media outlets over the weekend that the group would send activists to Capitol Hill this week to garner support for a resolution to launch a limited military strike in retaliation for the Aug. 21 attack by the Syrian government.

Barack Obama

Investigations have provided mounting evidence that Assad used chemical weapons in an attack in a Damascus suburb that killed some 1,400 people, including approximately 400 children.

Obama is working to gain support from Congress to launch the limited strike in response to the attack. Meanwhile, Assad said in an interview that he did not use chemical weapons against his citizens, *CBS News* reported Sunday.

"There has been no evidence that I used chemical weapons against my own people," Assad said in the interview conducted in Damascus, according to the network's news program *Face the Nation*.

The *CBS News* report came hours after the German newspaper *Bild am Sonntag* reported the Syrian army may have launched the attack without Assad's approval.

CNN on Saturday night began airing videos shown by the Obama administration to key members of the Senate in which victims are seen dying in the attack's aftermath.

The announcement by AIPAC – among many Jewish groups backing Obama's call to strike Syria militarily – came as Israel continues to keep a low public profile regarding Syria.

Israel, however, continues to distribute gas masks to its citizens over concerns of retaliatory chemical weapons attacks by Syria on Israel.

Also Sunday, *Reuters* quoted an unnamed Israeli official as saying the United States would notify Israel several hours before it launched an attack on Syria.

The news agency also reported that its TV division filmed what it believed to be an Iron Dome anti-missile battery being positioned on the periphery of Jerusalem.

Jewish groups backing Obama's call to strike Syria militarily are citing moral outrage and U.S. national security as primary considerations, but concern for Israel – however muted – also looms large in their thinking.

A lingering sensitivity over misrepresentations of the role of the pro-Israel community in the lead-up to the Iraq War in 2003 kept Jewish groups from weighing in on Syria until it was clear Obama was determined to strike. Now that same sensitivity is leading them to downplay any mention of Israel.

Officials of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, finishing up a Sept. 3 conference call with top security advisers to Obama, waited until the White House staffers were off the call before urging constituent organizations not to make their statements "Israel-centric."

Notably, Israel was not mentioned in any of the three statements that emerged immediately following the conference call, which was convened to solidify support for Obama's call for a strike. The statements – from AIPAC and the Anti-Defamation League as well as the Presidents Conference – only alluded to Israel.

"America's allies and adversaries are closely watching the outcome of this momentous vote," the AIPAC statement said. "This critical decision comes at a time when Iran is racing toward obtaining nuclear capability. Failure to approve this resolution would weaken our country's credibility to prevent the use and proliferation of unconventional weapons and thereby greatly endanger our country's security and interests and those of our regional allies."

The statements focused on the need to contain a nation that has crossed a red line by using chemical weapons against its citizens.

"Those who perpetuate such acts of wanton murder must know that they cannot do so with impunity," the Presidents Conference statement said. "Those who possess or seek weapons of mass destruction, particularly Iran and Hezbollah, must see that there is accountability."

Israel nonetheless loomed large in an off-the-record conference call between Jewish officials and two of Obama's top national security advisers. One Jewish official asked whether the United States would assist militarily should Syria attack Israel. (The answer: yes, but it's the U.S. assessment that Assad is not that reckless.)

One of the White House officials repeatedly emphasized that acting to keep Syria from using chemical weapons was a critical step to keeping Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. The vocal support of American Jews comes as Obama ramps up efforts to win congressional support for a military strike.

With files from JTA

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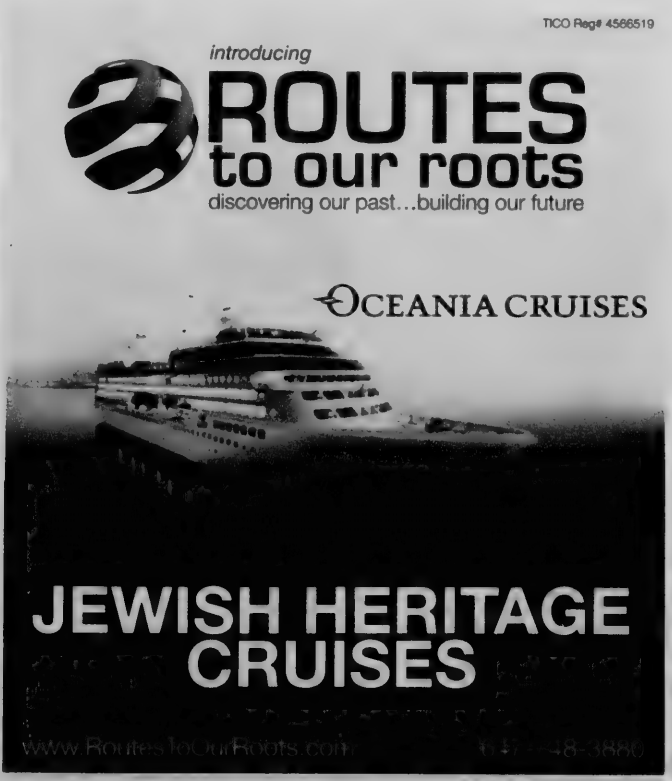

Israel decries leaks in peace talks

Continued from page 1

"The delegation hopes that the ongoing direct permanent status negotiations will lead to a resolution that achieves a just and lasting peace through resolving all permanent status issues as a major step towards comprehensive Middle East Peace which will contribute to regional security and stability," the statement said.

The ministerial committee included representatives from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, along with the Arab League's secretary general.

In related developments, a negotiator for Israel in the relaunched peace talks protested what he said are Palestinian officials' leaks to the media about the content of the talks.

Isaac Molho, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's envoy to the peace talks, in a call over the weekend to his U.S. counterpart, Martin Indyk, complained about numerous leaks by named and unnamed Palestinian officials.

Molho said the leaks "violated all the agreements" agreed to by the two sides with Kerry, *Ha'aretz* reported, citing an unnamed Israeli official.

At the beginning of the talks in Washington in July, both sides agreed to maintain silence on the time, place and content of the meetings, reportedly at Kerry's request.

Last week on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, in an interview with the Voice of Palestine radio, Yasser Abed Rabbo, secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization's executive committee, said there has been "no progress" in the talks and that it will require pressure from the United States to advance toward peace.

During interviews given over Israel's long holiday weekend for Rosh Hashanah, several other named and unnamed Palestinian officials similarly declared that the peace talks were stagnating.

Meanwhile, in Rome on Sunday, tens of thousands of people in St. Peter's Square in Vatican City converged for a peace vigil for Syria called by Pope Francis, in which he called for peace and reconciliation throughout the Middle East.

"This evening, I ask the Lord that we Christians, and our brothers and sisters of other religions, and every man and woman of goodwill, cry out forcefully: violence and war are never the way to peace!" Pope Francis, who had spent the day fasting, told the crowd Saturday night.

"May the noise of weapons cease! War always marks the failure of peace, it is always a defeat for humanity," he added. "Forgiveness, dialogue, reconciliation – these are the words of peace, in beloved Syria, in the Middle East, in all the world! Let us pray for reconciliation and peace, let us work for reconciliation and peace."

The Vatican estimated that more than 100,000 people took part in the culmination of a "day of fasting and prayer for peace" convoked by Francis on Sept. 1.

The Vatican stressed the gathering was religious, not political, but observers said it resembled a political rally at times, with participants waving Syrian flags and wearing T-shirts and holding placards with slogans such as "Hands off Syria," "Don't attack Syria" and "Obama you have no dream, you have a nightmare."

The Vatican reported that Pope Francis also tweeted the message "Pray for peace" to his nine million Twitter followers.

PRESIDENT FURLOUGHED: Former Israeli president Moshe Katsav, who is serving a seven-year sentence for rape and sexual assault, is seen arriving at his home in Kiryat Malachi Sept. 9 after receiving a 24-hour leave from prison. (*Flash90 photo*)

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Netanyahu derides Iranian holiday greetings

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was "not impressed" by New Year's greetings supposedly tweeted by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Benjamin Netanyahu

"I am not impressed by greetings coming from a regime that only last week threatened to destroy Israel," Netanyahu said Saturday night, according to Israeli media reports.

The tweet posted Sept. 4, the eve of Rosh Hashanah, said, "As the sun is about to set here in Tehran I wish all Jews, especially Iranian Jews, a blessed Rosh Hashanah."

Rouhani's office has not denied the account, @HassanRouhani, belongs to the recently elected president, and it is believed the account would not persist without his approval.

Rouhani was elected this year as a relative moderate ostensibly willing to make the nuclear program in Iran more transparent. But he has resisted calls by western states and Israel to reduce his country's uranium enrichment.

"The Iranian regime will be examined only by its actions and not by salutations," Netanyahu also said Saturday night, following the two days of Rosh Hashanah and Shabbat.

Netanyahu said the purpose of the message "is to divert attention from the fact that, even after the elections, it [Iran] continues the enrichment of uranium and the construction of a plutonium reactor meant to allow it to develop nuclear weapons that will threaten Israel and the rest of the world."

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif also tweeted, "Happy Rosh Hashanah," the second tweet on his newly opened account.

In a Twitter exchange, Christine Pelosi challenged Zarif over Iranian Holocaust denial. She is the daughter of Nancy Pelosi, the ranking Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives, whose husband is Jewish.

"Thanks," Christine Pelosi tweeted. "The New Year would be even sweeter if you would end Iran's Holocaust denial, sir."

Zarif replied, "Iran never denied it. The man who was perceived to be denying it is now gone. Happy New Year."

Arabs arrested after throwing rocks at Jews visiting Temple Mount

JTA

JERUSALEM — At least seven Arab worshipers on the Temple Mount were arrested following clashes that included throwing rocks at Jewish visitors to the holy site.

Israeli police made the arrests on the morning of Sept. 4 following reports of masked men throwing rocks at Jews visiting the site in advance of Rosh Hashanah.

Consequently, police prevented several buses of Arab worshipers from making their way to the Temple Mount, believing they intended to incite violence, according to reports.

The violence came a day after the arrest of Islamic Movement leader Sheikh Raed Salah, who had called on Muslims to prevent the "dangerous mass invasion into Al-Aqsa" with their bodies.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque is situated on the Temple Mount in the place where Jews believe the holy of holies of the First and Second Temples was located.

On a visit to the Temple Mount on the morning of Sept. 4, Israel's Housing and Construction Minister Uri Ariel said, "The Temple Mount is the holiest place for the Jewish people and must be open for prayer at every hour to every Jew."

Ariel, of the Jewish Home party, said he "plans to continue to go up [to the Mount] and strengthen the State of Israel's sovereignty in the site."

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Maitsev, Dmitry	Aug. 26/13	Private
Polakow, Susan	Aug. 26/13	104 Ridelle Ave.
Nusinowitz, Rose	Aug. 27/13	7 Townsgate Dr.
Bilchik, Luba	Aug. 29/13	1201 Steeles Ave. W.
Block, Lillian	Aug. 31/13	1059 William St.
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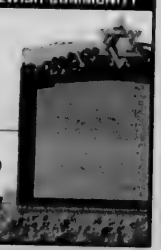

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Saving tax shouldn't be reason to donate, says Bronfman

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Philanthropy shouldn't only be about making donations, Charles Bronfman says. If you want to give to charities in a significant way, do so with conviction and manage your giving like a business, he advised.

Bronfman, chair of Andrea & Charles Bronfman Philanthropies Inc., which annually provides multimillion-dollar support to causes in the United States, Canada and Israel, made a rare public appearance in his native Montreal on Sept. 3. He was honoured as Man of the Year by the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal (JCF) at its 42nd annual general meeting.

"If you're just giving money because some tax accountant says it's a good idea, you're wasting your time," Bronfman said in conversation with Marvin Corber, a longtime friend and, incidentally, a chartered accountant.

"Do something more noble; help your community, and that can be defined as your street, your country, the world – and it can be on a small or large basis," Bronfman said.

Corber noted that Bronfman and his Peruvian-born wife, Rita Salomon, whom he married a year ago, are spending more time in Montreal, where she has lived for many years. The couple divide their time between New York, where he moved in 1996, Palm Beach, Fla., Israel and here.

Bronfman, co-author of two books on philanthropy, also advised running one's charitable giving as a business by setting goals and measuring results.

And, he added, "self-audit. If you go to someone outside, they are going to want to come back, to be rehired. They're not going to say you did something terrible."

Bronfman, who retired from a 50-year career with The Seagram Co. Ltd., wrote with Jeffrey Solomon *The Art of Giving: Where the Soul Meets a Business Plan* in 2010 and *The Art of Doing Good*, published last year.

While the first addressed the concerns of major-league donors, the latter profiles 18 individuals who started with little or nothing, and in some instances, had known personal tragedy and created thriving programs around the world helping others. Bronfman calls them "social entrepreneurs."

Bronfman, the co-founder of Birthright Israel, also stressed the necessity of being passionate about whatever cause one takes on.

Andrea & Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, which he and his late wife founded in 1985, will wind down in 2016. Bronfman promised he "will not fade away," but will continue to try to persuade donors and recipients to take philanthropy "very seriously."

The programs started by his foundation were designed to eventually be able to stand on their own two feet, he said.

"I will not take on any new projects," he added. "Sorry about that, folks."

Regarding philanthropy as serious business doesn't mean you can't have fun, he said. On the contrary, Bronfman believes in doing what you love.

"If you're going to do this kind of work, whether professionally or as a volunteer, do your investigation, decide what turns you on, enjoy it to the fullest. That doesn't mean you don't have to fight, but have a lot of fun."

Bronfman commented that how much money the JCF manages today "blew my mind."

Treasurer Michael Etinson reported that, as of March 31, the end of its fiscal year, JCF's assets were $344 million, up from $286 million the year before. That was achieved in part through contributions of over $38 million.

A record $29 million was distributed to charities over the year.

Short men shop at Brown's 'because it fits'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Lou Brown isn't a big guy to start with – five-foot-six at his peak, and now, with the passage of time, closer to five-foot-four.

At that height, it would seem he'd be a natural to come up with a concept in men's retailing to satisfy the needs of guys just like him – a store that caters to the, how shall we put this in the politically correct times in which we live, the vertically challenged.

Brown, 84, predates political correctness by a generation or two, so the name of his store is Brown's, A Short Man's World. Alternatively, it's called Shortman Brown's, while the store's promotional material proclaims: "Nobody's bigger in short."

Brown's definition of short is somewhat flexible. If you're five-foot-eight or under, the store is for you.

As far as men's apparel stores go, Brown's has it all: suits, slacks, ties, shirts, belts, shoes – sizes range from 5-1/2 to eight – and outerwear. There are two locations, one on Avenue Road, not too far from Wilson Avenue, the other at 545 Queen St. W.

Business is good despite the economic downturn of recent years. "We do six figures in sales per store," Brown said.

The bulk of the store's designer suits range in price from $698 to $998, though some higher-end items are available.

What makes the store unique is that all the apparel is specifically tailored for short men. You can't just hem pants for shorter people or shorten sleeves. The pockets won't be right, the pant knee will be too low, the garment won't look good, he said.

Same with jackets and outerwear. "You can come in here at five-foot-five and be fitted properly," he said.

Clearly there's a market for the kind of "destination store" Brown and his late father, Willy, created. People come from across the city and even from outside the country for the store's clothing.

Brown's is a typical immigrant success story.

The store, like Lou, started out 84 years ago, but back then it had not carved out a niche in the short men's market.

His dad, an immigrant from Poland, "couldn't get a job because he was Jewish. He finally got a job at a pant factory, but he didn't know the first thing about tailoring," Brown said.

The Jewish owner of the business agreed to train him if he'd work for nothing. After two weeks as a pocket-maker, Willy approached the boss and asked for $5 a week. The boss turned him down, so he quit and went to work for a competitor at $8 a week.

"After a few months, he decided he won't get anywhere as a pant-maker. So he opened his own second-hand clothes store on Queen," the same address as the current store, Brown said.

At the time, Queen Street was full of Jewish-owned businesses. His three uncles also had clothing stores on the avenue.

Lou Brown

Called Brown's, the shop was all of 450 square feet. The family lived above the store.

Brown attended Ryerson Public School and then Harbord Collegiate, but he dropped out at 16.

"I wasn't a scholar, but I had a knack for talking and I joined my dad in the second-hand store," he said.

It was a rather unusual circumstance that prompted him to suggest that the store move from second-hand clothes to new ones. As Brown tells it, "working in a second-hand store, the girls wouldn't date you. I told dad, 'I'm having a problem.'"

His father agreed to expand the business. It went from all second-hand apparel to half new, half previously worn.

At the time, his dad would buy suits from Baldwin Street pedlars for $5. He'd clean them, patch them up and put them for sale for $8. "It was a good profit in those days."

As time went by, business improved. By the 1950s, the store had expanded into four locations, including New Toronto and an outlet at Lawrence Plaza.

But for Lou, things were getting a little stale. "After awhile, it wasn't exciting any more. My father was building houses and I wasn't enjoying it anymore. It was just a job."

A new idea sprang Brown out of his funk. A lot of men of European stock would come in to buy. Many were short.

"I saw the need… Shorter men would come in, and we didn't have enough stock [to fit them]."

By then, the family had moved out of the upstairs rooms on Queen Street, so he suggested to his dad they call it "the loft" and stock it with clothing appropriate for shorter people.

To make sure they had the right merchandise, Brown approached manufacturers with whom the family had a good relationship, and had them design suits and shirts appropriate for the new client base. That meant sleeves and pockets were cut to look good on shorter customers.

It was in the 1970s, and Shortman Brown's was created.

People loved it, Brown recalled. "This lawyer comes in with his wife, a short guy. He'd heard about us. She said he always was in a hurry, and while I was talking to his wife, he comes up and says, 'I feel like I'm in a candy store.' That gave me a lot of encouragement."

After a few years, the store was selling more short apparel than regular. The downstairs at Queen shifted over to short merchandise and accessories were added. There's even a line of clothing for the extra short – guys around five-foot-three.

As the store's radio ad's signature line tells it, you'd buy at Browns, "because it fits."

At one point, the Avenue Road store carried both men's and women's clothing, but today, the upstairs has been turned over to clothing for "stout men" as well as off-season wear.

"We're strictly 100 per cent a destination store. People come from all over the country," said Brown.

"We have tailors in both stores, and if a guy comes in from out of town and he's going back, we'll fix him up right away.

"We only have two things to sell you, fit and service, nothing else. We give honest value."

As for his father, Willy worked in the business until age 93, when he was killed in an auto accident. Lou continues to come into the store six days a week, but he admits he keeps bankers' hours – in at the crack of 11, out at 3. His two sons, Robbie and Jeffrey, run the stores, but he likes to come in and kibbitz with the customers.

"I love it," he said. "It's a hobby. It has nothing to do with business anymore. It's a hobby."

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Jewish all along: Genie Milgrom's journey through time

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

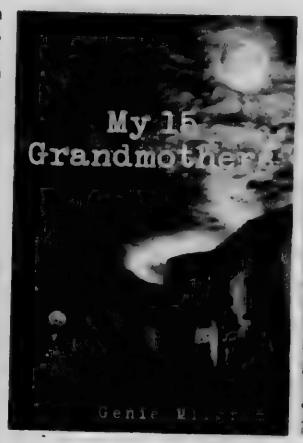
My 15 Grandmothers
Genie Milgrom
Createspace

Genie Milgrom, the author of *My 15 Grandmothers*, was one of numerous captivating speakers at the five-day International Conference on Jewish Genealogy last month in Boston.

Although she was born into a Roman Catholic family of Spanish origin in Havana, Cuba, Milgrom felt an affinity for Judaism from a young age. She was five years old when her wealthy family fled the Cuban Revolution and relocated to Miami, Fla., where she grew up.

She was 32 when she converted to Judaism, a burdensome mission that had involved years of study and eventual submission to a beit din and, of course, submersion in a mikvah. Only afterward did she begin to explore her outwardly Catholic family tree, and discover to her amazement that she was already halachically Jewish (according to Jewish law) all along.

At first all she had were clues handed down to her from both of her maternal grandparents. They had been second cousins whose ancestors were from a tiny village in Western Spain named Fermoselle, located on the Duero River between Spain and Portugal.



Milgrom's grandmother had left her a tattered white box inside of which she found a small piece of antique jewelry – an old Hamsa [the hand of God] – and a small gold earring adorned with a tiny Star of David. Initially she didn't appreciate the significance of these two very Jewish symbols, especially after family members told her the jewelry was probably given to her grandmother by a passing Gypsy.

Later she would be shown a very old piece of jewelry belonging to someone from another family from the town. Ostensibly, it was a simple gold ball on a chain. When you squeezed the two sides gently and pulled, the ball opened up into a chain of tiny Stars of David.

On several occasions Milgrom had asked her grandfather about the family's ancestry, but he always evaded the subject. After he died she found that he had sketched out a family tree and scrawled some history on a few sheets of old crumbling paper.

"He went back farther than I could imagine," she writes in her gripping and easily readable memoir. "Not only had he made a tree, he had also written a short history and some personality profiles. The tree went back to the early 1800s."

Hearing that a well-established professional Sephardic genealogist was going to her family's village of Fermoselle, she hired him to research her family tree. She instructed him to concentrate on "the maternal lineage, grandmother after grandmother, and document each step with copies of birth, baptism, marriage and death certificates, when possible."

Soon Milgrom was in possession of copies of documents that neatly traced her maternal Jewish ancestry, grandmother by grandmother, at least 15 generations back to the 1400s. As had quickly become clear, her family had been Bnai Anusim – "Children of the Forced" – Jews who had been forced to convert to Catholicism under dire threat of death.

The research showed that many of her cousins had intermarried, and many had become priests, both common patterns in "Converso" families. Many Bnai Anusim liked to have a priest in every generation "to make absolutely certain that the marriages that were taking place in the churches would be done according to the laws of Moses and Israel" while secretly omitting something from the Catholic rite so as to invalidate it, Milgrom writes.

Strangely, none of Milgrom's ancestors, and only two residents of Fermoselle, were named in the region's extensive Inquisition papers held in a Madrid archives. Most of her ancestors, it turned out, had escaped to Portugal, where they turned up in archives there.

Portuguese archives have digitalized many documents related to the Inquisition and posted them to the Internet. The National Archives of Torre do Tombo, for example, has documents dating back to the ninth century, including Inquisition documentation of every person sentenced or tried in the Inquisition tribunals of Lisbon, Poreto, Coimbra and Evora, Milgrom writes.

"These long documents usually include the full genealogy of the person that was judged."

During her two visits to Fermoselle, she uncovered some of the town's Jewish secrets, including the locations of former synagogues, mikvahs, Jewish homes and a system of interconnecting underground tunnels. Milgrom wrote her book because she wanted to tell her ancestors' story and "to be the voice that my ancestors never had. Most of all, I just want others who wish to find their Jewish roots to know that this quest is possible. Given the resources available in Spain and Portugal today, it can be done."

My 15 Grandmothers is available online from Amazon. Milgrom's website is geniemilgrom.com

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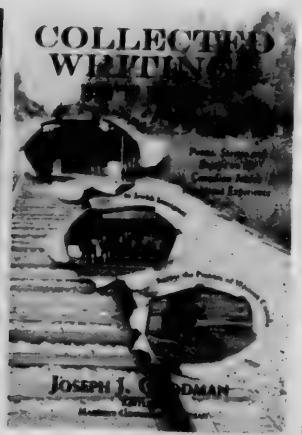
Collected Writings: Poems, Stories and Essays on the Canadian Jewish Immigrant Experience
Joseph J. Goodman
Xlibris



Seven years ago Leah Hammer discovered her long-dead grandfather, Joseph J. Goodman, had in 1919 published a book of Yiddish writings, *Gezamelte Shriften*, and then discovered a copy in the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass. The Yiddish volume was republished in a new bilingual edition, translated by Hannah Berliner Fischthal and edited by another of Goodman's granddaughters, Harriet Goodman Hoffman.

Included are many short poems on myriad subjects, stories such as *Yankl Becomes A Canadian*, and short essays that describe Goodman's experiences in various Canadian Jewish farming communities on the Prairies and in Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and other western cities and towns.

"In the not-too-distant past, Edmonton was regarded as the capital of the North Pole," he writes. "If I would have needed to get there 30 years ago, I would have said goodbye to all my dear friends and given my wife a conditional divorce. If, by some miracle, I would have returned, I would have immediately gone to the synagogue to thank God for delivering me from great danger, as befits a person who comes from a place very far away.

"At this date, I am spared the entire tumult. I only needed to pack up my valise and get into a CPR sleeping car. The black porter woke me up the next morning in Edmonton. It is true that Edmonton has no past; it has, however, an extraordinarily splendid future."

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

ITZHAK PERLMAN TO TACKLE TCHAIKOVSKY CONCERTO IN TORONTO

Legendary Israeli-American violinist **Itzhak Perlman** will be a beloved guest of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra later this month when he comes here to play **Tchaikovsky**'s much-admired *Violin Concerto*. The program also includes a fascinating but unfinished clarinet concerto that **Benjamin Britten** began composing for **Benny Goodman** during World War II. The final arrangement by **Colin Matthews** will be conducted by **Peter Oundjian** and features principal clarinet **Joaquin Valdepenas**.

Roy Thomson Hall, Sept. 25 and 26. Pre-concert chat in the lobby on Sept. 25, 7:15 p.m. www.tso.ca, 416-593-4828.

• • •

Chai Tea: The Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents a screening of *When Comedy Went to School*, a documentary portrait of that generation of American comics who got their start in the Catskill "Borscht Belt." **Jerry Lewis**, **Sid Caesar**, **Jackie Mason**, **Mort Sahl**, **Jerry Stiller** and many others share terrific stories and jokes.

The 77-minute film, by **Meviut Akkaya**, **Ron Frank** and **Lawrence Richards**, also features plenty of clips from various comedy films and sketches. Chai Tea, City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan. Sunday, Oct. 6, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. $15 in advance or at the door. www.tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• • •

Jedwabne Massacre: The film *Aftermath* (*Poklosie*) is based on one of the most controversial wartime episodes in Polish history: the Jedwabne massacre of Jews by their Polish neighbours. Directed by **Wladyslaw Pasikowski**, the film was based on a 1942 tragedy in which hundreds of Jews were burned alive in a barn, an event long blamed on Nazi Germany.

"I wanted to tell a story that would interest a broad number of Poles because it is one of the most painful parts of our country's history," Pasikowski said recently. "We already have a huge number of films on the horrors committed by the Soviets and the Germans, and it's time to say what bad things we did ourselves."

The film, based on the book *Neighbours* by U.S. historian **Jan Tomasz Gross**, was to be shown this week at Library & Archives Canada in Ottawa, with remarks by **Prof. Jan Grabowski**.

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Arts in Brief

• Musician **Yitzhak Argaman** is the featured performer at the Friends of Yiddish annual membership breakfast, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch). Sunday, Sept. 29, 10 a.m. for 10:30 breakfast. Members free, guests $15. Please RSVP by Sept. 23 to 416-736-8073 or Yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

• • •

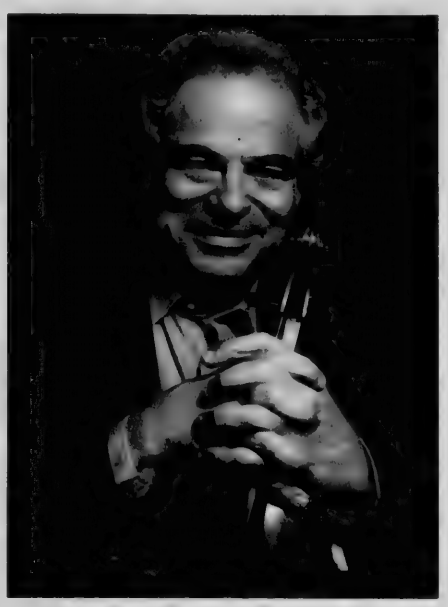
Capsule Review: Robert Wise's 1951 film noir, *The House on Telegraph Hill*, starring **Richard Basehart** and **Valentina Cortese**, offers an early cinematic view of a German concentration camp. A recent addition to Netflix, where it will reach a new generation of viewers, the film opens in Belsen where it depicts a group of zombie-like inmates, dressed in rags but not particularly drawn or emaciated, engaging in a mindless food squabble.

The action soon moves to San Francisco several years later, where concentration camp inmate Viktoria Kowalska arrives at the gloomy mansion that is the key locale of the drama. Having taken over the identity of her dead concentration-camp friend Karin, Viktoria comes to reclaim Karin's young son, who had been in the care of an elderly aunt, since deceased; the boy now has a guardian. All of Aunt Sophie's significant wealth will accrue to the child upon adulthood; Viktoria cements her position by marrying the guardian.

Immersed in her false new life, Viktoria discovers that her new husband is even more deeply immersed in deceit: he is secretly trying to kill her and the child in order to keep the fortune for himself and his secret mistress, Margaret the housekeeper. Interesting that the film ignores the depravity of the Germans in order to focus on the evil that lurks within the hearts of ordinary, supposedly decent folks.

In order to redeem her soul and save her life, Viktoria must come clean and tell someone the truth about her deception: her hero is a U.S. army officer who had helped her in a displaced persons camp. Is Viktoria's psychological burden a sort of survivor guilt, transmogrified into a gothic noir tale set over San Francisco's scenic and beautifully photographed Telegraph Hill?

In retrospect, the concentration camp scenes seem tame and naïve, and it seems ridiculous that there are apparently no lingering after effects whatsoever from Viktoria's years in a Nazi hell. (In keeping with a longstanding Hollywood taboo, Viktoria is depicted as Polish, not Jewish.) In addition to its short and noteworthy early treatment of the concentration camp setting, *The House on Telegraph Hill* is a competent but not outstanding curiosity, rated by **Leonard Maltin** at 2-1/2 stars.



Itzhak Perlman plays Roy Thomson Hall Sept 25 and 26.

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No holds barred when comedian speaks his mind

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Andy Kindler may be known for his criticism of the comedy industry, but he doesn't really think it's all bad.

He admits there are many very talented comedians, including Hannibal Buress, John Mulaney and Maria Bamford, all of whom will be performing with Kindler at the Just for Laughs Festival in Toronto. But there are lots of really bad comedians out there as well.

The American comedian is probably best recognized for his recurring role as Andy in *Everybody Loves Raymond*, as well as his annual State of the Industry address at the Just for Laughs Festival, in which he roasts comedy stars and the industry itself. He drew controversy this year after accusing radio personality and comedian Adam Carolla of bigotry and racism.

Despite the controversy, he stands by his comments, admitting that people might have misunderstood his intention.

The crux of his argument, he said, is that so many comedians these days use racial stereotypes to be funny, but if it's not a joke, then it's just bigotry and racism, and Kindler wants them to know that.

Despite his being known for slamming his fellow comedians, Kindler stressed that he's not a mean guy. In fact, he said he hates personal confrontation, and when he meets people face-to-face, he's almost too nice, saving his anger for the stage.

The New York City native said that, as a kid, he took comedy for granted. "I always thought everyone was funny," he said, adding that his father was his comedy hero, and that his early standup often involved impressions of his mother.

Kindler originally thought he would be a musician. It wasn't until he was 28 that he "stumbled" into the comedy industry, after doing impressions at a company picnic.

That's when he started to perform with his friend as a team called Andy and Bill.

"There's nothing more frightening than standup," he said. "Having someone else there is good because you can blame them when something doesn't go right – and you can commiserate together."

He said that ever since he began his career, his Judaism has often been a source of material. Stereotypically, he added, Jews can be annoyed and disgusted, which works very well for comedy.

Andy Kindler will be performing at this year's Just for Laughs Festival in Toronto.

"I'm not a practising Jew because I've got it down," he said, a joke that's part of his current material.

He speaks the same way he performs – in a stream of consciousness, often commenting on his jokes and then commenting on those comments. He described his standup as about two-thirds scripted and one-third improvised.

"I didn't realize until a few years ago I had ADD. I always thought I just couldn't concentrate," he said, explaining his style. "My mind does go blank every 10 seconds on stage."

Despite his famous, or perhaps infamous, social commentary, he said he'd like to branch out a bit more to cover politics, adding he's sick of the U.S. political system, where people "use racism to get elected.

"The fact that I'm calling it racism ruffles feathers," he said. "I don't want to be known as the guy who is fighting for truth and justice, but... I want to turn over that rock and expose it for what it is."

And that's what he'll continue to do, both in his standup and online, no matter who he annoys.

Kindler said he's looking forward to visiting Toronto for the Just for Laughs festival, despite Toronto's lack of good smoked meat and bagels – compared to Montreal, anyway.

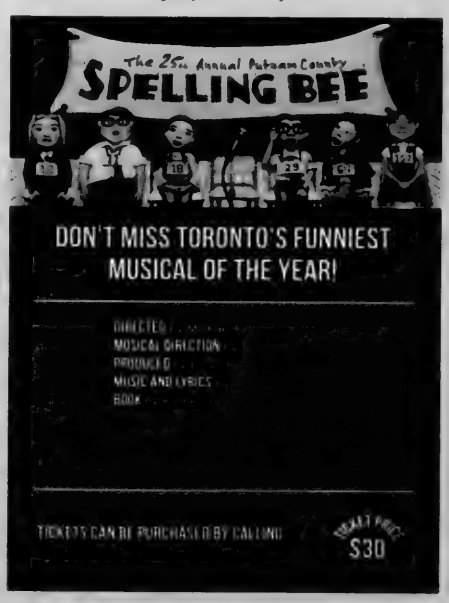
He's scheduled to perform three shows at the Toronto festival on Sept. 24, 25 and 26.

New theatre season celebrates Jewish culture

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

A play based on a real-life concentration camp liberation story and the premiere of David Ives's *New Jerusalem*, are among the highlights of the upcoming Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company (HGJTC) season.

The theatre company, created by co-artistic directors David Eisner and Avery Saltzman, was established to celebrate, illuminate and share Jewish culture.



The company's seventh season offers a mixed bag of shows, all taking place at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. The season includes a one-man show and a concert celebrating Jewish composers.

"We are so thrilled to be at the Toronto Centre of the Arts," Saltzman says. "The smaller space is so conducive to what we are doing and also the majority of our audience is there."

...And Stockings for the Ladies opens the company's new season and will run from Oct. 8 to 20.

Written by Attila Clemann and directed by Zach Fraser, the play explores a little-known chapter in the role of the Royal Canadian Air Force at Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp post liberation.

...And Stockings for the Ladies is about one man's need to work outside the rules to create compassionate change. "Brendan McMurtry-Howlett, the young performer in it, plays over 20 characters," Saltzman says. "It is a tour-de-force performance and was a big success at The Fringe. I think our audiences will really love it."

On stage from March 15 to April 13, 2014, is a riveting courtroom drama called *New Jerusalem – The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656.*

The play's Canadian premiere is directed by Mitchell Cushman. The play re-enacts events in the life of Baruch de Spinoza, one of the greatest philosophers in history. This David Ives' off-Broadway hit challenges the traditional, political and religious thinking of the time. "This man was not a conventional thinker," Saltzman says of the play's protagonist. "He thought more of the spiritual aspect that we feel now ... that we are all God and integrated into one. To have these thoughts in 1656, he was considered a heretic."

Other plays include *There's No Business Like Irving Berlin*, directed by Saltzman himself, which graces the stage for one night only on Nov 3. Starring greats from the Canadian musical theatre scene including Sterling Jarvis, Sheila McCarthy, Arlene Duncan and Camilla Scott, the show celebrates one of the 20th century's best Jewish composers and lyricists.

From May 10 to June 1, 2014, HGJTC and Angelwalk Theatre will co-produce the Canadian premiere of a new off-Broadway musical called *Stars of David: Prominent Jews Talk About Being Jewish*. Based on Abigail Pogrebin's bestseller, it is directed by Saltzman under the musical direction of Mark Camilleri.

Stars of David is a snapshot of Jewish identity told through interviews with some of America's most recognizable public figures, including Gloria Steinem, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Joan Rivers and Aaron Sorkin. It features music from Broadway's finest composer/lyricists including Marvin Hamlish and Duncan Sheik.

HGJTC is also offering two add-ons to their regular season. Direct from Israel, *An Israeli Love Story* will be performed four times from Feb 13 to 16, including a special matinee performed in Hebrew. This innocent love story takes place in 1942 and tells the tale of a chance meeting between a vivacious, young girl named Margalit, and Ami, an idealistic kibbutz pioneer and soldier in the Palmach, which was the unofficial army of pre-state Israel.

Also on offer is a fundraiser for the theatre company to be held on Sept. 30, *Funny Girl In Concert*, starring Gabi Epstein along with the best of Canada's musical theatre talent. "It is so expensive to produce a show like *Funny Girl*," Saltzman says.

"For a small not-for-profit, it is impossible to do. That's why we do it in concert with a 25-piece orchestra for one night only, so the community can see a really iconic musical, including dialogue, done in concert format with full orchestration."

For tickets and subscription information, visit: hgjewishtheatre.com.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca
HEEBONICS

Singer-songwriter wins big music prize

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

For a young singer-songwriter, the chance to work with accomplished Canadian bands like Triumph and the Tragically Hip would be a dream.

For Taylor Kurta, it became a reality after she won the RBC Emerging Artist Music Mentorship Prize. In addition to the mentorship sessions with members of the award-winning bands, she won the opportunity to perform in Canada's Walk of Fame Festival this month, as well as $25,000.

"I freaked out. I didn't think it was real at first," she said. "You don't [think] things like that happen to you. When they do it's too much to comprehend."

The 20-year-old Thornhill native said she applied in March, and assumed she wouldn't win, so she stopped herself from thinking about it so as not to get her hopes up. She said she had completely forgotten about the competition until she got the call in June.

"Obviously, RBC Foundation has changed my whole entire life," she said.

She went into the famous Metalworks studio on Aug. 26, where she worked with Gil Moore and Rik Emmett, members of Triumph.

"I'm used to working in a basement studio so being in a real studio was crazy. Everything is so nice and they gave me Fiji water and everything," Kurta said. "Having them listen to my songs and catering to me, it was a weird feeling. I'm not used to it."

She knew that many acclaimed artists have recorded or mixed their tracks at Metalworks studio, including Guns N' Roses, Sam Roberts, and most recently, hiphop superstar Drake.

She said it was a "crazy" feeling to see all of the studio equipment, and to work with people "who knew what they were talking about and who gave me amazing advice."

Some of the advice included slowing down one of her songs to bring the audience into the music.

"Getting advice from Canadian legends like that was really surreal, and I feel so fortunate," she said.

In total, she spent 20 hours in the studio. She'll get another 10 hours of expert advice when she heads to another studio with Gord Sinclair from the Tragically Hip. She hopes to complete the 30 hours with a new extended play to her name, an album with three or four professionally recorded songs.

Kurta's first purchase with the prize money was a new guitar – an electric acoustic guitar, which she said will drastically change and improve her live sound.

It's a Martin guitar – the same company as the one that made her first ever guitar, which she got when she was 14.

"One day I saw my friend playing guitar and I thought, 'I wonder if I can do that.' So I sat for two weeks, playing four hours a night," she said.

By singing over the music, she was able to develop a certain vocal style, which she said is quite different from many other singer-songwriters.

Samples of her songs are at taylorkurta.com.

The rest of the prize money will go towards a degree in music therapy – something that Kurta sees herself doing in her future, as well as performing. She plans to enrol for that program at Wilfred Laurier University starting September 2014, although she's happy to move it if her performing career takes off.

She chose Laurier because of its proximity to Toronto, so she can continue to perform in the city while she studies.

She said that music therapy is so important to her because of its ability to heal people.

"I feel like everyone in this world has this purpose," she said. "If I was given a gift, it's my duty to share that with other people. If I can heal other people with music, then why not?"

From left, Gil Moore, Taylor Kurta, Rik Emmett

Deadline reminder: Due to the holidays, deadlines will change. Sept. 16 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 3. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Sunday, Sept. 15

SEMESTER IN ISRAEL

Ramah Jerusalem High School holds an information session for parents and students, 11:30 a.m., at the Gottesmans' home, 266 Franklin Ave., Thornhill. RSVP to jodi@gottesmaninsurance.com, or call 905-881-7176.

Tuesday, Sept. 17

ADULT MARCH OF THE LIVING

A meeting for adults interested in joining the March of the Living 2014 will be held 7 p.m., Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. RSVP **Cheryle Rosenberg**, 416-398-6931, or email crosenberg@ujafed.org.

Thursday, Sept. 19

WINGS AND WINE

Chabad Markham sponsors a sukkah open house, 3-5 p.m., 242 Green Lane, Thornhill. RSVP required. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or visit www.chabadmarkham.org.

Other News

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Baycrest Freeman Family Day Centre is looking for a volunteer who can teach music and incorporate music education into a program. To volunteer, visit www.baycrest.org/volunteer, or call 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

Reena is looking for creative arts volunteers to work with the Reena Theatre Troupe helping to prepare for a major production. Volunteers with skills/interests in dance, music, acting, lighting, sound, scene design and production are needed Sundays 1-5 p.m. from September 2013 to May 2014 at 972 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Call **Mille Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org.

HOLOCAUST SUPPORT

Baycrest's Holocaust Resource Program offers support groups for child survivors of the Holocaust and adult children of Holocaust survivors. Group meetings begin in September. Call **Shoshana Yaakobi** 416-785-2500, ext. 2271, or email syaakobi@baycrest.org.

HEBREW CLASSES

A beginners Hebrew class with **Irv Kirshenblat** is being offered at Beth Tikvah Synagogue starting Sept. 17 during the day and Sept. 23 evenings. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 308.

Conversational ulpan method made easy, with **Yael Lev**, beginner level 2, Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.; intermediate level 1, Thursdays at 1:30 p.m., Pride of Israel Synagogue. $150/10 weeks. 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Temple Sinai offers beginners and intermediate Hebrew, starting in October. Call 416-487-3281 or email education@templesinai.net.

YIDDISH CLASSES

Yiddish classes for beginners through advanced will be taught Sunday, 10 a.m. to noon, Beth David Synagogue. Yiddish culture for kids, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Adults $150/10 sessions; kids $20. Classes start Sept. 29. Call **Barbara** 416-631-5843, or visit www.committeeforyiddish.com.

ADATH ISRAEL BOOK REVIEW

Heather Kassel reviews *419* by **Will Ferguson**, Sept. 24, 8 p.m. at Adath Israel Congregation. The series is $50 for members; $85 for non-members or $10/$15 per review. Call 416-499-6920.

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Friends of Yiddish holds its membership breakfast Sept. 29, 10 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. **Yitzhak Argaman** entertains. RSVP by Sept. 23, call **Sandy** 416-736-8073 or 416-458-1440, or email Yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

NEW ISRAEL FUND

The New Israel Fund presents "Meeting the Challenge: Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State," Sept. 22, 1- 5 p.m., Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St. Visit www.nifcan.org, or call 416-781-4322.

A MORNING OF JAZZ

The York Jazz Ensemble presents "A morning of classic jazz," Sept. 22, 9:15 a.m. at Beth David Synagogue. Email brotherhood@bethdavid.com.

FALL LECTURE SERIES

Registration is now open for Temple Emanu-El's fall lecture series. Speakers include **Sally Armstrong, Gerry Gray, Doug Pourdon, Adam Chapnick, Iain Scott.** $45 for the series/$12 per lecture. Call 416-449-3880.

Continued on page 41

Canadian Society for Yad Vashem

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority

INVITES THE COMMUNITY TO JOIN US ON

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About the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem is one of the largest and most prominent societies among Yad Vashem's 28 representative bodies worldwide. The Society supports Yad Vashem's initiatives and implements its important vision across Canada. Through its educational and commemorative activities, the Society carries out Yad Vashem's mission of ensuring that the Holocaust and its lessons are forever engraved in the memory of humankind.

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem wishes the community Shana Tova / שנה טובה and a healthy, prosperous & peaceful New Year

Remembering the past, Shaping the future.®

Continued from page 40

MAVEN BOWLING LEAGUE

Maven Bowling League is looking for new members. First game is Sept. 12, 7:30 p.m. at Bowlerama Newtonbrook. Call **Ron Caine** 416-518-8333; 905-889-8333.

TIKVAH TOTS

Tikvah Tots, singing and games for children ages one to three, resumes Sept. 29 at Beth Tikvah. Call 416-221-3433.

WRITE YOUR FAMILY STORY

The Jewish Genealogical Society presents "Writing Your Family History Now," led by **Mike Karsen,** Sept. 22, 1 p.m., Temple Sinai. www.jgstoronto.ca.

MORASHA CLASSES

Registration is open for new Morasha classes at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Starting Oct. 16, **Bracha Feder** teaches "Leaders and the People: Goals and Tensions." Starting Oct. 10, **Shayna Kravetz** teaches "Ten New Tough Torah Questions." Call **Loretta,** 416-789-7400.

THE CHORALAIRS

The Choralairs of North York, a singing group, starts its new season Sept. 24 at 7:15 p.m. at the Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. Call **Sally** 416-636-8247, or email sallyl@sympatico.ca.

YOM KIPPUR SERVICES

Am Shalom Synagogue, a Reform synagogue in Barrie, offers tickets for Yom Kippur. Call 705-792-3949.

Beth Isaiah Congregation, Guelph led by **Rabbi Avraham Fisher** will be holding services. Call 519-265-1591, or visit www.guelphsynagogue.ca.

B'nai Shalom Congregation, a Conservative, egalitarian congregation meets in Oakville for Yom Kippur. Call 905-901-9889, or email info@bnaishalom.ca.

Chabad Jewish Discovery Centre, 1552 Dundas St. W. offers Yom Kippur services. Call 905-268-4432, or visit www.JewishMississauga.com.

Nefesh HaChayim, a participatory minyan led by **Rabbi Adina Lewittes**, meets at the Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. For tickets, call **Tania** 905-760-9472, or email nefeshtickets@gmail.com.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds services at 1600 Steeles Ave. W. For tickets, call 416-385-3910 or email roby@oraynu.org.

Shaare Zion Congregation, led by **Rabbi Gary Zweig,** meets at the Gibson Retirement Residence, 1955 Steeles Ave. E. Call 905-886-0178 or email info@shaarezion.org.

Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave., offers a variety of services for adults and children on Yom Kippur. Call 416-487-4161 or www.templesinai.net.

The **Winchevsky Centre** holds secular humanistic services, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Tickets, 416-789-5502, or email info@winchevskycentre.org.

SUKKOT FUN

PJ Library celebrates Sukkot at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, Lebovic JCC, Sept. 22, 3 p.m. Enjoy music, crafts and snacks. Registration required at www.pjlibrarytoronto.ca. Call 416-621-5675.

Morris Winchevsky School celebrates Sukkot at Dufferin Grove Park, Sept. 22, 11 a.m. Call 416-789-5502.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a Sukkot festival, Sept. 22 at 10 a.m., St. Andrew's Junior High School, 131 Fenn Ave. Call 416-385-3910.

Temple Sinai invites young adults (22-39) to enjoy sushi in the sukkah, Sept. 19, 7 p.m. Call 416-487-4161, or email hayley@templesinai.net.

JF&CS GROUPS

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups for bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer,** JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors Sukkot lunch and entertainment, Sept. 24, 11:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. $20/$25. Reservations required. Call Tammy 416-635-2900, ext. 458, or email ajs@circleofcare.com.

Baycrest Learning Academy for Older Adults is offering courses in partnership with the Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University. Call Laura Hogan at 416-785-2500, ext. 5209 or www.Baycrest.org/LearningAcademy.

Beth Tzedec Haverim presents the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir, Sept. 16, 1:30 p.m. Call 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call Sheila, 416-665-3333, or Marcia, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors Club. Kosher food, card games. 416-256-1892.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie,** 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine Sept. 25. Dance with live music Sept. 22. Monday to Thursday, mah-jong, Rummikub and dominoes, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesdays, chair exercise for seniors, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Register for the Opera Appreciation Series with **Iain Scott,** starts Sept. 24. Oct. 6, 12:15 p.m., 60th-anniversary brunch with the **Jordan Klapman Trio.**

Active 55+ Miles Nadal JCC Sept. 15, walking tour of the Annex, noon. Call **Colin Blayney** 416-924-6211, ext. 526, or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Now accepting registration for limited spaces for junior and senior kindergarten full-day program with kosher lunch and snacks. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4351.

Mah-jong tournament games for experienced players, Mondays at 1:30 p.m; casual Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 p.m.; folk dancing with Teme and Sandy, Wednesdays at 10 a.m.; recorder with Judy, Wednesdays; duplicate bridge with Samy Toledano, Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

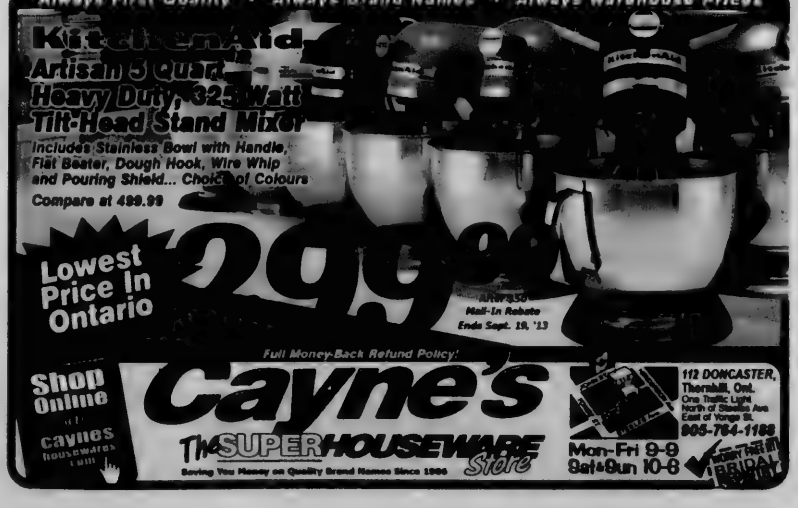
Adult choir meets Tuesdays 1 p.m. No experience or sight reading needed. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Three movie critics discuss the work of film directors **Robert Altman, David Lynch** and **Steven Spielberg,** Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

The Ontario Jewish Archives at 40, photos from the Ontario Jewish Archives are on display at the gallery until Oct. 3. Reception, Sept. 23 at 7 p.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

PITCH FOR ISRAEL CELEBRATES SIX YEARS: The sixth annual Pitch for Israel took place last month at the Powerade Centre in Brampton, Ont. The community-wide charity softball tournament has raised $600,000 since its founding in 2008 by Toronto resident Daniel Warner. The net proceeds will go to renovate the yards at the Ilanot School in Jerusalem for children with special needs. From left are MP Bal Gosal, Pitch for Israel co-chair Daniel Warner, Pitch for Israel co-chair Michael Grossman, Ontario Progressive Conservative party Leader Tim Hudak, One Family Fund director Pam Albert; JNF Canada CEO Josh Cooper, MP Mark Adler and JNF Canada executive director Lance Davis.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Mazel Tov מזל טוב

Happy 90th birthday Dan and Saul Gerson. Frequently mistaken one for the other, always loved and respected! Mazel tov from their families in Montreal and Toronto.

Congratulations Ashley Goodfield-Barber on becoming a bat mitzvah. Love from Mom, brother Justin and Grandma Aileen.

Big brother Mackenzie and parents Natasha & Christopher welcome Jacqueline Robinson Newman, born May 15. Embraced with love by her grandparents and family.

Happy 100th birthday to Faye Levey from your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Myrna & Seymour Weiner announce the birth of their grandson, Charlie Julian, born May 10 to Susanna Gallor & Jennifer Weiner. Playmate for Jake.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Jew me down

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

The comments came out of nowhere, which is why they took us by surprise.

Over the four years we'd known him, our friend, Steve, was well aware we were Jewish. But all of a sudden, this summer, anti-Semitic jokes began spilling into his conversation in the most random ways.

"Everyone knows Jews make all the money," he deadpanned during a golf game. Was he joking or serious? The Jewish golfers around him wondered. No one said a word, but we talked it over later. Why would he say something like that? It had felt like a slap in the face, a bombshell dropped on an otherwise beautiful day out with friends.

We let it go.

But a few weeks later, there were more comments. And later, even more.

I was angry at our friend, but mostly disappointed. Did he not realize from the stunned silence how offensive he was being? Was he testing the boundaries of humour with his Jewish friends, trying to poke fun, or intentionally voicing anti-Semitic sentiments? My husband and I talked it over late at night and decided it had to be a pathetic attempt at humour that was, at best, inappropriate.

After another Jew-comment over dinner, I tried to address the unfunny jokes anecdotally.

"Can you believe it? A North Vancouver city councillor recently announced at a council meeting that he would not be 'Jewed down' on taxes?" I told our group of friends.

Last May, Rod Clark had said the city was "getting Jewed down completely" on the taxes it was owed. When his political blunder was addressed seconds later at the same meeting, the stubborn man refused to retract his comment, believing the phrase was just an ordinary, meaningless part of the lexicon.

It wasn't until it made the headlines that he could be convinced otherwise and changed tack, swapping indignation for repentance.

"A lot of people don't consider the racial stereotypes behind comments like this," I declared, making sure Steve was listening carefully.

The conversation moved on. But the anti-Semitic cracks Steve had voiced still weighed heavily on my mind. I wrestled with the prospect of a direct confrontation and decided it was the only way to completely clear the air.

I knocked on his door and with a grave expression and little preamble, started my shpiel. "Those Jew jokes you've been making – they're really not funny," I told him. "They hit a nerve and make me very uncomfortable. Please, no more."

Steve apologized for his poor taste in humour, and we moved on. The Jew jokes stopped completely and the friendship continued with barely a hiccup.

Except that comments like the ones he uttered can never be completely eradicated. They get stored somewhere deep in our individual psyche, and when they're uttered again, they emerge, their arrows sharper and more penetrative than ever.

I like to think that if there's a next time – a different joker, and different circumstances – there will be no "letting go" or late-night pondering of true meaning.

Next time, I shall say, unequivocally, "That was totally inappropriate."

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Supplement
October 10, 2013
Deadline for Advertising
Friday, September 13
The Canadian Jewish news

Try lunch for dinner

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to the CJN

I absolutely adore Indian summer. Somehow, the still warm days and the still abundant produce that's evident at the grocery store mean I don't have to rush headlong into autumn but can still savour the sweet smells of fresh tomatoes, herbs and vegetables, and at least pretend that although schedules are fast becoming furious, I can make delicious, garden fresh dinners.

Sandwiches are the ideal vehicle for the late summer richness of field tomatoes, emerald zucchini and succulent sweet peppers. Sandwiches are also relatively quick, require little preparation and can even be tucked into a napkin and toted along as families drive to newly started soccer matches and the like. I've included different bread ideas in each recipe but, of course, choose the bread your family prefers – there's no shortage of available options.

STEAK SANDWICH WITH CARMELIZED ONIONS AND CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

Chimichurri, an Argentine condiment, usually has chilies, or at least hot pepper flakes, added to it, for some fire. Since I've added a peppery arugula to this sandwich, I've omitted the customary heat in the sauce. Feel free to add a pinch if your family likes it hot.

Caramelized Onions:
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
5 large onions, stemmed and sliced
1 tbsp. packed light brown sugar
Chimichurri Sauce:
1 cup packed fresh parsley leaves
1 cup packed fresh coriander leaves
1 tbsp. fresh oregano leaves
4 large cloves garlic, peeled
2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste
Steak:
1 lb. grilling steak
1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
pinch each salt and pepper
4 sandwich rolls
2 cups fresh arugula leaves

Heat the oil in a large skillet set over medium heat. Add the onions and sugar; cook, stirring occasionally, for 25 to 30 minutes or until the onions are very soft and caramelized. Set aside.

Meanwhile, make the chimichurri sauce. Place the parsley, coriander, oregano, garlic and vinegar in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal "S" blade. Pulse until finely chopped. With the machine running, pour the olive oil through the feed tube, for about 1 minute. Transfer to a serving bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Brush the steak (or steaks) with the oil. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Grill on a preheated grill set over medium-high heat, turning once, for 8 to 10 minutes or until medium-rare. Transfer to a plate; tent with foil for 5 minutes. Cutting against the grain, slice the steak into thin slices.

Cut each sandwich roll in half without cutting all the way through. Line each bun with one-quarter of the arugula. Top with 1/4 of the caramelized onions. Evenly divide the meat on top. Slather with chimichurri sauce. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

ITALIAN GRILLED CHEESE

Nothing could be simpler than this flash-in-a-pan sandwich. The smokiness of the Mozzarella elevates this old favourite to a distinctly new level. The garlic-infused oil perfumes the sandwich, complementing the basil as well as the tomatoes.

2 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 tsp. salt
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
8 slices challah bread
4 oz. smoked or plain Mozzarella, sliced
3 oz. Fontina, thinly sliced
1 large ripe tomato, cut into 8 slices
1/3 cup fresh basil leaves

In small bowl, mash the garlic and salt together using the back of a spoon, until it is paste-like. Stir in the olive oil. Let stand for 5 minutes.

Place 4 of the challah slices on a work surface. Divide the Mozzarella evenly among the 4 slices. Top each with 2 tomato slices and at least two basil leaves. Divide the Fontina evenly among the sandwiches. Top with remaining challah slices. Brush half of the olive oil mixture over the top bread slice.

Heat a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Invert the sandwiches into the skillet so that the oil brushed side meets the heat. Cook for about 5 minutes or until the underside is golden. Brush the tops of each sandwich with the remaining oil mixture. Carefully flip each sandwich over. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes or until the underside is golden and the cheese has melted. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

CURRIED CHICKEN SANDWICH WITH GUACAMOLE TOMATO MAYONNAISE

Both the grilled chicken breasts and the guacamole mayonnaise can be made up to 4 hours ahead and kept covered in the refrigerator, making this an easy to put together fuss-free sandwich. Be sure to bring both the chicken and the mayonnaise to room temperature for best results.

2 boneless skinless chicken breasts
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp. curry powder
1/2 tsp. each cayenne, salt and pepper
Guacamole Mayonnaise:
2 small ripe avocados
1/4 cup low fat mayonnaise
1/4 cup finely chopped tomatoes
1/4 cup finely chopped red onion
2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh coriander
1 tbsp. freshly squeezed lime juice
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
2 plain or whole grain large pitas
4 lettuce leaves

In a small bowl, mash the avocado until creamy but still a bit chunky. Stir in the mayonnaise, tomatoes, red onion, coriander, lime juice, salt and pepper; set aside.

Place the chicken breasts on a clean cutting board. Cut in half as if to butterfly, but cut all the way through to make two thin pieces.

In a separate bowl, stir together the oil, curry powder, cayenne, salt and pepper. Brush the oil mixture over one side of the chicken breasts. Place the grilled chicken breasts on a preheated grill, oiled side down, over medium-high heat. Grill for 5 minutes. Brush the remaining oil mixture over the top side. Flip the chicken; grill for about 5 more minutes or until no longer pink inside.

Cut each pita in half and open up slightly. Line one side with a lettuce leaf. Place one chicken breast beside the lettuce. Divide the guacamole mayonnaise evenly between the pita halves, spreading it beside the chicken. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

GRILLED VEGETABLES AND HUMMUS SANDWICH

Virtually any kind of prepared hummus will work in this sandwich, but the roasted garlic variety lends an uncompromising oomph and flare. The zucchini and sweet pepper can be roasted stovetop on a grill pan if the weather is inclement. They can also be made early in the morning and just pulled out of the fridge as you're ready to assemble the sandwiches.

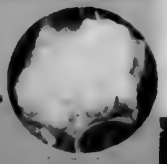
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
1 large sweet red pepper, cored, seeded and quartered
1 large zucchini, trimmed and sliced thinly lengthwise into at least 8 long slices
1/2 cup prepared roasted garlic hummus
2 cups watercress
1 loaf ciabatta, cut into 4 pieces

In a small bowl, stir together the oil, salt and pepper. Brush over one side of the red pepper quarters. Place the red peppers on a preheated grill set over medium-high heat. Grill, turning occasionally, for about 20 minutes or until charred and very soft. Set aside.

Brush one side of each slice of zucchini. Grill, turning once and brushing the other side as you flip, for about 3 minutes per side or until nicely marked and very soft.

Cut each ciabatta quarter in half horizontally. Spread the hummus evenly over 4 halves. Top with a roasted red pepper quarter and two slices of zucchini (or more). Top with one-quarter of the watercress. Place other half of bread on top. Makes 4 sandwiches.

CAULIFLOWER PIZZA



1 cauliflower
2 tsp olive oil
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
1 c red & yellow cherry tomatoes
3 garlic cloves
2 tbls chopped flatleaf parsley
1 tbl grated lemon zest.

Preheat oven to 400°. Line a baking pan with parchment paper. Break cauliflower into very small florets and place on baking pan. Drizzle with oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss and roast 15 min. In a medium bowl, stir tomatoes, garlic, salt and pepper together. Add tomato mixture to cauliflower and mix together. Roast another 10 min. Transfer to bowl. Add parsley and lemon zest. Toss.

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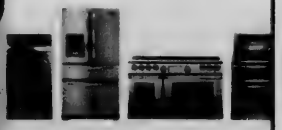

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Jewish groups denounce Quebec values charter

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Jewish groups reiterated their strong opposition to the proposed charter of Quebec values unveiled by the Parti Québécois (PQ) government on Sept. 10, three weeks after details were apparently leaked to the media.

From the pulpit on Yom Kippur, Rabbi Reuben Poupko of Congregation Beth Israel Beth Aaron called on all Jews – men and women – to wear kippot and Stars of David in public to protest what he views as an attack on civil liberties.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and B'nai Brith Canada both believe the prohibition on religious headwear and other "conspicuous" symbols for public sector employees is contrary to the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

"It is unacceptable and will only serve to inflame civil discourse," CIJA said in a strongly worded statement.

The proposed legislation is "discriminatory, arbitrary, provocative and will sow the seeds of division that the government claims it wishes to avoid."

It continued: "The government is rehashing old, out-of-context stories in order to generate support for the unwarranted attack on the basic rights and freedoms of Quebecers, all to find a solution to the so-called 'reasonable accommodation crisis,' which was largely recognized as fictitious."

The charter's stated aims are to reinforce state neutrality and the secular character of public institutions, as well as underline the equality of men and women.

CIJA counters that the separation of church and state is well entrenched and there's no need for new laws.

"The prohibition on wearing religious symbols in the public and para-public service is not justified, and would exclude a large number of Quebecers. The role of the state should be to bring people together, not to divide them," it says.

Continued on page 14

Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville presents a copy of the proposed charter of Quebec values to Premier Pauline Marois. *(Government of Quebec photo)*

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John Kerry, left, and Benjamin Netanyahu *(Flash90 photo)*

Syria weapons deal sets standard for Iran, Kerry says

JTA

JERUSALEM — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said the U.S.-Russia deal on the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons will also have an impact on Iran and that military action is still possible.

Following a meeting Sunday in Jerusalem with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Kerry told reporters that the agreement "will only be as efficient as its implementation will be" and that "[U.S.] President [Barack] Obama has made it clear that to accomplish this, the threat of force remains."

Kerry said the agreement reached the previous day between him and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov "has the full ability to strip all of the chemical weapons from Syria." He also said that destroying Syria's chemical weapons arsenal sets a standard for Iran, and that the world must not allow "hollow words" to dominate international affairs.

Under the agreement, Syria would provide a full account of its chemical weapons stockpile within a week.

Continued on page 25

Chol Hamoed Sukkot
Candlelighting: 7:00
Havdalah: 8:02
Greater Toronto Area

Spotlight on influential and up-and-coming Jews
See Community Focus — Section B

Oslo accords debate continues 20 years later — please see page 7

CANADA

JGH Backs Workers

MONTREAL — The Jewish General Hospital (JGH) in Montreal said it supports its employees' freedom to wear religious symbols, no matter how overt. The hospital said that "the freedom of choice to wear conspicuous religious symbols does not impede the ability of its employees to deliver proper and timely services to the public" and that "as long as those services are offered with professional competence, courtesy and respect, the recipients' perceptions should not override the freedom of religion and the freedom of expression of hospital employees." The proposed charter of Quebec values unveiled by the Parti Québécois government Sept. 10 would let hospitals apply for a renewable, five-year exemption. The JGH thinks this might be impractical because some staff work at multiple institutions and may have to conform to varying dress codes if some had exemptions and some didn't.

WORLD

Young Jews Attacked

PARIS — Ten teens reportedly of African and North African origin assaulted 10 Jewish 13-year-olds from the Ner HaTorah private Jewish school at a public sports centre in Paris, Sept. 12. There were no serious injuries. The attackers reportedly asked the Jews to stop "occupying the area," called them "dirty Jews" and said "Hitler didn't finish the job" and shouted "Viva Palestine." The attackers fled when police arrived, according to a Sept. 13 report on the French Jewish news site *JSSnews*. Parents and pupils said the attack, in the 19th Arrondissement, turned into a fight as the Jewish pupils tried to defend themselves. The attackers may have been from a high school whose sports facilities the Jewish students are allowed to use.

Pope Praises Jews For Keeping Faith

ROME — Pope Francis praised Jews for keeping their faith despite the Holocaust and other "terrible trials" throughout history, and reaffirmed Judaism as the "holy root" of Christianity.

He made the statements in an unprecedented open letter to Eugenio Scalfari, a prominent Italian atheist and founding editor of the liberal newspaper *La Repubblica*.

Pope Francis

The letter, published Sept. 11 on the front page of *La Repubblica*, came in response to editorials this summer by Scalfari directly addressing Francis on faith and religion.

The Pope's reply affirmed the necessity of open dialogue with non-believers, which he called "right and proper and precious." He also responded to Scalfari's query about "what we should say to our Jewish brothers about the promise made to them by God: has it all come to nothing?"

"Believe me," the Pope wrote, "this is a question that challenges us radically as Christians, because, with the help of God, especially since Vatican Council II, we have rediscovered that the Jewish people are still for us the holy root from which Jesus germinated."

The Pope said that particularly due to close ties with Jews in his native Argentina, he had often, in prayer, "questioned God, especially when my mind went to the memory of the terrible experience of the Shoah."

Shoah To Be Recalled

BUDAPEST — A disused Budapest train station will soon become a $22-million Holocaust memorial centre. The Hungarian prime minister's chief of staff said it will feature an educational centre and will be opened by spring 2014 at Budapest's Jozsefvaros train station. That timing coincides with the 70th anniversary of the rapid deportation of 437,000 Hungarian Jews, which began in the spring of 1944.

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Home dialysis gives dad time with newborn

Abigail Cukier
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — Just a couple months after setting up a nursery for their newborn, Arie and Joy Pekar dedicated another room in their home to dialysis treatment.

Arie started dialysis on June 19 and, on June 23, he and Joy welcomed a baby, Benjamin, who arrived three weeks early, into their home.

Earlier this month, Arie started home hemodialysis so he could spend less time away from his family.

Arie has polycystic kidney disease, which causes cysts to develop and interfere with the organ's ability to filter waste from the blood. In addition, the disease makes you exceptionally tired, as the kidney is responsible for creating a hormone that triggers the body to create red blood cells. It can also cause nausea, skin conditions and trouble with digestion.

Arie's mother, Ilana, has had the disease for decades, and after learning he had very high blood pressure, Arie was tested. At age 21, he found out he had inherited the genetic condition.

Because Arie, now 33, was diagnosed early and while he was in good health, doctors were optimistic about his prognosis. But despite preventive treatments and a healthy lifestyle, his disease is progressing quickly.

Arie and his mom both need kidney transplants. Friends and family have been tested as donors and ruled out.

Since the couple went public with their story last January, several people have come forward for testing, but so far, no one has been a suitable match.

His doctors had hoped Arie would get a transplant before he needed to start dialysis, as that would help his prognosis. But this spring, it became clear he would need to start the treatment.

Continued on page 16

Arie Pekar with his son, Benjamin, getting dialysis in the hospital when Benjamin was 10 days old.

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Israel's security situation quietly improves

With the intense focus in western media over the past few weeks on confusion surrounding U.S. policy regarding Syria, several interesting developments elsewhere in the Middle East have gone largely unnoticed.

Some of these developments are surprisingly positive where Israel is concerned, an ironic situation given the general state of chaos and turmoil affecting so much of the region.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Recent unexpected changes stemming mainly from the Egyptian army's July overthrow of former president Mohammed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood have resulted today in improved security on Israel's southern border.

Specifically, Egypt has been involved in an unprecedented military campaign to regain control of what, for years, was widely acknowledged as its "lawless" Sinai Peninsula. Jihadist and even some Al Qaeda-affiliated groups with the assistance of radicalized Bedouin have used the Sinai as a launching pad for attacks on both Egyptian security forces and Israel, including, in the latter case, missile attacks targeting Eilat.

In mid-August, when 25 Egyptian police were ambushed and killed execution-style by Islamic militants in the northern Sinai, Egypt decided the time had finally come to act decisively. To do so, it needed Israel's co-operation in permitting more Egyptian troops and heavy military equipment in the Sinai than are allowed under the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace agreement.

Amos Harel in *Ha'aretz* reported on this co-operation: "Although [Egypt and Israel] want to keep their warmer relationship under wraps, it is hard to ignore the fact that they enjoy not only tactical co-operation on the ground, but also a convergence of strategic interests. Considering the dramatic chain of events in Egypt since 2011, it is very hard to predict the coming months, but at least in the short term, Israel's security situation on its southern and western fronts has seen a major change for the better."

In Gaza, Hamas also has suffered a major setback.

"Egyptian pressure on Hamas has meant it will not dare even think about firing rockets at Israel or allowing smaller Palestinian factions to do so. The Hamas leadership in Gaza, still surprised and bruised by the violent and effective way the leaders of their sister movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, were deposed in Cairo, are careful to obey," Harel wrote.

In its Sept. 7 article "Lonely Hamas," the *Economist* described Hamas' growing isolation and an irony involving Israel: Hamas has increasingly had to turn to Israel to provide more of the basic necessities, such as fuel, that it used to receive from Egypt. The impact on Hamas has had some surprising effects.

As the *Economist* noted: "At Friday prayers, some Hamas preachers curse Egypt more than Israel. Hamas border guards arrest and even shoot anyone trying to break the ceasefire with Israel. The 300,000-odd Israelis living in easy rocket range of the border with Gaza are enjoying a rare bout of calm."

As to changes in the wider region, the *Jerusalem Post*'s Yaakov Lappin reported (Sept. 8) on a talk given by senior Israeli Defence Ministry official Maj.-Gen. Amos Gilad to the Institute for Counter-Terrorism's international summit in Herzliya. "An axis of Sunni states [Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries] has taken form in the region, which [in Gilad's words] 'does not view Israel as a sworn enemy' and has successfully kept extremist jihadi terrorism at bay," Lappin wrote.

He quoted Gilad that this alliance, – which views the United States as the sole superpower – is of "huge importance" to Israel, even though it will never be accepted as a formal member.

Left unsaid is that there is growing concern among some of the Sunni states that in light of perceived indecision over Syria, the United States' role has been diminished and Russia's enhanced, including its strengthened alliance with Iran. Shia Iran, after all, remains the dominant threat to Sunni states' stability as well as to Israel's security.

Although the situation may shift again, any news about Israel's improved strategic position with some of its Arab neighbours is reason to feel encouraged.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

RIDE FOR KIDS: For the third time in as many years, Jewish National Fund Toronto partnered with the Hard Chargers Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club to raise awareness and funds for the 40 prison wardens who were killed in the 2010 Carmel forest fire in Israel. About 80 participants in the Correctional Officers Ride, held Sept. 8 in Newmarket, Ont., raised more than $10,000 for an educational scholarship fund set up for the children of the fallen Israeli wardens. (Kevin Rosenthall photo)

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Zionism's unfinished business

Rabbi Tarfon's oft-quoted adage in the *Ethics of our Fathers*, "the work [of perfecting the world] is not yours to complete, but neither are you free to desist from it," holds true for Israel and its supporters.

Earlier generations succeeded in creating a strong, viable and vibrant state. Consider three of their many achievements: first, superior technological and military capabilities that enable Israel to defend itself against virtually any threat; second, an active democracy with effective civil society organizations and an independent judiciary that, for the most part, encourages debate and dissent in the public square, and third, the transformation of Hebrew into a rich language that gives dynamic expression to the country's boundless creativity and spirit.

But earlier generations didn't complete the work. Israel continues to confront three contentious challenges that must be resolved for it to prosper into the future. All are intertwined with the overarching, unsettled question of the country's dual self-definition as a "Jewish and democratic state" – the full meaning of which has yet to be clarified.

The first challenge is the role of religion in public life. For decades, numerous efforts to articulate a model that's right for Israel have foundered on the shoals of political barriers, although the recent Religion and State Index of the Hiddush Association showed that 61 per cent of Israeli Jews favour greater separation of religion and state and widespread opposition to the Orthodox Chief Rabbinate's monopoly on personal-status issues.

The second challenge is Israel's treatment of its non-Jewish minority. Twenty per cent of the country's eight million citizens are Arab, and the question of their equality and loyalty remains a festering sore. In a Jewish state, they're second class. In a democracy, they're equal. Squaring this circle is a formidable task.

The third challenge is territorial. Ultimately, Israel can't thrive without defined borders and a two-state resolution of its conflict with the Palestinians. Real security concerns notwithstanding, removing this "elephant from the room" is essential for the country's identity, demography, international standing and morality. Last week, Science Minister Yaacov Peri reiterated, "everyone knows that a bi-national state is the end of Zionism."

This is where the three challenges are joined: ending the occupation will assure Israel a Jewish majority and buttress its democracy, allowing an open discussion of its dual character.

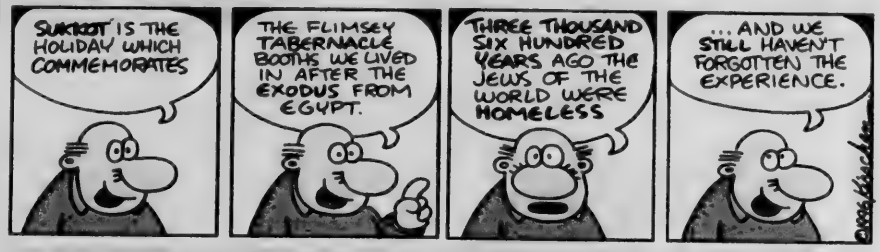
In the current Knesset, some lawmakers prefer to retreat inwardly by introducing proposals for a new Basic Law that will shift the balance to Israel's Jewish identity over its democratic principles. This could easily become a slippery slope.

Rabbi Dow Marmur's recent statement, in this paper, that "Canadian Jewry needs a Peter Beinart" and Consul General DJ Schneeweiss' comment that "Israel must include all Jews" are exhortations to embrace, rather than avoid, the difficult conversations we must have on the unfinished business of Zionism. And they are a call to do so in a big, inclusive and diverse tent that respects differences and values listening.

The task may not be completed in our lifetime, but we cannot desist from it, and we may emerge stronger for it.

Shira Herzog

Dry Bones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... AND WE STILL HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THE EXPERIENCE.

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Unity is important

As Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz beautifully elucidates ("Who is your bad Jew?" *The CJN*, Aug. 15), Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehudah Berlin establishes an obligation to maintain inter-communal unity among all Jews. To that effect, it is interesting to note how Rabbi Berlin's response continues that the purpose of such inter-communal unity is to build a system of education that follows the Talmud and *Shulchan Aruch*, and where all the academic studies (including secular subjects) are taught by scholars who fear Heaven.

In my opinion, this caveat of Rabbi Berlin means that his unity prescription parallels the unity prescription of Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik, the latter envisaging inter-communal alliances on matters of *klapei chutz* (external social efforts to benefit humanity), while maintaining Orthodox independence on matters of *klapei pnim* (internal halachic matters). Inspired by Rabbi Berlin and Rabbi Soloveitchik's message – particularly as elaborated by Rabbi Steinmetz – we can indeed achieve Jewish unity, thereby enriching our common destiny.

Shalom Spira
Montreal

• • •

It's truth, not jingoism

The writer of the letter "Columnist too jingoistic" (*The CJN*, Aug. 29) is as wrong and confused about Cuba as he is about Israel. The Stalinists in Cuba have executed 15,000 to 17,000 people and currently have thousands of political prisoners. The writer calls truth "jingoism" when the facts about Israel, or facts presented about abusive leftist regimes, do not coincide with, or somehow impinge on, his own hard-wired false beliefs.

Many modern Jew haters now use "Zionist" as a weasel substitute for "Jews" to hide from the fact that anti-Zionism is indeed anti-Semitism. Left-wing Jews are becoming more vocal, more one-sided against Israel, less willing to listen to the truth and wholly open and receptive to the lies – lies from Jewish Jew-haters, Islamist groups sponsored by terrorists, leftist professors and "religious" leaders who blame all the ills of the world on Israel.

I hope that our mainstream Jewish groups will one day stand up to equivocators and propagandists who have turned the pride of Israel into incessant rage against a country and a people. Some people are bent on shrinking or destroying Israel for the sake of Arab dictators and Islamic terrorists so that they can grab the one country in the region that has evaded their conquest.

Gary Gerofsky
Dundas, Ont.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Michaels is fair and even-handed

Letter writer Ben Barkow goes overboard when he claims that *CJN* columnist Paul Michaels is "too jingoistic" in his writing ("Columnist too jingoistic" *The CJN*, Aug. 29). The letter writer recommends that your newspaper stop carrying his columns.

I have been reading Michaels' columns for a number of years now, and I have always found his writing to be lucid, informative and even-handed. He manages to take a cutting-edge issue – e.g., Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons – and treat the issue fairly, in the context of reviewing the coverage from major news outlets. The fact his column represents a good "news watch" feature (something not-too-common in Canadian journalism) adds to what makes it interesting.

I disagree with the ugly tone of Barkow's letter. He says that Michaels' writing caters to a "small, nasty segment of your readership." Michaels' point-of-view differs little from that of most of the other opinion writers in *The CJN*.

David Murrell
Fredericton

• • •

Community divided by JCC closure

The UJA campaign launch begs to be congratulated for its success ("UJA campaign off to record start," *The CJN*, Aug. 29). However, your article stated that UJA Federation of Greater Toronto unifies the community. I beg to differ. The Jewish community centre on Bathurst Street was torn down, dispersing its members to other centres, including more than 200 members to the Columbus Centre. The result was not unifying. Instead, it separated the community. Here we are, three years later, and we still don't have a JCC to act as a second home to seniors, Holocaust survivors, and squash, racquetball and tennis players.

Perhaps because those decision-makers were so shortsighted, we are no longer the unified community we once were.

Murray Rich
Toronto

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Twenty years later, debate on Oslo accords rages

Alex Traiman
JNS.org

Twenty years after the signing of the fateful Oslo accords between Palestinian Liberation Organization chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, MKs are heavily debating the merits of the peace process and the two-state solution paradigm.

Parliamentarians from both Israel's left and the right agree that the process has not yielded the results anyone would have hoped for, including the deaths of more than 1,000 Israelis and 3,000 Palestinians, and they agree that Israelis and Palestinians are more skeptical than ever about the prospects for a negotiated settlement.

Where Knesset members disagree is on whether the process was flawed from the outset, and on whether the principles that led to the signing of the interim peace agreement should still be applied. Consequently, the 20-year anniversary of the Oslo accords – signed Sept. 13, 1993 – is not a celebration of the agreement's outcome, but rather a debate on its merits.

"The main lesson is that the paradigm of the left, that land for peace will bring security to the region, has failed, and this is the time to think clearly that we should not endorse a Palestinian state," MK and Deputy Defence Minister Danny Danon of the Likud party told *JNS.org*.

MK Hilik (Yehiel) Bar, secretary general of the Labor party and deputy speaker of the Knesset, said to think about the alternatives to the Oslo accords and to Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiations "is foolish, unfair, and it will not happen."

"There is no other option than to have a Jewish state and a Palestinian state that is based on the '67 borders," Bar told *JNS.org*.

Currently, details of the new round of Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiations, which were announced in July, are largely being kept from the public. The negotiations are being advanced by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Martin Indyk, former U.S. ambassador to Israel. Indyk has come under scrutiny for serving on the board of the New Israel Fund, a left-leaning NGO that heavily funds anti-settlement and anti-religious activity.

Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, left, U.S. president Bill Clinton, centre, and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat at the historic signing. (*Vince Musi/The White House*)

While Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas appear to be entertaining the possibility that a peace settlement can be reached through the current round of negotiations, most Israelis and Palestinians aren't paying much attention.

In an unusual turn of events, members of Israel's governing coalition and the prime minister's party are coming out against negotiations, while members of the opposition are supporting the government's initiative.

"The prime minister said clearly that he supports negotiations without preconditions. Yet he hasn't said where he stands on the outcome of negotiations," said Likud's Danon.

"I think the Israelis are waking up and they have understood that the idea is not valid anymore, and we see more and more Israelis shifting. We should not endorse any idea that we will give land to the Palestinians," he said.

Labor's Bar, however, believes it is the very distrust between Israelis and Palestinians that makes segregating Israel into two separate states a necessity. Bar insists that if peace efforts had played out only slightly differently, the creation of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank could have resulted.

"We had three major attempts to make peace," said Bar. "One was Rabin-Arafat. The treaty was signed. But as we know, Rabin was shot down by a Jewish terrorist. There is no way to know what would have happened if Rabin was still alive."

The second attempt was between Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Arafat, according to Bar. During those negotiations, Barak offered Arafat more than 95 per cent of the West Bank for a Palestinian state. Arafat famously rejected the offer, and embarrassed mediating U.S. president Bill Clinton in the process.

"Arafat chose to die as a shahid [martyr], not as a peacemaker. That was his choice," Bar said.

In the third round, between Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert and Abbas, "Both sides say that it was Olmert's legal complications within Israel that prevented the negotiations from going all the way," Bar said.

While the three rounds of negotiations ultimately resulted in increasing distrust, intifadahs, Israeli military operations, and a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, Bar suggested that Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiations may still deliver results.

"This current Knesset has a very clear majority for the two-state solution. I think that more than 70 Knesset members would vote for a two-state solution if brought for a vote," Bar told *JNS.org*.

"The status quo is unsustainable," he said.

Other Knesset members are not as optimistic that negotiations will cure decades of unrest.

"Everytime you try a certain medicine and it doesn't work, you need to either realize the medicine doesn't work or re-analyze the disease," said Deputy Transportation Minister Tzipi Hotevely (Likud).

"Oslo was based on three incorrect assumptions," Hotevely said. "The first assumption is that the conflict is about territory. The second assumption is that Arabs and Jews should not live together, and that segregation and separate states can create peaceful existence. The third assumption was that the conflict was about 1967."

"[Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon proposed segregation, with the unilateral disengagement from Gaza," she said. "The result was radicalism. Hamas took over. Gaza didn't become Singapore like many hoped it would. Instead, rockets started falling on Sderot."

As to whether the current peace talks will yield results, Hotevely is certain they won't.

"I'm sure Bibi Netanyahu has goodwill, but the talks will fail. The reason is because the conflict is not about [Israeli territorial expansion in] 1967, it is about Israel's independence in 1948," Hotevely said. "The conflict is not about territory. The conflict is religious. It may be difficult for liberals to realize that the conflict may not have a logical solution."

"We've been there, we've done that. We've tried it. It failed. We need to try something else," she said.

Meanwhile, the debate on Oslo continues.

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Israel must tread carefully amid chaos in Arab world

Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

With deadly street battles between the military and the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo; rocket attacks and chemical weapons in the Syrian civil war; car bombs targeting Shiites and Sunnis in Lebanon and Iraq; repeated assaults against Christian minorities, and more, occurring on a daily basis it should be clear that the Middle East really is a dangerous neighbourhood.

This description isn't a "right-wing Zionist myth" but the core environment in which Israel must operate, requiring great caution in selecting policies and responses.

In contrast to this complex reality, far too many "experts" – journalists, academics, politicians and diplomats – continue to offer the same simplistic mantras for solving conflicts and bringing peace. They speak and write with an air of great certainty about issues and situations that are inherently uncertain and constantly changing.

In reality, there are no magic or short-term solutions, and outsiders, no matter how well-meaning or powerful, including the president of the United States, are entirely incapable of imposing solutions. The best they can do is follow the Hippocratic oath taken by doctors: do no harm.

Indeed, the quick transformation of the Arab Spring into inhuman slaughter highlights the need for a strong and sobering dose of humility among analysts from all perspectives. Two years ago, most policymakers and opinion leaders in the West were excitedly predicting a new dawn as Arab totalitarian regimes and petty dictatorships were overthrown to make way for democracy and freedom.

They confidently forecast that in Libya and Syria, the Gadhafi and Assad regimes would soon be replaced by tolerant and peace-loving liberal regimes, like (or almost like) in Europe and North America. In Egypt, the evil military regime had been ousted, and democracy had supposedly triumphed. In the commentaries and policy pronouncements, these romantic facades replaced the clearly stated core objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda and other jihadists.

Similarly, according to the accepted wisdom (introduced with words such as "everyone knows" or "it is obvious that"), an agreement to create a Palestinian state in the West Bank, end the "occupation," "share" Jerusalem and set mass terrorists free became the necessary ingredients for a peaceful Middle East.

The daily incitement from the Palestinian leadership, the ongoing violence and the intense power struggle between Hamas and the PLO are replaced by imagined signs of mutual understanding. And in this rosy fairy tale, a Palestinian state would be insulated from the terrible violence and chaos that is the norm everywhere else in the Arab world.

In parallel, the powerful leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Oxfam and their partners frequently issue authoritative statements on the Middle East that reinforce the facade. Journalists (including at the CBC) confuse these empty pronouncements as substantive analysis and do no independent fact-checking. While obsessively spreading false accusations against Israel, the real war crimes, mass killings and daily human rights violations in the Arab world were ignored. It should be obvious that the narrow ideological officials who control many of the political advocacy NGOs got everything wrong, but they keep churning out sound bites.

For the consumers on the other end of all of this expertise and advice on the Middle East, the first recommendation is *caveat emptor* – buyer beware. The majority of Israelis have learned this lesson the hard way, and 20 years after the disastrous "Oslo peace process," simple-minded analysis and easy prescriptions are viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism. We know that there's no comparison between our neighbourhood and Europe or North America, and that mass violence is not due to differences over where to draw borders or "ending the occupation." Without fundamental changes in Arab and Muslim societies, whatever policies Israel adopts are irrelevant.

And for the journalists, academics, political activists and others who kindly offer us advice from far away, a little humility would go a long way. Before they repeat the conventional wisdom and usual mantras about Israel, they might spend some time observing the violent conflicts being waged in Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad and across the Arab world. To avoid being pulled into this chaos, Israel's leaders must choose its policies very carefully and avoid recycled and simplistic slogans.

Appreciating our Judaism through a sojourn in India

Yair Lootsteen
in Jerusalem

My family and I spent most of August on a journey through parts of India, and I haven't quite returned home yet.

We visited Mumbai and Delhi for a couple of days each, but most of our time was spent discovering Ladakh, a remote and sparsely populated Himalayan region, magnificently nestled in the north-western Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, bordering both Tibet, in China, and Pakistan. Due to its high altitude and extreme winters, it's open to tourists for only a few months each year.

I know this isn't a travel column, and although I highly recommend this trip to others similarly inclined and will happily give my two cents to anyone who might want them, I won't tire you with the details of our journey. Suffice it to say it was a wonderful family experience, not devoid of challenges (my son got acute stomach poisoning), and India with all its contrasts – religious, cultural and scenic splendours juxtaposed against extraordinary poverty and a literal sea of humanity – is a place I'll surely visit again.

And while it wasn't the focus of our trip, our travels also provided opportunities to examine who we are as Jews and Israelis.

To start with, our family has an Indian-Jewish connection. My wife's late mother was of Indian heritage, having spent some of her formative years in Bombay – today's Mumbai. We visited synagogues still active, including the wonderful, ornate Magen David where she and her parents prayed, the neighbourhood where she grew up and the Jewish cemetery where we said *Kaddish* at the grave of my wife's great-grandfather, a rabbinic scholar who travelled to India from Yemen in the late 19th century to become a spiritual mentor to the distinguished Sassoon family.

It was wonderful meeting family members still living in Mumbai.

We came across hundreds of Israelis, mostly 20-somethings recently released from IDF military service. They come in droves to decompress, are known locally for doing just a bit too many drugs, and gather in particular towns and villages. In Leh, Ladakh's regional capital and in Manali, in Himachal Pradesh, they are numerous. Many shops advertise in Hebrew, some merchants speak the language pretty well, and restaurants serve schnitzel, hummus, and Israeli salad.

Like it or not, this is the scene.

Buddhism prevails in these parts, with hundreds of temples, enticing, accessible and tangible in their aesthetic beauty and friendly monks. We met Israeli youngsters who appeared to have been smitten spiritually. Others connect to their roots through the work of places such as Habayit HaYehudi in Leh. Known by locals as Jew House and run by a young Orthodox couple from Jerusalem, it's an anchor for Jewish kids, especially secular Israelis over-exposed to India's raw spirituality and in need of reminders that they have a spiritual home of their own. We joined a couple hundred of them one Friday evening for Kabbalat Shabbat, and although we're used to a more pluralistic brand of Judaism, after a week of countless temple visits, praying wheels and fabulous golden Buddhas, it was refreshing to bring in Shabbat with songs and prayers we felt at home with.

Other experiences reminded me of home. In the big cities, airport-style metal detectors are the norm when entering hotels, malls and major tourist sites.

During our stay, a border altercation with Pakistani insurgents left five Indian soldiers dead and the nation in mourning. We learned of persistent tensions between India and Pakistan, and India and China.

Travelling in Ladakh, one can't help noticing a large military presence, with huge bases, military convoys, roadblocks, and permits required for travel to certain areas, while others are completely out of bounds to foreigners.

We visited the Hall of Fame, a memorial in Leh to hundreds of Indian soldiers killed during the Kargil War of 1999 (previously unbeknownst to me) between India and Pakistan. It reminded me of similar memorials to battles and soldiers here in Israel. Being a neutral outsider, it seemed to me that so many had died because of futile territorial gamesmanship by all sides.

And another thing. Most Indians we met know little if anything about Israel and the conflicts afflicting our region. It was refreshing not to find anything about us in the press.

Returning to our own war drums here in Israel, we're still breathing the thin air of the Himalayas, a bit more appreciative of what we have at home.

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Ryerson buys time for decision on Sam's signs

CJN Staff

The decision on the future of two massive spinning records that used to adorn Sam the Record Man's Yonge Street frontage in downtown Toronto has been put off for a year.

Last week, the Toronto and East York Community Council agreed to give Ryerson University extra time to come up with a plan for the two-storey neon-lit signs.

The record-selling business that would become Sam the Record Man was founded by Sam Sniderman in 1937. The flashy neon signs at the centre of the issue were installed in 1961 and to many became iconic and synonymous with the bustle and excitement of Yonge Street.

Ryerson acquired the signs when it purchased the Sam the Record Man property in 2008. At the time, Toronto City Council was considering designating the property, on Yonge just north of Dundas Street, under the Ontario Heritage Act. As a condition of purchase, Ryerson agreed to store the signs and re-install them when it completed its Student Learning Centre on the site.

In November 2012, Ryerson informed the City of Toronto that it proposed a three-part alternative to re-mounting the signs. Citing potential environmental concerns over mercury in the neon tubing and a shortage of qualified sign experts, the school proposed an alternative way to commemorate the once-iconic store.

Ryerson suggested creating a replica sign in the sidewalk in front of what used to be the store, as well as a commemorative insert telling the store's story. It would also launch a website recognizing the significance of the store as part of a tribute to "Music on Yonge Street – celebrating 70 years of Sam's."

Ryerson denied cost was a factor, though media reports put the price at restoring the signage at $250,000.

The Sam the Record Man sign adorned the front of the Yonge-Dundas store *(Wikimedia Commons photo)*

City staff approved Ryerson's proposal, but opposition grew from a number of sources, including city council. A petition that, as of last week, had garnered more than 1,100 signatures called on the city to hold Ryerson to the terms of its contract.

"The agreement between Toronto and Ryerson University was that they would put the Sam the Record Man sign back up after it was removed for construction," stated the petition, addressed to city councilors. "Now the city is going to let them out of this deal because Ryerson doesn't like the aestehtics, feels it will be expensive, and a myriad of other complaints that frankly are not relevant because they are just not our problem. The only thing that's relevant is that they were allowed to build at this location if they agreed to put the sign back up. So they should."

"We're asking the city to do the absolute bare minimum, and make Ryerson honour the deal they made with the people of Toronto... Ryerson made a legal pledge to us, and now we just want them to honour the deal. End of story."

Sniderman is remembered as a mentor to many in the Canadian music industry and has been called the Godfather of Canadian Music. He died in 2012 at age 92.

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Cast and crew celebrate 20 years of Sailor Moon

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Twenty years after its original airing in Japan, *Sailor Moon* is still recognized as one of the most influential cartoons of its genre in North America.

And at this year's Fan Expo in Toronto, members of the original cast and crew celebrated the milestone with a panel discussion featuring voice actors Linda Ballantyne (Sailor Moon), Katie Griffin (Sailor Mars), Susan Roman (Sailor Jupiter) and Toby Proctor (Tuxedo Mask), as well as voice director John Stocker.

The Sailor Moon series was the Toronto Jewish voice director's first time in that position, and it has since led to him working as director on a number of cartoons, including *Totally Spies*, *Redakai*, and *Caillou*. Stocker is also well known for his voice-acting work, perhaps most famously as Beastly in the *Care Bears*.

But the Sailor Moon reunion brought back together a cast that he described as particularly special.

"Sometimes you do get together with a cast where everybody just gets along, and not only do they get along during the time we're recording, but years down the road, we have times like this where it gets even stronger, and the reflections are wonderful and we enjoy working as a team and we've become even better friends," Stocker said at the Fan Expo panel talk.

Despite several change in voice actors over the course of the series, and the fact the crew had to work on a low budget, it had a lasting impact.

For many young girls, Sailor Moon was their first introduction to anime, and it gave them a show about a group of women – the Sailor Scouts – who weren't afraid to get their hands dirty as they fought for love and justice.

Stocker said it was the first time young girls ever saw "girl power" in all its glory in a cartoon, which may explain why so many have been touched by it.

At Fan Expo, one woman thanked the panelists for their work in bringing the show to Canada, showing her that anybody – even a goofy "meatball head," a reference to Sailor Moon's trademark hairstyle – can do good.

Stocker said many fans express similar sentiments to him and the cast.

"Some refer to individual scouts as being guiding forces, role models or mentors," he told *The CJN*. "[The voice actors are] often thanked for giving them something they've been able to pass along to and share with their daughters."

He said a lot of mothers "cosplay" – short for costume play – with their daughters at the conventions, with both dressed as scouts.

The mere fact that so many people showed up to Fan Expo dressed in Sailor Scout uniforms demonstrated how long the show's influence has lasted, even though Stocker said he and most of the voice actors had no idea of its impact until years after it aired.

"I had already dropped it off my resume," he said. "Then, when I did Fan Expo a few years ago, I looked around and talked to a lot of people. Suddenly it really hit me. This thing is huge."

Fans will be happy to know that coinciding with Sailor Moon's 20th anniversary, creator Naoko Takeuchi announced a reboot of the series. It's set to debut this winter, although it hasn't been announced whether Stocker and his voice actors will return to work on an English dub.

They all expressed interest at the panel, and Stocker urged fans to contact the production company – rumoured to be Toonami – to tell them they'd like the original crew back together.

"You want to hear this gang, you want to see all of us again doing Season 6, we'd love to do it," he said.

But if he had the opportunity to get involved with the reboot, he has one thing he would change.

"I'd take my time with it," he said. "It was recorded in too much of a hurry. Sometimes we had to sacrifice production and performance values for the sake of budget. Can you imagine how amazing it would be if we had the time to pay attention to a little more detail?"

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Initiative praised by Centre for Jewish Education

Jewish schools partner on ad campaign

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

For the first time, eight Jewish day schools in the Greater Toronto Area have partnered on a marketing campaign to entice parents to "choose Jewish" for their children's education.

The centre-spread ad, which ran in last week's *CJN*, posted the dates and times for open houses for Associated Hebrew Schools, the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, Bialik Hebrew Day School, Zareinu Education Centre, Leo Baeck Day School, the Toronto Heschel School and Robbins Hebrew Academy.

The group plans to run two more back-page ads in the Sept. 25 and Oct. 10 issues of *The CJN*.

Cayla Solomon, Bialik's marketing and communications manager, who took the lead on this campaign, said it began as a discussion about what information the schools could share that would benefit them all.

"From that came the idea of doing these joint ads, mostly because we felt that we're all in the same business here in the sense that we're each selling our own brand of Jewish education. But at the end of the day, we all felt that as long as these kids were ending up in a Jewish school, we're all happy," Solomon said.

Cayla Solomon

"The overarching message needed to be 'Choose Jewish education.' You can decide what is the right school for you, but choose Jewish education."

Advertising logo being run in *The CJN* and other newspapers

Chuck English, Associated's marketing communications co-ordinator, praised Solomon for seeing the potential in bringing together the marketing representatives of various Jewish day schools and for taking the initiative.

He explained that a few years ago, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Centre for Jewish Education (CJE) facilitated meetings with the marketing co-ordinators at each of the day schools.

"It sort of fizzled out a bit," Solomon said. "I figured we needed to take it on ourselves. We weren't excluding [CJE], we just felt we needed to take ownership of it."

CJE executive director Ed Segalowitz applauded the schools' marketing directors for taking the initiative to create a joint campaign.

"I think it's terrific, it's very effective, [and] it's a good use of the school funds that are available. I think it's creative and I congratulate them," he said, adding that the schools' marketing co-ordinators have said they like to handle their own ad campaigns.

What separates the joint ad from the ones the schools run separately is that, "we're marketing the category and not just the brand," English said.

"For example, there is a milk marketing board that promotes the consumption of milk, but you can buy your milk from six different companies," he explained.

"If we can drive people to make a decision to attend Jewish day schools, and you bring more people into the system, then everyone will get their fair share."

Sheri Rapp, who is charge of marketing and admissions for Paul Penna, said in addition to presenting themselves as a community of Jewish educators, this campaign also benefits the schools financially by splitting ad costs.

"On the one hand, it's partially a financial thing, but it is much more than that really, because it is very much the schools wanting to say that we're partners in this, we're co-operating, it's a community, we are not competitors," Rapp said.

English said partnerships like this one are rare in the Jewish community.

"These schools represent completely different religious philosophies. The only thing they have in common is day school education. When is the last time you saw a group of synagogues get together to encourage people to join any synagogue?"

Rapp hopes the ads, which are also running twice in *Post City Magazines*, and will run in an upcoming issue of the *National Post*, will at least encourage parents to come out to the open houses and learn about what the schools have to offer.

"Once they actually come into the schools, they'll be pleased with what they see."

Rapp said she understands that Jewish day school tuition in Toronto – which ranges from about $12,000 a year to more than $23,000 – can be a big financial burden for many families.

"As much as possible we need to make subsidies available... It can be heartbreaking when you hear stories about people who desperately want it and there are reasons why they couldn't do it on their own," Rapp said.

"I think all schools understand the struggle that parents are going through," Solomon added.

"At Bialik, our go-to line is, 'No Jewish child should be denied a Bialik Jewish education,' and we really try to do whatever we can to be accommodating to struggling families."

Segalowitz said that making the sacrifice to provide children with a Jewish education is just one of the many difficult choices Jewish families need to make.

"If you believe in your Jewish values and believe, as a Jew, in the future of your people and the power and joy of Jewish values and traditions for your children, then you make those choices," he said.

Rapp said even parents who insist they can't afford the tuition should come out to the open houses.

"If you're interested in going, you should at least come to the open houses, apply, let people at the schools know about your financial situation and the schools will do what they can to help you. There is nothing to lose by inquiring and putting in the subsidy request... You shouldn't be afraid to at least take the first step."

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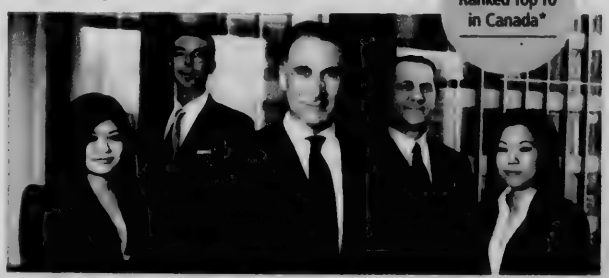

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Cancer survivor can relate to Israeli vets

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Canadian journalist Libby Znaimer knows what it takes to survive against all odds and how to overcome the challenges of rehabilitation.

Znaimer has successfully battled not one, but two cancers: breast cancer in 2006, and pancreatic cancer – the most lethal kind of all – in 2008.

On Oct. 8, Zoomer Media's vice-president of news and information for Classical 96.3FM and AM740, will share her story as the honoree at Beit Halochem Canada's Woman of Distinction Award luncheon.

The event, to be held at the Oakdale Golf and Country Club, will raise funds for Beit Halochem, an Israeli organization that helps 51,000 wounded veterans and victims of terror to recover from their injuries and psychological trauma.

From her office in Zoomer Media's headquarters in Toronto's Liberty Village neighbourhood, Znaimer spoke candidly about her unlikely survival story, as well as her lifelong connection to Israel and its people.

Having grown up in a Zionist home with her older brother, Canadian media mogul Moses Znaimer, the self-proclaimed "staunch" Zionist had even entertained the idea of making aliyah.

"Many people aren't aware, but I lived in Israel for nearly five years when I was younger… I was there shortly after the Yom Kippur War, which was very traumatic for people," she recalled.

"I got my first job in journalism with the Associated Press in Tel Aviv and I covered terrorist attacks."

One of the attacks she covered was the Coastal Road massacre of 1978, regarded as one of the worst terrorist attacks in Israel's history, which involved the hijacking of a bus. In the attack, 38 Israelis, including 13 children, were killed, and 71 were wounded.

"It was quite traumatic. I've seen all of that. So it's very meaningful for me."

She said her personal experience with recovery and rehabilitation has made her connection to Israeli victims of war and terror even stronger.

"It's hard enough when there are no visible signs [of injury] on you. When it comes to cancer, some people have different lasting problems and some people don't. I'm very lucky that I don't. To have to recover with a disability, I mean, I can't even wrap my head around it."

Libby Znaimer

Znaimer was in her 50s when she found a lump in her breast that turned out to be cancer. After her diagnosis, she tested positive for BRCA2, a genetic mutation more prevalent in Ashkenazi Jews that increases the likelihood of developing breast, ovarian and pancreatic cancer.

In 2008, a year after she endured months of surgery, chemo and radiation, Znaimer learned that she had pancreatic cancer, a disease that has a five-year survival rate of about four per cent.

She was lucky that her pancreatic cancer was detected before it spread. But it was wrapped around a main artery and vein and couldn't be operated on unless her doctors succeeded in shrinking the tumour. Znaimer and her doctors decided to try an experimental treatment to shrink the pancreatic tumour by targeting the BRCA2 mutation.

Today, the growing number of pancreatic cancer survivors can credit Znaimer, the national spokesperson for Pancreatic Cancer Canada – a foundation that raises awareness and funds for the fourth biggest cancer killer in North America – for being the first patient to test out a treatment plan that has had some success in treating a cancer that is largely considered incurable.

"No one was more surprised than my doctors when it worked," Znaimer said.

"They started treating people with the BRCA mutation that way and they respond better to treatment… I think I probably responded way better than the average, but what they started to do is they test every case for BRCA now at Princess Margaret [Cancer Centre in Toronto] and some other places," she explained. "It's a big advancement for a small subset of patients. Literally, I was just about the first case. I'm lucky that it wasn't the next person."

Beit Halochem luncheon chair Susan Flam said she is thrilled to be able to recognize Znaimer as a woman of distinction.

"Not only is she professionally accomplished as a journalist, broadcaster, and radio executive, but she has braved and won her battle with cancer and she supports many cancer-related causes. She gives back," Flam said.

"Both the veterans and the honoree have a kinship with each other, because all of them have faced major roadblocks in their lives. They have had really arduous journeys to regain control of their lives."

Hanoch Budin, an Israeli veteran who served in Lebanon in 1982, where he lost an arm in an explosion, and who went on to win eight swimming medals at the Paralympic Games, will also speak at the luncheon.

For tickets, call 905-695-0611, or visit www.beithalochem.ca.

Community condemns proposed charter

Continued from page 1

B'nai Brith believes the proposed charter is unconstitutional because it violates religious expression guarantees. It said it is prepared to intervene if the federal government mounts a court challenge.

"Instead of promoting equality and justice and seeking a better society for all, the proposed charter of values discriminates against persons of faith and transforms them into second-class citizens," said lawyer Allan Adel, national chair of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights.

"This is one of the most unconstitutional moves a government can make. The very notion that the government will be in the business of deciding what constitutes a 'large and conspicuous' religious item is simply ludicrous."

Reaction from other parts of the Jewish community was also condemnatory.

Business consultant Arthur Hiess, who has a long record of defending minority rights, said the proposed charter "harks back to the restrictions imposed on Jews" by authoritarian regimes historically.

Jews have lived in Quebec since the 1700s, and their values are part and parcel of the values of this province, he said.

The discussion of such a ban is having a negative impact on Quebec's economy, he said, scaring away foreign investment. He predicts highly mobile doctors and other professionals directly affected would leave the province.

"Quebec has become the laughingstock of North America," Hiess said.

He said he's astonished that Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville, a former Radio-Canada journalist, is appealing to the worst instincts of people, to the "lowest common denominator" by fanning fear of religious minorities, especially among those living outside Montreal, where Muslims, Jews and Sikhs are few.

Alex Werzberger, head of the Coalition of Chassidic Communities of Outremont, agreed that, if the charter is adopted, it could open the way to further restrictions. "This is going to touch each and every one of us in ways we cannot even think of," he said.

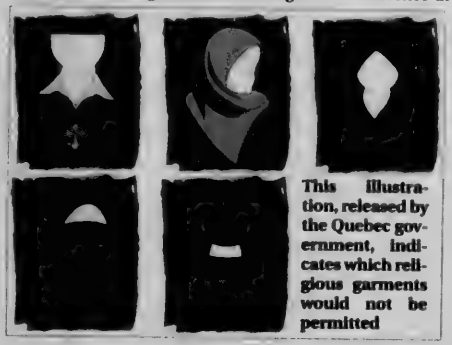
He worries, for example, that kosher meals might not be available in hospitals, or if kosher food would even be allowed to be brought in from the outside.

He's concerned that too much discretion will be in the hands of bureaucrats to draw the line between the religious and the secular.

"[Former prime minister] Pierre Trudeau said the government has no business in the bedrooms of the nation. Well, it has no business meddling in the souls or consciences of the nation, either."

Whether or not the charter is passed, Werzberger said the message the government is sending is, "We do not want any religious people showing their religion in public in Quebec." It's a chilling reminder to him of the Spanish Inquisition, when Jews were forced to convert or go underground.

"Why isn't the government taking the $2 million it's going to spend on promoting the charter and using it instead to educate people about minorities?" Werzberger asked.



This illustration, released by the Quebec government, indicates which religious garments would not be permitted

Ira Robinson, a Judaic studies professor at Concordia University specializing in Canadian Jewish studies, is fearful the charter will set the tone for who is and who is not a full-fledged member of Quebec society.

"This is an attempt to impose on an entire society a hegemonic definition of what is acceptable and what is not... This is a responsible government saying, 'We are in Quebec and this is how we define ourselves. People who do not wish to conform will not have the full privileges of our society,'" said Robinson, who wears a kippah at all times.

Robinson is concerned that when people see him on the street with his kippah, they will think, "If he wanted a responsible position, he would change, and that it is some kind of expression of dissent."

Mayors Anthony Housefather of Côte St. Luc and William Steinberg of Hampstead, which have predominantly Jewish populations, are among the mayors of 15 de-merged municipalities on the island of Montreal who, on Sept. 11, adopted a resolution opposing the charter, saying it denies the multicultural reality of the city.

"We will oppose the adoption of the charter through all political means and, in the event it is adopted, we would certainly apply for the exemption [foreseen in the proposed law]," Housefather said.

"The charter is an attempt by the PQ government to divert attention from their failure to handle the urgent issues of the day – the economy, infrastructure, education, health, pension plans – and to sow division."

In unveiling the charter, the government said the goal is to "set clear rules for everyone. Since 2006, a number of high-profile religious accommodation cases have given rise to a profound discomfort in Quebec. To maintain social peace and promote harmony, we must prevent tensions from growing... We will be best served by a state that treats everyone the same."

Among the proscribed headwear are kippot. However, small items of jewelry would be permitted.

Drainville explained at his Sept. 10 press conference at the National Assembly that the government wants "to allow people to wear discreet signs... We don't see any problem with someone wearing a little ring or little earrings showing a little cross or Star of David...

"If there is a problem eventually on the size of the things, people will just sit down and agree... We think these issues can be resolved by common sense and discussion... in good faith, and I think that people will generally agree to replace the symbol by something [and], if the problem is that it's too big, by something smaller."

The ban on "overt and conspicuous" religious attire would apply to all employees of ministries and government organizations, provincial and municipal; judges, police officers, prosecutors and correctional agents; staff of the Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs) and subsidized private daycares, public school boards, cegeps and universities, and public health care and social services.

Cegeps, universities, health and social service institutions, and municipalities could opt out of the charter for a renewable, five-year period.

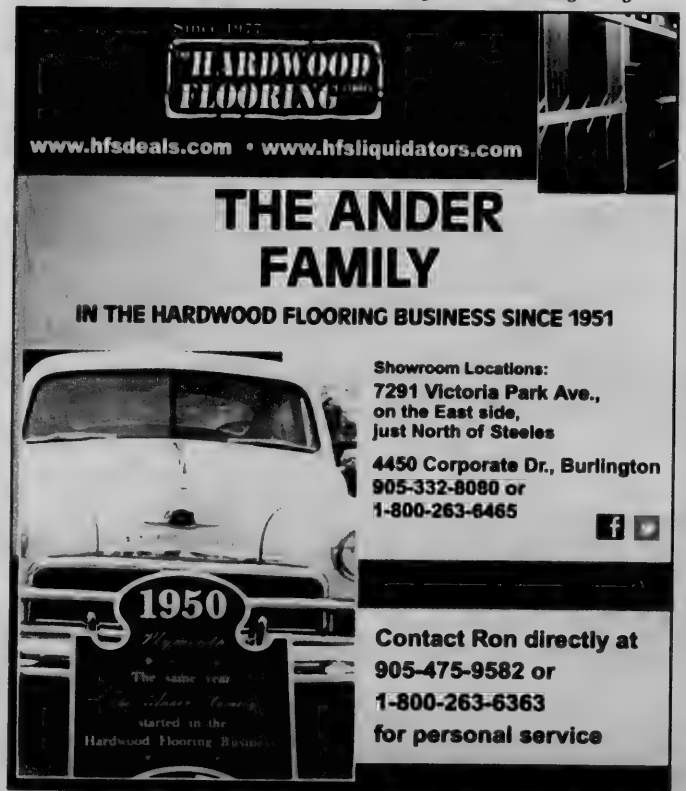
The five-pronged plan also calls for amending the Quebec rights charter to include rules on handling religious accommodation requests in light of the supremacy of state neutrality and gender equality, forbidding public employees to promote their religious beliefs on the job, requiring that faces be uncovered to receive government services, and having all ministries and governmental organizations implement a policy on neutrality and the management of religious accommodation.

Drainville stressed that "the idea of having a neutral state that is respectful of everyone, notwithstanding your personal convictions, is a very unifying idea... We need to say, and repeat and repeat, that the reason we want to do this is to give the same respect to everyone."

In Ontario, longtime MPP and former cabinet minister Monte Kwinter of the governing Liberal party tabled a motion Sept. 10 that calls on that province's legislature to oppose any bill to restrict or prohibit freedom of expression and religion in public places.

Kwinter, who is Jewish, said his aim wasn't to interfere with Quebec politics, but he believes that if the charter is adopted, it could have wider repercussions, such as an exodus of opponents to Ontario.

The motion is expected to be heard in the legislature Sept. 19, and he hopes it will receive all-party support.



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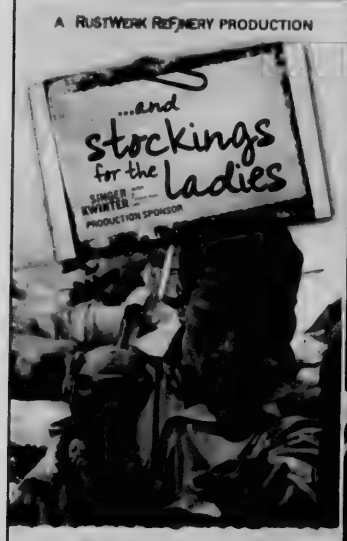

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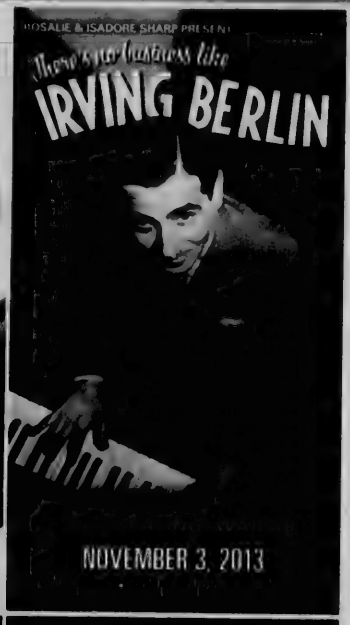

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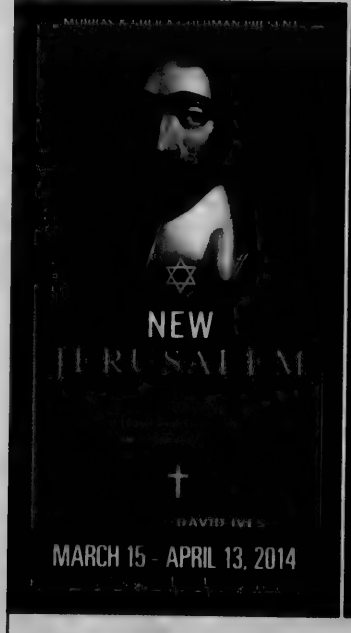

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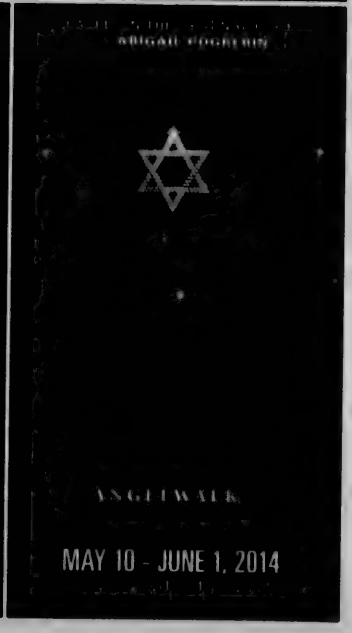

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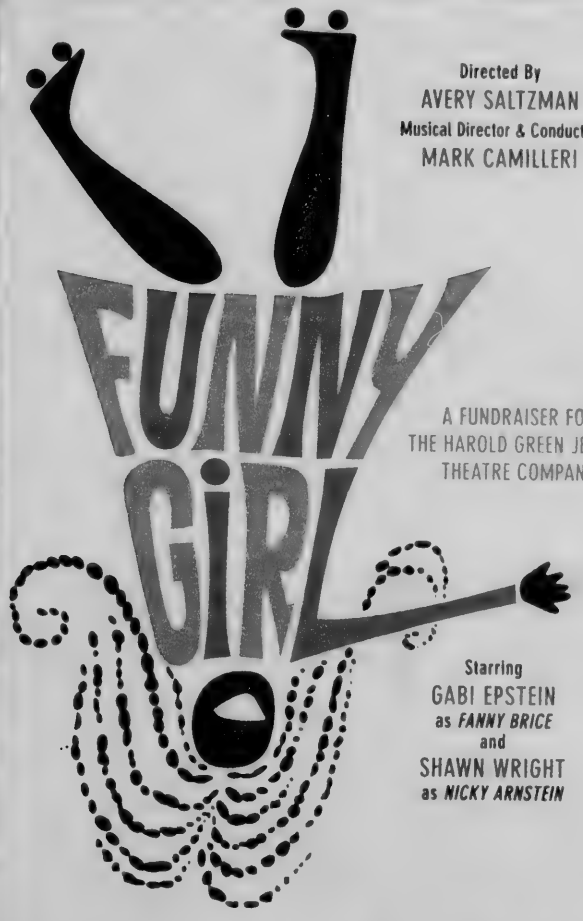

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Executive Director, Holy Blossom Temple

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A warm, collaborative, and values driven leader, the Executive Director will build a collegial, effective, and trusting working relationship with the Senior Rabbi, the professional staff, the President, the Board of Directors, and the lay leadership of the Temple, establishing partnerships that allow for the successful execution and clear delegation of responsibilities on multiple Holy Blossom initiatives. A skilled project manager, the Executive Director will manage the Temple budget in a manner that will strengthen financial sustainability allowing for Holy Blossom to achieve its full potential. An engaging and invigorating presence, the Executive Director will guide a committed administrative team, fostering a culture of engagement and high morale, while enthusiastically supporting the priorities of Holy Blossom.

Forward thinking and strategic, he/she is a skilled communicator able to maximize resources and leverage technology to extend an organization's reach and effectively engage a broader community. A diligent and agile executive, he/she is comfortable balancing administrative and operationally focused responsibilities, and is able to seamlessly transition from membership oversight and fundraising initiatives to the management and development of Temple assets. The Executive Director will be a key facilitator of Holy Blossom's physical, educational, and spiritual renewal and help guide the Temple's strategic growth for many years to come.

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To explore this Executive Director opportunity in further detail, please contact Lisa Heidman, Senior Client Partner at lheidman@bedfordgroup.com. A detailed position profile including required competencies will be provided to all qualified candidates under consideration.

New dad hopes transplant improves prognosis

Continued from page 3

Dialysis doesn't cure kidney disease or make kidneys well again, and it doesn't fully replace kidney function.

During his first dialysis treatment, Arie became nauseous, couldn't hear and fainted a couple of times. Since then, it has gotten better. But the process still leaves him exhausted, extremely hungry and usually with a bad headache. He goes through dialysis twice a week for three hours at a time.

"It is emotionally hard, too. He has seen his mom live this life," Joy said.

"I can't imagine what it must be like for him to look down the road and say 'This is what my life will be like and to have his life expectancy shortened tremendously.' And to look at a new son and think those things."

A day before Benjamin's brit milah, Arie experienced a ruptured cyst, which can happen with his disease.

A rupture leaves him in extreme pain and sometimes incapacitated for a week. Fortunately, this time, the pain subsided somewhat, and he was able to be part of the special occasion.

It can all be difficult to balance.

Arie tries to work as much as possible – he owns a security business – while fitting in dialysis, medical appointments and finding time to be with his wife and baby.

This summer, the family rented a cottage for a week, and he had to visit the local hospital for dialysis. He couldn't swim in the lake for fear of infection at his access site. He will never be able to go anywhere without being able to get dialysis, making travel out of Ontario difficult and very expensive.

"We would have never thought we'd be here at this point in our lives. Maybe in 20 to 30 years, but not now," Joy said.

"Our lives look very different than most people our age. But we will keep sharing our story and hope someone, somewhere will work out.

"We are so incredibly touched by the people who have come forward. It is amazing that people would take that step."

The Pekar family encourages anyone interested in more information to visit www.facebook.com/MomAndMeNeedA-Kidney or to email momandmeneedakidney@gmail.com.

Montreal chooses architects for Mordechai Richler gazebo

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

The gazebo on Mount Royal is to become the Pavillon Mordecai-Richler, but when is unclear.

MONTREAL — Two years after the project was announced, architects have been chosen by the City of Montreal to renovate the gazebo on the eastern slope of Mount Royal that is to be named for the late Mordecai Richler.

In June 2011, on the eve of the 10th anniversary of the writer's death, the administration of then-mayor Gérald Tremblay promised to pay tribute to Richler by restoring the more than 80-year-old structure and naming it for him.

The project was to be completed by the summer of 2012. To this day no work has been done on the gazebo, which has continued to deteriorate.

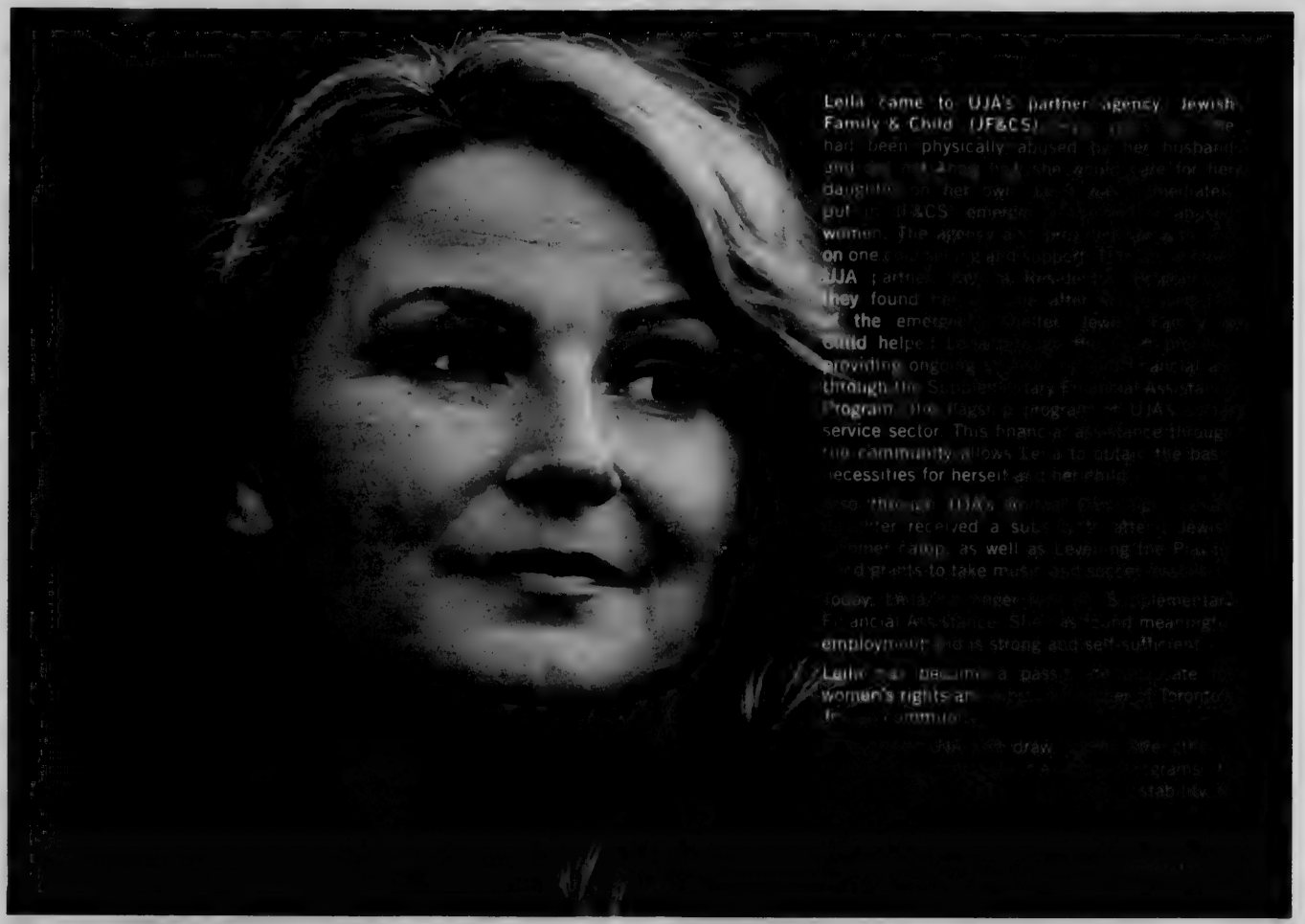
It received no publicity at the time, but on Aug. 21 the city's executive committee approved the bid by the architectural firm of Beaupré Michaud et Associés to draw up plans for "Pavillon Mordecai-Richler."

The firm was the only tender, and the executive committee approved a maximum budget of $57,753.37, taxes included, for its work.

This information only came to light after *The CJN* asked councillor Marvin Rotrand, the prime mover behind the campaign to have the city honour Richler by naming a public place after him, what progress, if any, had been made on the project.

No time frame for the submission of the architectural plans was made known.

The decision to honour Richler this way was made after months of public discussion on whether and how his native city should officially remember him. The gazebo was chosen by the city's executive committee because of its proximity to the neighbourhood Richler grew up in and made famous in his novels.



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United Jewish Appeal

University student speaks up on behalf of Israel

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to The CJN

Few students understand the importance of Israel advocacy like Leon Martynenko does.

Martynenko, originally from Ukraine, lived in Israel from 1996 to 2007 and served in the Israel Defence Forces before moving to Canada with his parents and enrolling at the University of Toronto's Mississauga campus.

These circumstances make him a little older than most of his peers, and also far more knowledgeable about the political situation in the Middle East.

While his mandatory army service is over, his peers are still getting called up regularly to defend Israel on its front lines.

So he sees it not only as desirable that he speak up on campus on behalf of Israel, but as a moral obligation.

The need for advocacy became achingly clear back in 2009, during the conflict in Gaza.

"It was horrible what was going on in school," he recalled.

Meeting StandWithUs Canada's executive director Meryle Kates in the fall of 2012 convinced Martynenko to work with the organization, sharing the truth about Israel on his own campus and beyond.

"They provide a lot of material and quality training... I joined them from the very beginning," said Martynenko.

Kates recalled: "Leon was one of the first students that I identified by a chance lucky meeting."

Leon Martynenko

Last fall, StandWithUs Canada was a brand-new offshoot of a 12-year-old organization started in the United States, which now has 17 chapters worldwide.

Martynenko was a perfect fit, Kates said.

"[He was] really committed to standing for and defending Israel on campus, and had absolutely no way to do it on his own," she said.

The Mississauga campus had very few Jewish students, Kates added, and those who were there were felt "under assault every day by the kind of anti-Israel rhetoric that's allowed to run rampant."

The situation in Mississauga parallels that at York University and other universities across Canada, Martynenko said.

"There is a big population of students who are... trying to denounce Israel at any opportunity."

He added that most university-aged students simply don't feel comfortable standing up to powerful anti-Israel factions such as Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA).

They're usually young and insecure about speaking with, or single-handedly trying to counter, these groups.

"It's hard to speak against these people," Martynenko said.

Students also lack the knowledge to counter statements they may have already heard on campus and in the media.

StandWithUs Canada offers the security of a group setting – with tables and information boards for events – along with the winning weapon of knowledge – historical and political facts that answer the vocal naysayers' claims.

"They provided pamphlets and other information so students can... educate other students, those who have no idea what Israel is," Martynenko said.

Kates said there's no other organization that offers students the kind of support that StandWithUs does.

"[We have a] focused mandate to simply empower students with the education and resource materials... to be able to speak about Israel in a way that will create positive impressions about the country," she said.

Although he graduated with a double major in economics and the history of religion, with a dual concentration in Judaism and Islam, Martynenko plans to take additional courses to prepare for a career in project management and business analysis.

Despite a busy schedule, Martynenko insisted he won't drop the StandWithUs baton he's carried for nearly a year.

"I started this on my campus, I cannot just walk away and drop responsibility on someone else. I will show up, and I will help them."

The Canadian Jewish community must continue supporting StandWithUs Canada while it expands its operations onto more campuses, including U of T's downtown campus, Ryerson University, York and further afield, Martynenko said.

Though university administrators may personally support Israel, they "will not speak out against specific... phenomena on campus."

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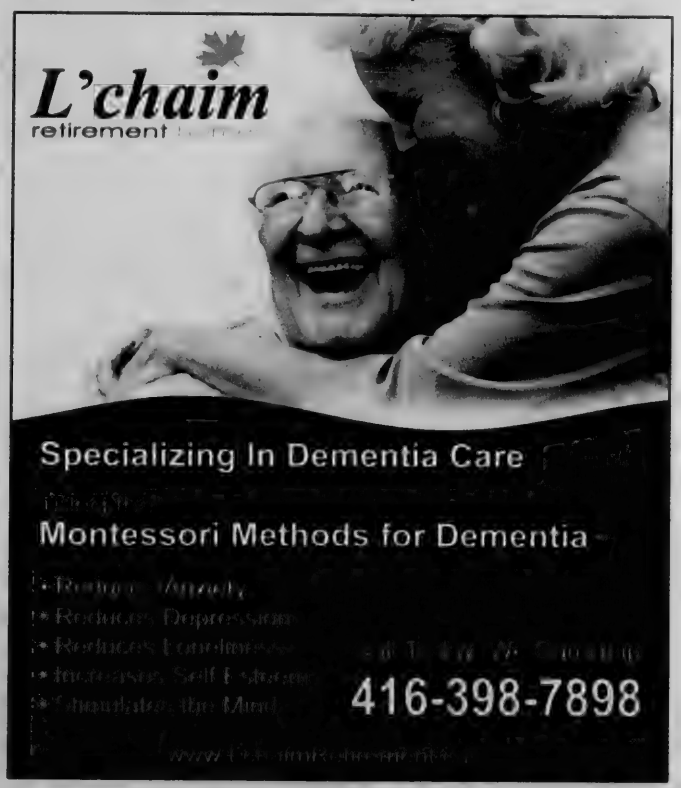

Marathon puts focus on glaucoma

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Mark Shaffer, a local physician, is taking part in a marathon next month to raise the profile of a disease that has affected his family for years.

He's running for the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada in the Scotiabank Waterfront Charity Challenge – comprising a half marathon, a 5-km run or a 5-km walk – taking place Oct. 20.

An eye disease that can lead to blindness, glaucoma affects 400,000 people in Canada, with an estimated another 400,000 as yet undiagnosed.

Shaffer's son, Gabriel, now 40, who is married with two children, was born with no central vision in his right eye, due to an infection his mother contracted while pregnant.

"If he is looking at a bullseye, he only sees the periphery," Shaffer said.

About 12 years ago, Gabriel's "good eye became another bad eye" when he began feeling some discomfort from pressure within his eye.

"He was diagnosed with glaucoma and since then has continued to take drops and has had two surgeries. He requires exceedingly careful and timely follow-up for the remainder of his life with the hope that he maintains the vision that he has."

Shaffer became involved in the society about seven years ago, he said, because it's a small group, and he wanted to get the word out.

"Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness if it goes untreated."

The mission of the group, he said, is to raise funds for research.

A "minimal runner," Shaffer is taking part in the marathon to raise money and raise awareness. "We have to send out a message, and even my grandchildren are involved. This past summer they ran a lemonade stand in front of their house to raise funds for the society."

For information on the run, visit torontowaterfrontmarathon.com.

Corey, left, and Jonathan Shaffer raise funds for the Glaucoma Research Society of Canada.

Corrections

The story "Ve'ahavta launches Aboriginal health program" (Sept. 4) should have said that Joe Barnes is the executive director of Kenora Chiefs Advisory. *The CJN* regrets the omission.

Incorrect information appeared in the article, "Sukkahville competition set for Sept. 22," (*CJN* Sept. 12). The correct website address for Kehilla Residential Programme should be www.kehilla.ca. *The CJN* regret the error.

CAMP GETS NEW SHUL: Campers and staff at Camp Moshava enjoyed a new synagogue this summer, thanks to the generosity of Julia and Henry Koschitzky, who have strong ties to the camp. The only co-ed Orthodox Zionist camp in Canada, Moshava was started more than 50 years ago. A formal dedication took place on visitors' day, July 21, with a performance by the camp choir and a dessert reception.

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Warren Buffett
"We came looking for brains, so we stayed in Israel."

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In this series, led by Dr. Jonathan Breslin, we will discuss three challenging ethical issues currently encountered in the hospital setting. Some of the issues include choices at the end of life, resource limitations in health care settings, and organ transplantation.

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Where's the beef?

Test-tube meat raises a host of halachic issues

We at the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR) – Canada's largest kosher certifier – read with great interest the recent news that scientists at Maastricht University in the Netherlands have created meat in a laboratory derived from a cow's muscle tissue.

We are most excited by this development and see considerable potential, including a possible tool to combat hunger in developing nations and an alternative staple that could drive down the cost of food – although the price tag on the initial "test-tube burger" was an astounding $325,000.

And you thought kosher meat was expensive!

This new discovery raises a few interesting halachic issues. Since the original meat cells are extracted from an animal, the animal would have to be a kosher one, and killed in accordance with Jewish law (shchitah). One might argue that the originating cells are used in a minimal quantity – a ratio of at least 60 to 1 – and therefore the non-kosher component is nullified due to the halachic principal of *batel b'shishim* (nullification). However, this argument would likely not stand up because of an exception to this principle of *batel b'shishim* called *davar hama'amid*, namely, when the ingredient in question is essential to the transformation process it cannot be nullified, no matter how infinitesimal the amount used.

Richard Rabkin

Another factor to consider is that if the originating animal tissues are derived from a live animal, it could be a violation of the prohibition of *basar min hachai*, taking a piece of meat from an animal that is still living.

So if the originating cells are extracted from an animal that has been killed in accordance with Jewish law, the kosher test-tube burger may indeed by feasible. Now for the most important question: the cheeseburger.

It could be argued that the test-tube meat should have the same halachic status as kosher beef gelatin. Gelatin is a translucent substance derived from the collagen of animal byproducts, mainly bones and hides, that is used as a gelling agent. The animal bones and hides are broken down into gelatin via an intense chemical process. The great halachic scholar of the previous generation, the late Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, among others, was of the opinion that kosher beef gelatin obtains a pareve status because of the intense chemical process that the product undergoes. This ruling is followed by the Kashruth Council, as well as the other major kosher certifiers.

The rationale for kosher beef gelatin could extend to our case, and thus the test-tube meat may well be considered pareve.

But before we fire up our barbecues for kosher cheeseburgers, there is one more factor to consider, and that's the halachic principle of *ma'arit ayin*. *Ma'arit ayin* means "appearance to the eye" and is a rabbinic dictum that prevents certain actions if an onlooker would assume the person is engaged in a forbidden activity. Eating milk and meat together is prohibited by the Torah, so would a test-tube cheeseburger contravene *ma'arit ayin*?

The considerations concerning *ma'arit ayin* are complex, but in general if a simulated food product is already well known, such as margarine or non-dairy creamer, or the taste and texture of the simulated product differs from the original, *ma'arit ayin* may not apply.

Alternatively, a distinction of some sort, a *heker*, could be placed on the product packaging or at the restaurant so that consumers would know that the product was not real meat – for example, branding the product as the "Maastricht Meatless Burger."

Of course, these are only preliminary considerations, and assuming that one day Maastricht University can bring down the $325,000-per-burger cost to something a little bit more, well, manageable, when the time comes, the Kashruth Council's rabbis will study the issue in depth and consult with our colleagues in the kashrut industry and develop an official position.

In the meantime, maybe the scientists should start working on test-tube herring – wouldn't that be something?

Richard Rabkin is director of marketing at the Kashruth Council of Canada.

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Bialik school opens new branch in Vaughan

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The blowing of the shofar heralded the Sept. 11 grand opening of Bialik Hebrew Day School's Ben and Edith Himel Education Centre at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan.

Phase 1, which is now complete, is home to one class each of junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten and Grade 1. This space can accommodate the inaugural Grade 1 class until Grade 4.

A $12-million campaign is currently underway for phases 2 and 3 of the building to be erected concurrently.

Phase 2 needs to be ready to accommodate the incoming Grade 1 class through grades 5 to 8 and will include an art room, science lab, lunch room, library and gym. Phase 3 is designed to expand the school to two classes at each grade level.

Shana Harris, Bialik's head of school, said at the opening that 52 years ago, a group of labour Zionists "made the bold decision to start a school. It is through their foresight that this small group contributed to Jewish continuity.

"For the past 27 years or so, the dream has been to open a second branch. Now, another small group with some vision has made the dream a reality. We are now able to give children in the northern GTA roots [in the Jewish community]."

Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said the new branch was made possible "because of leaders who had a vision and who believed in the future."

The opening also included a performance by the Bialik Hebrew Day School choir and a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

From left, Irving, Pamela and Mel Himel hang a mezuzah at the new Bialik Hebrew Day School Ben and Edith Himel Education Centre.

FIGHTING HATE

Leaders from across the political spectrum joined the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) at a Rosh Hashanah reception at Queen's Park on Sept. 10 to toast the new year. The event also included a ribbon-cutting ceremony to launch the FSWC's newest initiative, Tour4Humanity (T4H), a "mobile tolerance training centre," designed to bring the organization's programming to communities across the province. From left, Ontario PC Leader Tim Hudak, FSWC president and CEO Avi Benlolo, T4H donor Dorothy Shoichet, NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, Ontario Lt.-Gov. David Onley, T4H donor Tom Koffler and Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne cut the ribbon to launch the initiative. [*FSWC photo*]

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my sisters-in-law, my nieces and nephews,
my cousins, my machatunim,
Beth Jacob members
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Lightning strikes twice at Tel Huqoq

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

Last year, I was one of the first to write about the spectacular discovery of a Late Roman/Early Byzantine synagogue at Huqoq in the upper Galilee, with an inscribed mosaic floor showing the biblical hero Samson.

This turned out to be one of the major archeological discoveries of 2012. Its excavator, Jodi Magness, was invited to give the keynote address at the Archaeological Institute of America's annual meeting.

My initial involvement with the Huqoq excavations came about thanks to Michael Chazan, the head of the University of Toronto's Archaeology Centre, who asked if I could help him raise funds to get U of T involved in this worthwhile endeavour. Fortunately I was able to do so, thanks to the generosity of a number of former students.

At the time, I thought that the Huqoq excavations would be an ideal vehicle to highlight the Jewish-Italian Friendship Project that I had helped to set up with both the Italian and Israeli consuls general in Toronto. It's a project that's meant to highlight and celebrate the close and harmonious relationship between our two communities. (It is also a friendship that was remembered recently with the 80th anniversary of the Christie Pits riots where Jews and Italians fought together against anti-Semitic thugs.)

This past summer brought another mosaic to light at Huqoq, once more showing Samson, this time carrying the gates of Gaza on his shoulders. The choice of Samson to be highlighted on the Huqoq mosaics is quite interesting, especially since he was looked upon as a proto-messianic figure, albeit a flawed one.

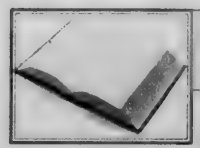
Samson holding the gates of Gaza (James Haberman photo)

The Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods, to which the synagogue belongs, had just seen the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire by the Emperor Constantine in the early fourth century CE. By the end of that century, the empire was permanently divided into two parts. The Western Empire did not survive, falling prey to barbarian invasions. The Eastern Empire, where the synagogue was located, would become the Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire.

By the beginning of the fifth century, the official persecution of Jews was starting. Hence, it would not be unusual for a synagogue built in this period to highlight a hero such as Samson, who had taken on the enemies of his people and prevailed against them.

Sukkot speaks to Jewish unity

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath



Rabbinic Reflections

Few holidays on the calendar speak of Jewish unity quite like the holiday of Sukkot. For seven days, we invite family and friends to dine with us in our makeshift home under the stars. Interspersed with eating and conversation, we sing Jewish melodies – slightly off-tune but with great gusto, while little bits of evergreen quietly drop into our chicken soup. Hey – it's tradition!

If you have a Sukkah in your yard or in an accessible location, don't be surprised if you get a random drop-in from a "Sukkah Hopper." In Jewish communities all over the world there is a true feeling of togetherness as we leave our comfortable homes and brave the elements in our temporary huts.

There is another element that symbolizes Jewish unity on Sukkot called the four species. The fulfilment of this mitzvah requires us to hold together either fruit or branches from four different species of trees – the date palm (lulav), the myrtle (hadas), the willow (cravat), and the citron (etrog). The midrash explains that the mitzvah of shaking the lulav and etrog (as the four species are usually called) symbolizes the intrinsic unity of the Jewish people.

These four species are noticeably different from one another. The etrog has both a pleasant taste and a pleasant fragrance. The fruit of the tree (date) from which the lulav is taken, has a pleasant taste, but no fragrance. The myrtle has a pleasant fragrance but no taste, and the willow has neither fragrance nor pleasant taste.

Taste symbolizes Torah study, because understanding Torah gives us a concrete pleasure, similar to the sensation of experiencing a pleasing flavor.

Smell symbolizes the fulfilment of mitzvot. *Kabbalat ol* – an unquestioned acceptance of the yoke of Heaven – is this quality that motivates us to fulfil the mitzvot. Since we often don't understand the reasons for the mitzvot, their observance may be less tangibly gratifying than Torah study is, in much the same way that smelling something is less palpably gratifying than tasting it.

Yet a deeper insight into the four kinds and its symbolism enables us to see each of the four species as representing a different type of individual.

The etrog represents a person who studies Torah and fulfils the mitzvot, the lulav represents one who studies Torah but does not perform mitzvot, the myrtle represents one who fulfils mitzvot but does not study Torah, and the willow represents a Jew who neither studies Torah nor observes mitzvot.

We bring these four unique species together and make one blessing over them in complete unity, showing that no matter where you come from or who you are – be it a scholar or a professional, rich or poor, happy or sad, a technophile or technophobic – you're a part of the Jewish People.

Which brings us back to the warm and inviting meal in the sukkah. Each person is integral to the Jewish People as each person in the sukkah helps to make every meal special and meaningful.

Chag Samayach!

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath is spiritual director of Rohr Chabad of NDG, an associate chaplain at Concordia University and the founder of JMontreal.com.

New leadership in Israel: a work in progress

From the Reut Institute

Martin Ben Moreh

In the last few years, civil society in Israel has been developing at a rapid rate. This phenomenon really burst into the national consciousness in the summer of 2011 in the form of widespread social demonstrations, when some 600,000 people took to the streets – more than seven per cent of the population!

Young people want to influence the lives they lead and the country they live in. There has been an emergence of "authentic leadership" – a "serving elite" who want to create change on issues that affect their lives and have a strong desire to be actively involved in public discourse and the decision-making process.

Groups of young Israelis aged 22 to 35 who are interested in innovative change are springing up all over Israel. One example is the 200 Shachaf Communities that are in the midst of forming a national movement of young, socially active communities. These groups of young people from all sectors of Israeli society are leading social change in communities on Israel's socio-geographic periphery. Another example is the alumni of the youth movements who, after their initial experience in the movements and after finishing their army duty, have formed educational communities across Israel.

In Israel and all over the western world, we're seeing young people who are tired of, and disappointed by, the traditional political party system of the 20th century that allows them to vote every few years for a national party, usually on national issues. The new authentic leadership wants to be involved in ongoing decisions that affect their lives. They want to have a say in improving the quality of their life and want to make a real difference. This process is, of course, accelerated by the world of the Internet and the smartphone, where knowledge, news and new ideas are available literally 24/7.

There's a real need for a new social network that will provide a platform to develop this vibrant leadership. There's a need to form partnerships with clusters of leaders and to conduct a series of open meetings where various volunteers and professionals from different walks of life and various locations in Israel can participate in discussions on how to improve the quality of life on the local and national levels.

Part of the ongoing discussion will involve exploring the connections between local developing leadership and different fields of social innovation. The core platforms of everyday life that can empower citizens and help improve quality of life in their communities need to be explored. These platforms include schools, community centres, youth movements, parks and recreational spaces, hospitals and local clinics, and more. In addition new sources of community energy are emerging, from urban kibbutzim to regional start-ups and various grassroots movements that are active all over Israel. Another aspect of this project is to open the dialogue to young people living outside Israel who are facing similar dilemmas in their own lives.

The Reut Institute is reviewing ways to catalyze this new authentic leadership, one of which could be the establishment of a Reut "community hub" for organizations who see themselves as partners in our vision to create a prosperous and resilient network of communities across Israel.

Martin Ben Moreh is the Reut Institute's program director for Judaism, renewed Zionism and Israeli society.

After the High Holidays, now what?

From the Bimah

Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

If you want to run the Toronto Marathon, there are two ways to do it. The first way is to start off by getting some good running shoes, then stretching your muscles gently, and then going for a short walk or jog. You do this for a while until you get comfortable; going out a few times a week. Then, you build up your jog until it becomes a run of a couple kilometres. Then, over time you work up to 10 kilometres, then 20 kilometres. When you can do that a few times a week, you work your way up to 42 kilometres, and you're in pretty good shape to run a marathon.

The other way is significantly less time consuming. You simply register for the race, show up on the day of, and set off running as fast as you can. If you manage to complete the race without collapsing from pain or exhaustion, or both, you'll probably do some damage to your joints and muscles, and you'll feel it for weeks or even months to come. You'll likely promise yourself you'll never do that again, or at least not until next year at the very earliest.

Which one is the wiser course of training? I think we can agree that the first is much more prudent and productive.

Now think back to your experience over Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It was quite a lot of time to spend in a synagogue! Did you feel that the prayers of the Yamim Nora'im were exhilarating, uplifting and invigorating? If so, you were probably in good "davening shape" beforehand. You probably "trained and stretched" well beforehand – you practised all year, at least a couple times a week, so you were spiritually fit and ready and able to put your soul and being into a real "service of the heart," coming close to the Holy One through the liturgy of the day.

If on the other hand you're sore from the experience, then something is wrong. You may well have strained or sprained your davening muscles! Each year, I see that some people are "out of shape" with davening to the extent that you wonder whether or not they will make it to the finish line, to Neilah. So what's the remedy? Begin training. The sooner the better!

There's no better place to start your training than Sukkot and Simchat Torah. The tfillot are sung heartily and enthusiastically by everyone, and the food is plentiful. The joyous spirit of Sukkot and Simchat Torah offer plenty of sensory delights: eating in a sukkah, singing Hallel, and taking the lulav, the four species bound together to represent the essential unity of the Jewish people. It's a joyous complement to balance the solemnity of the first 10 days of Tishrei.

Now is the time! Take active part in your community's celebration of Sukkot, and make sure to eat in a sukkah, or even build your own, and prepare yourself to dance on Simchat Torah. Before long, you'll find yourself much more spiritually fit!

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U.S., Iranian presidents may meet at UN

The Times of Israel

In a dramatic warming of ties, U.S. President Barack Obama may meet at the UN later this month with the newly elected Iranian President Hasan Rouhani.

The possibility of a meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly was reported Sunday night by Israel's Channel 10 news, and by various international news sources including Britain's *Guardian* newspaper. It would mark the first face-to-face talks between Iranian and American presidents since Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979. There was no official confirmation of the reports.

Hasan Rouhani

Britain has confirmed that its foreign secretary, William Hague, will meet at the United Nations next week with his new Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Javad Zarif. Britain severed ties with Iran in 2011.

In an ABC TV interview Sunday, Obama said he had exchanged letters with Rouhani, but that the two had not spoken directly. The U.S. president said he believed Rouhani understood the potential for a diplomatic solution to his country's disputed nuclear program, but would not "suddenly make it easy."

"If you have both a credible threat of force, combined with a rigorous diplomatic effort…," Obama said, "you can strike a deal."

Israel's Channel 2 news reported Sunday night that Oman has recently been brokering indirect contacts between the United States and Iran, and that the U.S. might be prepared to consider an easing of some medical and other sanctions on Iran to help facilitate progress toward a diplomatic resolution over Iran's rogue nuclear program. In his comments Sunday, Obama warned Tehran that the new initiative to avert a western strike in Syria should not be interpreted as a lack of willingness in Washington to pursue a military solution, if necessary, to the ongoing Iranian nuclear standoff.

"I think what the Iranians understand is that the nuclear issue is a far larger issue for us than the chemical weapons issue, that the threat… against Israel that a nuclear Iran poses is much closer to our core interests," Obama said. "My suspicion is that the Iranians recognize they shouldn't draw a lesson that we haven't struck [the Bashar Assad regime] to think we won't strike Iran."

Conversely, Obama added, the Russian-brokered agreement that would see Syria hand over its sizable chemical weapons stockpile is an indication to Tehran that "there is the potential of resolving these issues diplomatically."

Zarif was quoted Sunday as saying that Iran sought "confidence-building measures" from the United States to help resolve the nuclear dispute, and that the U.S. needs to recognize that Iran now has advanced nuclear technology and knowhow.

Since taking office in early August, Rouhani has signalled a desire for warmed relations with the West, while also insisting that Iran intended to keep moving ahead with its nuclear program. In a speech to clerics last week, Rouhani said Iran "will not give up one iota" of its nuclear program.

The Channel 2 TV report said Israel broadly welcomed the U.S. argument that, as with Syria, diplomacy backed by a credible military threat might enable progress toward the negotiated resolution of the Iranian nuclear crisis. But at the same time, it said, there's concern in Jerusalem that because Obama had first threatened and then backed away from the use of force against Syria, the Iranians do not regard the United States as having a credible military option where they are concerned.

The key question, amid these new contacts between the U.S. and Iran, the report added, is how close to the bomb the Obama administration might allow the Iranians to get. Israel's position has been that Tehran's stockpiles of enriched uranium must be removed, and its capacity to progress toward nuclear weapons prevented.

The 68th General Assembly meeting of the United Nations runs from Sept. 24 to Oct. 4.

TimesofIsrael.com

REMEMBERING 1973: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz took part in a state ceremony marking the 40th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War at the military cemetery on Jerusalem's Mount Herzl Sept. 15. [*Israel Sun photo*]

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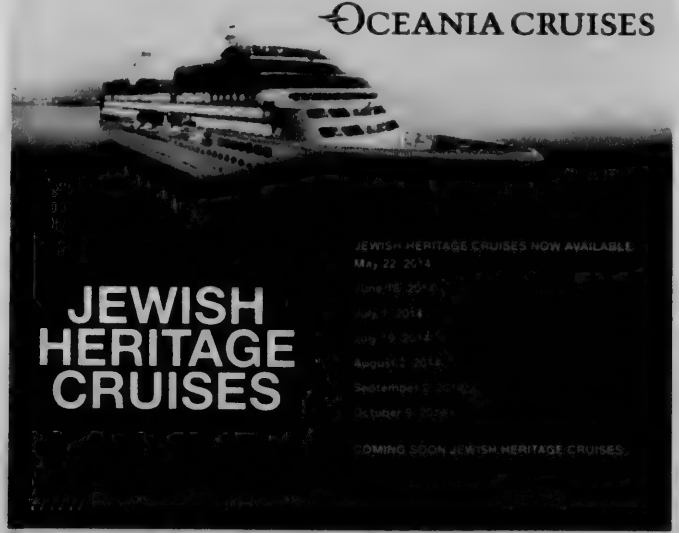


Chabad holds Yom Kippur services in flooded Boulder

JTA

BOULDER, Colo. — Some 300 worshipers attended Yom Kippur services in the lobby of the Chabad on Campus centre in flooded Boulder, Colo.

The lobby of the synagogue building is above the flood line, according to Chabad.org, which reported Sunday on the services.

Rabbi Yisroel Wilhem, co-director of Chabad of the University of Colorado, said many were unable to leave their homes to attend services, but others came because of the tragedy of the flash flooding that continues to batter the Boulder area.

Rabbi Yaakov Borenstein, co-director of the Chabad Jewish Center in Longmont, Colo., was forced to evacuate his home late last Thursday night, according to Chabad.org, booking the last room at the hotel in which he had booked a room to host the centre's Yom Kippur services.

Rain continued to fall Sunday in Colorado, with the death toll as high as six and nearly 500 people unaccounted for, according to reports.

Report: Israel stopped producing nukes in 2004
Go to cjnews.com

Kerry, Netanyahu discuss peace talks

Continued from page 1

The arsenal would be destroyed "in the soonest and safest manner," according to the State Department. The agreement followed three days of talks in Geneva.

After his meeting with Kerry, Netanyahu said the world must ensure that radical regimes don't have weapons of mass destruction "because as we've learned once again in Syria, if rogue regimes have weapons of mass destruction, they will use them.

"The determination the international community shows regarding Syria will have a direct impact on the Syrian regime's patron, Iran. Iran must understand the consequences of its continual defiance of the international community by its pursuit toward nuclear weapons."

Kerry and Netanyahu also discussed the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

At a ceremony Sunday morning at Mount Herzl in Jerusalem marking the 40th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War, Netanyahu cautioned that "Israel must be prepared and ready to defend itself by itself against any threat. Today, this ability and this willingness are more important than ever."

On Saturday, Syria formally applied to join the Chemical Weapons Convention, the United Nations announced.

The document signed by Syria, however, stipulates that "the accession of the Syrian Arab Republic to the convention shall not in any sense imply recognition of Israel, and shall not entail entering into any relations with Israel in the matters governed by the provisions thereof."

Israel gets Moroccan etrogs

JNS.org

An etrog

Israel has received its first-ever shipment of etrogim from Morocco ahead of the Sukkot holiday, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

The etrog, a fruit of the citron tree, is one of the Four Species – along with the lulav from the date palm tree, hadassim from the myrtle tree, and aravot from the willow tree – mentioned in the Torah as being connected with the holiday of Sukkot.

According to biblical scholars, the Moroccan etrog grows in the Atlas Mountains, a region that's the birthplace of the original etrog that is mentioned in the Bible.

The decision to import approximately 1,500 etrogs was due to a push from Israel's Sephardi community. Though they agreed to the etrog deal, Israel and Morocco do not share formal diplomatic relations. But the two countries did have brief economic and cultural ties during the 1990s, following the signing of the Oslo accords. Morocco was once home to more than 250,000 Jews, many of whom immigrated to Israel in the mid-20th century.

IOC head to leave trade group

Raphael Ahren
The Times of Israel

The newly elected president of the International Olympic Committee intends to resign from the presidency of an organization purported to support the anti-Israel boycott movement, *The Times of Israel* has learned.

Thomas Bach, a German sports functionary who was elected last week for an initial eight-year term at the helm of the IOC, is the chairman of Ghorfa, the Arab-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Founded in 1976, the organization is accused of helping companies make sure they avoid any trade with Israel. Since Bach's election last week in Buenos Aires, several Jewish groups have called on Bach to step down from his position at the trade group.

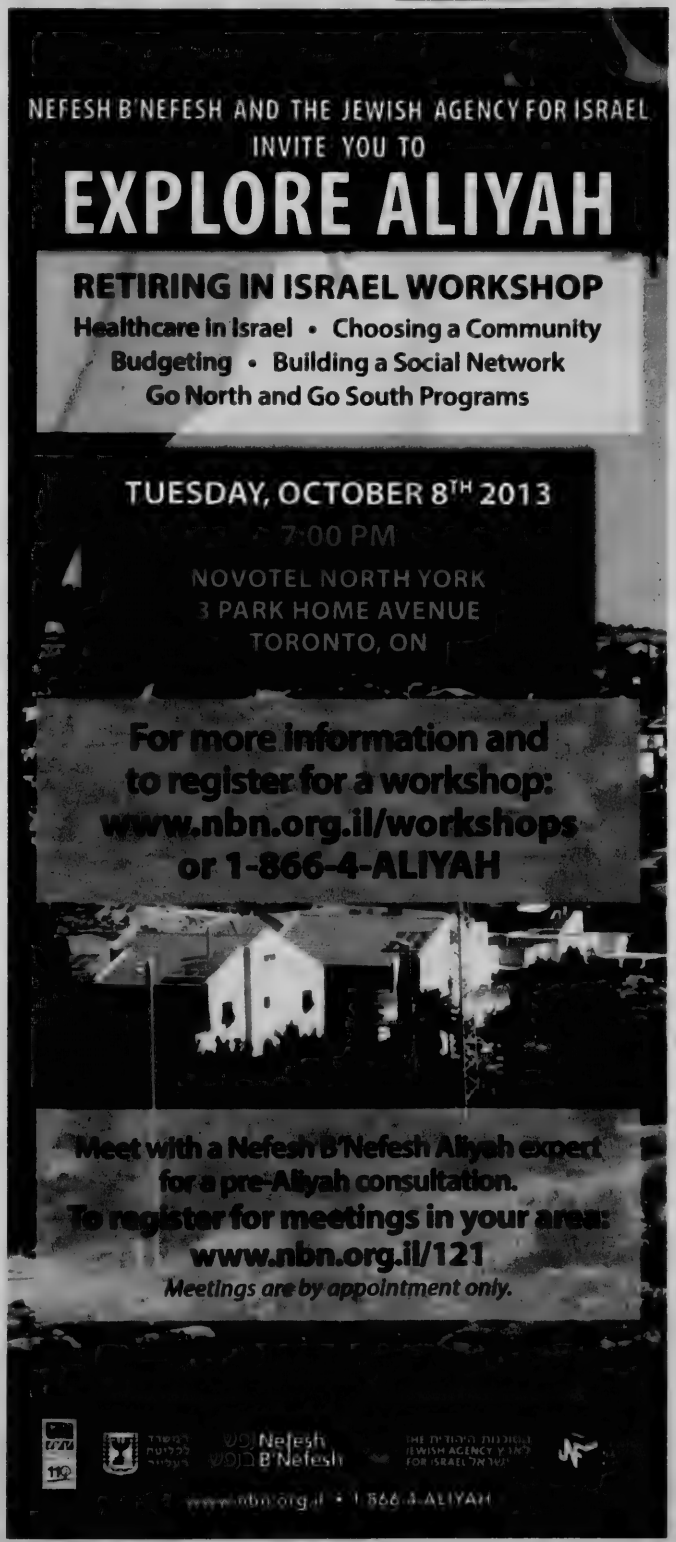
Bach also came under fire from Jewish groups for opposing a minute of silence for the Israeli victims of the Munich 1972 terror attack during last year's Olympic Games in London.

"He will resign as the president of Ghorfa," Christian Klaue, the head of media at the German Olympic Sports Confederation and Bach's spokesperson, told *The Times of Israel*. He also denied that Ghorfa had anything to do with the Arab world's boycott of Israel.

Bach had promised to step down from all his other positions bar one – the chairmanship of the supervisory board at Weinig AG, wood processing company based in his hometown of Tauberbischofsheim – if he was elected to head the IOC, Klaue said.

Bach himself has not publicly commented on his controversial presidency of Ghorfa. But in German media, Bach's membership in Ghorfa – and his close relationship with the Kuwaiti Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, who lobbied actively on the German's behalf – was described as problematic weeks ago. After he was elected, Jewish groups immediately called for Bach to resign his post at Ghorfa.

TimesofIsrael.com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School programs let students study in Israel

Viva Sarah Press
Israel Correspondent

KARMIEL, Israel — High school semester abroad programs give students an inside view of another culture, offer a chance to meet lifelong friends and help them learn more about the world.

With dozens of similar programs to choose from, the new Dror Leadership High School (DLHS) is hoping Grade 10 and 11 students from Canada and the United States will choose a semester in northern Israel as their destination.

Sivan Bamberger and George Stevens

DLHS will kick off its first semester in January 2014. The program aims to give Jewish youth an opportunity to really experience Israel, learn about Jewish and Zionist issues, and help mould a new generation of community leaders.

"Jewish communities around the world are in need of young leaders who are strong in their Judaism, active in their communities and possess first-hand knowledge of Israel, both its beauty and its challenges," said Sivan Bamberger, director of the Dror program, based in the Galilee city of Karmiel.

Registration for the inaugural semester abroad is open until mid-October. George Stevens, the program's educational director and a former British Columbian with deep roots in the Vancouver Jewish community, said the ultimate goal is to host 25 students in the program.

"We expect five to 10 students for our first class. We want to have a high student to teacher ratio, as we want to give them the best experience they can have," Stevens said in an interview.

That ratio is unheard of in Israeli classrooms, where the Education Ministry allows 40 students per teacher.

Stevens stressed that the students will "take North American-style classes" while experiencing Israel on social, cultural and geographical levels.

"They'll learn Jewish history the Israeli way. First learn about it in the classroom and then, the next day, go see where it happened," he says.

DLHS has an agreement with the Adam Hevra Ve'Teva school in the town of Karmiel, just outside of Haifa, to operate an English-speaking, American class within the Israeli high school.

For decades it was a kibbutz-based high school program that brought North American teens to Israel for a semester. Bamberger raved about the program she attended some 15 years ago.

"The spirit of kibbutz – community, camaraderie, a safe space for everyone – really trickled down to us, the North American students," she said. "It was a very influential experience that gave me self-confidence, lifelong friendships and the skills to be a Jewish leader. Unfortunately, that program no longer exists, so we're building a new one in that spirit, but which is updated to reflect the realities of Israel in 2013."

Stevens said that throughout his years in Jewish education – among other posts, he served as program director at Or Shalom Religious School in Vancouver – he learned that "the best way to truly experience Israeli society is to live as a part of it and contribute something to it. This way you meet Israelis and understand the issues they face."

The Jewish educators behind the program chose the small city of Karmiel in order to keep the community spirit an option. "It's a great city and it's bigger than a kibbutz, more interesting, but it's very peaceful and quiet. In Karmiel, you can experience every walk of life in Israel," Stevens said.

As for parents worried that their children may not want to come back, the DLHS program is not meant as a push toward aliyah.

"We're not going to say, 'This is why you should make aliyah.' Sixteen years old is too young to think about aliyah, but they can think about Israel and what role they want it to play in their lives," he said. "We hope the students will develop a deep, lasting connection to Israel and a better understanding of what it means to be Jewish."

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Trips inspire young Jewish Canadians

Monique Elliot
Special to The CJN

TORONTO — When Mitch Goldenberg reached out to distant family living in Israel this summer, he said it was in an effort to build a stronger connection to his heritage and cultural identity.

Like many of his peers, young Canadian Jews are planning trips to Israel, whether through organizations such as Taglit Birthright or camps such as Canadian Young Judaea (CYJ).

Goldenberg spent the past year travelling Europe after graduating from Carleton University.

The Thornhill, Ont., native then decided to apply for a staff position on Biluim Israel's leadership program at CYJ, and, after touring concentration camps and memorials in Poland with a group of 17-year-olds, found himself with a free weekend in Israel and contacted distant family he vaguely knew about.

"I honestly think that growing up and going to university and going to Poland and having the education I have has led me to be interested in this stuff now," he said.

He especially connected with his second cousin, Tommy Ben Shaul, who invited Goldenberg to join him at a family lunch.

"It is special," Ben Shaul wrote via email. "Although I hadn't met him, we had a bond. I can't explain it, but I felt close to him, although I learned of his existence only a short time before I met him."

The pair, both 23, bonded by going out for drinks with friends, watching *Seinfeld* episodes, and trading life stories.

"It sort of seems surreal that we connected so well," Goldenberg said. "I decided to take advantage of an opportunity and it paid off, because now I know a lot more about my history."

Goldenberg, a journalism school graduate, also interviewed his father's cousin in an effort to hear his Holocaust stories and learn how his family came to settle in Canada.

Grade 12 student and Biluim participant Jonah Strub said his life experiences allowed him to connect to Israel in a different way. Strub, who had never before been outside of North America, said meeting relatives in Israel made him want to return.

"It really made me think about my future a little bit more, because I was always planning... on living in Toronto my entire life," he said.

"Going to Israel, it really made me feel a connection... to a different country that I've never really had before, so it really made me think that maybe I want to go to university in Israel for one year, maybe I want to live there when I'm older," he added.

"It made me think a little bit more about the different options that I could have in my future."

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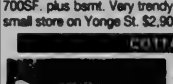

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Sarah Shapiro-Goldberg
Special to The CJN

In June 2011 my mother Fela Shapiro passed away. She was predeceased by my father, Kusiel Shapiro, and her sister, my beloved aunt, Elka Rubenstein.

Fela and Elka survived the Holocaust together, never separated even for a minute. I understood that our families were unique in that most of our parents' friends didn't have a single living relative. But we did. Our families shared everything. If we weren't actually living under the same cottage roof, we lived around the corner from each other. We shared holidays, family occasions and every summer at the cottage. So looking back through the window of summers past on Jubilee Road, here is a story about Fela and Elka, sisters like no other.

My parents and aunt and uncle purchased the cottage in 1955 for something like $3,000. That was when a worker could buy a small cottage not on the lake but close enough that you could yell to your mother to bring down something to eat. We were lucky to have had that quintessential Canadian experience of leaving the city on the last day of school not to return until Labour Day.

For many years we didn't have a phone at the cottage. It would have never occurred to me to speak to a friend during the summer. I was with my sister and my three cousins, my mother and aunt and we didn't need anyone else.

My dad worked in the city and my mother would call him every Tuesday evening. So Tuesdays, after dinner, we walked to Pete's Marina and General Store. The phone booth was covered in cobwebs, spiders spinning or dead, crazed moths swarming and sticky Popsicle wrappers – all things she could not tolerate for a second. So naturally she brought a pail of hot water, Mr. Clean and a shmatte to scour the booth. Of course you have to sterilize the booth before you make a five-minute call.

After speaking to my Dad and having ice cream, we went back to the lake, had one more swim and watched the sun slip away.

Fridays were something else all together. It was a high-energy day that took preparing for Shabbat to a whole new level. We were kicked out of the cottage right after breakfast so my mother and aunt could clean and then cook. After their morning coffee they took to their corners, ready to begin cleaning with a vengeance. They were pros and if we knew what was good for us, we would just get out of the way.

Chores for the kids were unheard of. Any mother who enlisted the help of her children to do anything related to housekeeping couldn't possibly be serious about clean. And that is why I never made my bed, washed a dish or boiled the kettle until I got married because it was clear that everything had to be just so. I got a total kick out of watching my mother and aunt in a mad cleaning frenzy, sweating in the humidity, relentless in their pursuit of clean.

Mid-morning on Fridays we waited for the sound that would transform the day to Erev Shabbat. Soon the Open Window Bakery truck would turn onto Jubilee Road, honking all the way down – backwards. The driver jumped out and flung open the back doors. The smell of the fresh baked challahs, buns and cakes made us dizzy. There were chocolate cup cakes filled with whipped cream, danishes and finally the legendary blueberry buns. These buns were packed with blueberries so fresh they would be dripping down your chin as you inhaled them off the racks. The Open Window Bakery truck was loved by Jewish families all around Lake Simcoe. Not only because it brought breads and cakes but also because it delivered us summertime Shabbat.

Late in the afternoon on Friday was bath time. This was a trick because the cottage had no bath or shower. We did have a large basin, several soup pots and a hot water faucet outside. One by one our mothers peeled off our bathing suits, stuck us in the basin and began soaping us down. The pots were used to rinse our hair. We dried off, put on our best Shabbat shorts and pop-tops and ran down to the end of the road to wait for the bus that would bring my dad.

Shabbat dinner was done in two shifts. The kids ate first and then we would be kicked out again. That's twice on Fridays. My mom and aunt then scrambled like synchronized curlers to clean up and set the table once again for the men. Remember, the kids never helped with anything.

We were spoiled by those long days of swimming, diving into cresting waves, digging for clay or floating on a raft. Inside the back door our names remain, faded by the seasons, marking how much we grew from year to year. They are a symbol of the cycle of summers that defined our childhood and shaped our lives.

Fela and Elka gave their families the gift of childhood innocence and the loving bonds that stood the test of time. Devotion to family was how they lived and the legacy they left for their five daughters and 18 grandchildren. Not bad for two sisters from Lodz who survived an inferno, came to Canada and built new lives. And what lives they had, together to the end and forever after.

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The family of Lynn Roth z"l gratefully acknowledges the many messages of condolence, donations, shiva visits, meals as well as the support and care of loving family and friends.

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Investigator uncovers financial wrongdoing

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

By the time Edward Nagel arrives at the crime scene, the perpetrator usually has done his or her best to wipe clean any traces of the incident.

Incriminating evidence? There's a good chance it's been disposed of and the lawbreaker has covered his tracks. Or at least he thinks he has.

Witnesses? That's for crime shows. Usually, you won't find anyone willing to testify, so putting together a case means rolling up your sleeves, opening the books and indulging in the painstaking and time-consuming "legwork" – make that paperwork – that can crack a case wide open.

Nagel, you see, wears no badge but he is an investigator with a CPA following his name. He's a gumshoe in a slick suit whose bailiwick is the grimy underworld inhabited by miscreants who pilfer the company cash box, sometimes to the tune of tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Nagel is a forensic accountant, a license designation that acknowledges his special skill in uncovering corporate fraud, misappropriation of funds and general wrongdoing that other accountants and corporate officers might overlook.

Edward Nagel is a forensic accountant

His profession is true to the real meaning of the word "forensic," which contrary to the impression repeated in numerous crime shows, does not necessarily entail bloodstained victims and walls riddled with bullet holes.

Forensic, in the context in which he operates, simply refers to something suitable for court, he said.

He has been called to testify as an expert witness, but that is an infrequent occurrence, if not entirely rare.

"When it comes to fraud, most of the cases tend to settle before they get to court," he explained.

When he is called onto a case, his task is to find out where the money went. And when he's done so, the cases are usually resolved internally.

Clients would rather get their money back and give the perpetrator the bum's rush out the door than attract unwanted publicity. Non-profits and for-profit corporations simply don't want exposure of the shortfalls in their internal mechanisms for preventing wrongdoing, Nagel, 41, said.

Nagel, a chartered professional accountant (CPA), has been working as a forensic accountant since 1998. He started at Arthur Andersen and left to work in a boutique firm. He started his own practice, nagel + associates, in October 2009.

The father of two youngsters in a Jewish day school, he's also on the executive committee and the board of Technion Canada, which supports the Haifa-based university.

As to his business, he said, "Most of the cases I'm involved with are fraud-related and they're mostly corporate fraud."

Typically, a CEO, CFO, board member or their legal counsel will bring him on board after concerns have been raised over financial irregularities.

They're worried one of the company's officers is finagling funds or altering financial statements to cover up a fraud, he said.

Small firms that employ a general manager often deal in cash and it can be easy for someone to "dabble in the books." Larger companies usually are subject to more complex schemes. It could be a case where a CFO was skimming money from the firm by setting up a fictitious vendor and writing cheques to them, creating a "ghost employee" and paying them, or padding expenses.

Another aspect of corporate crime occurs when management falsifies financial reporting to lower costs or inflate revenues. If the employee's compensation includes a bonus, they can personally profit from that sort of misdeed, he said.

Sometimes the fraud is intentional. Other times, the perp stumbles into it. It can start with something as apparently innocuous as padding expenses like restaurant bills and taxi receipts.

The employee may stumble into a loophole in a corporation's internal controls and then seek to exploit it, he said.

But, there are telltale signs that suggest corporate gonifs fit a profile. That person could be a long-term employee who rarely takes vacations, never asks for help on the job, gets angry when people do help, works late and on weekends, lives beyond his means and has an addiction, whether to gambling, alcohol or drugs.

People might steal thinking it's a temporary thing – they'll replace the money in short order. Others resent the success of colleagues and feel they should be the one with the expensive home or car.

On one occasion he cited, the search of a corporate officer's computer revealed a document that he created and then converted into a fake invoice to bill the company. The employee was terminated after he returned the $200,000 he had taken, Nagel said.

In another case – one he wasn't involved in – a long-serving Hamilton city employee stole more than $1 million over nine years. It happened despite internal cash-handling protocols. Commenting on the case, Nagel said a 2012 report found that worldwide, average occupational fraud lasts about 18 months before being uncovered, and that 20 per cent of all private and public workplace fraud exceeded $1 million.

It's estimated that companies lose as much as five per cent of their revenues to fraud, he added.

Cracking a case requires an intense attention to detail. That can mean searching a computer for incriminating data, checking payroll registers, comparing an employee's overtime claims to his schedule or even his security pass, he said.

"It's a lot of roll-your-sleeves up, looking for trends, anomalous transactions that occur at year end or at the end of a quarter" when bonuses are calculated, he said.

Kind of dry stuff – not even an overnight stakeout drinking lukewarm coffee to speak of.

Still, solving a case or setting up a system to prevent further thefts is gratifying.

"There's satisfaction in putting together the story, to be able to substantiate the allegations," Nagel said.

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Book reads like a Chinese *Game of Thrones*

Joseph Serge
Arts Editor

River of Stars
Guy Gavriel Kay
Viking

In his last book, *Under Heaven*, Canadian award-winning novelist Guy Gavriel Kay created a historical fantasy novel set in China's Tang Dynasty.

In *River of Stars*, released last spring, Kay returned to the same world some four centuries later.

It's not quite a sequel, although events of the first book are occasionally referenced. In this one, the once powerful Kitai Empire is now divided, both externally and internally.

The empire is now subjugated to its northern rival, the Xialou Empire, which takes yearly tribute from Kitai. Internally, the court is divided by bitter factions that circle their Emperor, willing to do anything to curry favour, including starting what would surely be a disastrous war with the north.

Kitai also is bitter over the loss of what it calls the 14 prefectures, areas rightfully theirs that have been controlled by the Xialou for 200 years.

Into this ficticious world set in the decadent 12th Dynasty, Kay creates two strong, powerful characters destined, inevitably, to meet up with each other and change the course of Kitai's history.

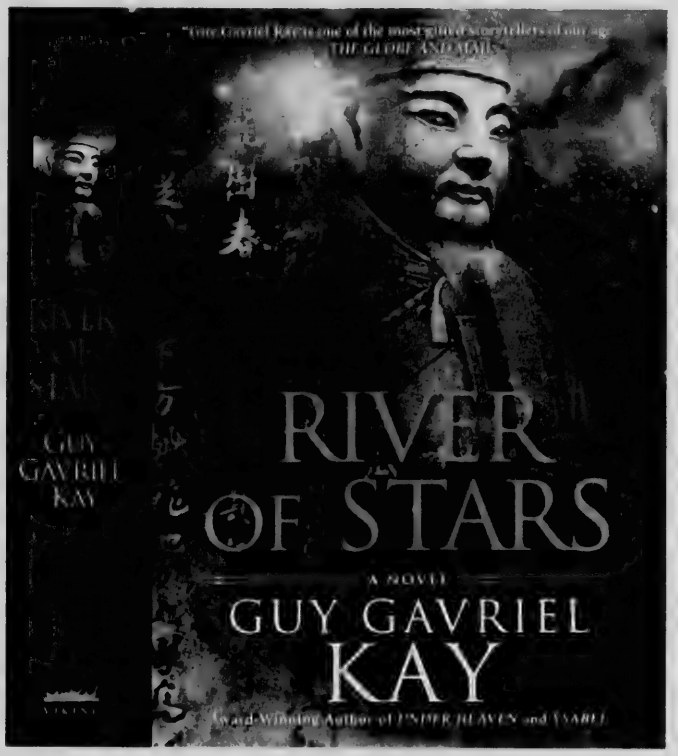
In the first pages, we are introduced to the young Ren Daiyan. The second son of a records clerk, he pretty much has no chance for fame and fortune, but, large for his age and confident, he is determined to grow up to be one of the greatest men of his time, destined to restore glory to a diminished world.

His prowess with a bow is not undetected, and as a teenager, he is selected to join the sub-prefect's bodyguard team on a journey to a neighbouring town. It's an important mission, one that his parents see as an opportunity for him to bring honour to his family.

This will be Daiyan's moment. The trip leads to a fateful ambush in which Daiyan kills seven men with seven arrows in an instant. He decides there and then not to return to his hometown, but escapes into the forests the bandits came from, thus beginning his new journey.

Lin Shan is 17 when we first meet her. She is the only daughter of Lin Kuo, a respected court gentlemen. She is on her way with her father to visit the renowned Xi Wengao, a former prime minster, during the empire's illustrious Peony Festival. She is tall for a woman and can read the classics and the poets. Her father has educated her in many disciplines – she has a good writing hand and can sing and write songs in the new, modern style. Her father even trained her in archery. None of this is proper for a girl.

Shan is a fiercely independent woman, something unheard of in that time and place, when women bound their feet in subservience to men. She is adamant that she will not live life defined or controlled by what others think or say. She will not live the life others have chosen for her.


"One Guy Gavriel Kay is one of the most gifted storytellers of our age"
THE GLOBE AND MAIL
GUY GAVRIEL KAY
RIVER OF STARS
A NOVEL
GUY GAVRIEL KAY
Award-Winning Author of UNDER HEAVEN and TIGANA
VIKING

Time passes quickly. Daiyan becomes an outlaw, one about whom legends will be told for centuries. His strategy and skills are renowned and soon he is courted by a court official to join his guard, where he then rises to the role of a commander in the Emperor's army.

Shan, meanwhile, marries Qi Wai, a marriage her father has sought and approved of. At the time, he is a student of archeology, but, more importantly, he belongs to the exclusive imperial clan that offers Shan luxuries, privilege and servants.

"A woman marrying into the clan lives a different life. And it can be a good life, depending on the woman, on her husband, on the will of heaven," Kay writes. At the same time, it isn't always desirable, because marrying into the imperial clan means living a sequestered life, shaped by ceremony and regulation.

As part of the imperial clan, Shan gets the opportunity to meet the Emperor himself, and has frank, bold discussions with him, persuading him to release her favourite poet who has fallen into disfavour and been exiled.

Disfavour and falling from grace form a big part of the middle game of this novel, which can be likened into a form of Chinese *Game of Thrones*. Politics and court intrigue play a major part.

The Kital Empire is a shadow of its former self. It has just suffered a crushing military defeat at the hands of the neighbouring Kisliks, a tribal faction, primarily as a result of incompetence. (The general forgot to take siege weapons with his invading army.) Blame is thrown around and ministers are exiled or killed. It is said that in Kitai, people rise and fall. When you fall in Kitai, you fall a long way.

The Emperor himself spends most of his time in his wonderful garden and is mostly disinterested in the burdens of government. The garden is a monument to the empire itself, vast with man-made hills, lakes and mountains. He is unaware of just how many common people have died to build this luxury.

Within his court, two rivals, Hang Deijin and Kai Zhen, are vying for power. They will not stop at anything to further their own careers. Zhen's wife, a Lady Macbeth-like character, plots an elaborate scheme to kill Shan, and this is where Daiyan's life and Shan's intersect.

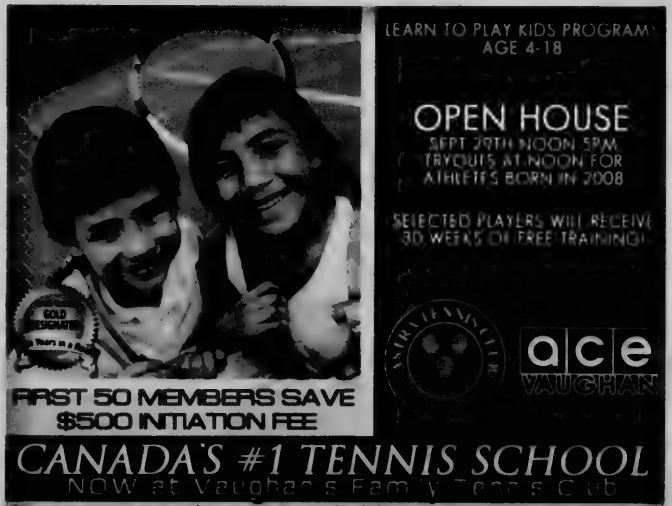
If the second part of the book gets somewhat bogged down by politics and intrigue, the patient reader is rewarded toward the end as things march headlong to a dramatic climax.

A new emerging tribe from the Koreini Peninsula, the Altai, is ascending and threatens the Kitai city of Hanjin. The Kitai, not accustomed to war, find themselves defending their city against the vastly superior barbarian hordes. Into this, Daiyan, now marked by prophecy, is a messianic figure called to change the tide and protect the empire.

There is very little fantasy or supernatural in this book, less than in *Under Heaven* and far less than his award-winninng *Yisobel*. There are many references to ghosts (which played a key role in the previous book) and a dramatic encounter with a *Daiji*, a half-woman, half-wolf seductress. But *River of Stars* is still full of Kay's other trademarks, strong, powerful characters, artfully created worlds, and delightful, poetic prose.

Ultimately, this is a novel about loyalty and betrayal. Some would betray their country for profit, others would sacrifice their lives for their Emperor.

Although there are some slow, digressive moments, particularly in the middle of this 600-page novel, fans of Kay will once again be delighted with it.



Filmmaker examines humour of Jewish comics

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

When Toronto filmmaker Alan Zweig was a child, his parents told him that Jews were outsiders and that was the way of the world.

However, when he watched *The Ed Sullivan Show*, he noticed that frequently the comics appearing on that program were Jewish. Zweig wanted to know why Jews were the kings of stand-up comedy in a society unkind to their faith.

"That was a huge paradox," Zweig said in an interview. "If they hate us, why do they think we're so hilarious? Why are we dominating this field? I wondered this my whole life."

Zweig explores these questions with the help of more than a dozen celebrated Jewish comics in his new documentary, *When Jews Were Funny*, which just screened at this year's Toronto International Film Festival.

In the film, Zweig sits down to interview several Jewish comics of today (notably Judy Gold, Howie Mandel and Marc Maron) and yesterday (like Shelley Berman and Shecky Greene), searching for answers.

He wants to know what made Jews such a potent comic force during his youth, and if that same vitality exists today.

In *When Jews Were Funny*, the older comics explain that up until the 1970s, it was not "in" to tell Jewish jokes. As strangers in a strange land, they had to adapt to the audience's needs and assimilate their culture.

Comedy was a tool for Jews to express their powerlessness and intelligence, Yuk Yuk's founder Mark Breslin says in the film. The alienation of the Jewish experience could spawn jokes where cynicism and sarcasm reeled in big laughs.

When Rodney Dangerfield remarked that he got "no respect," there was a truth behind it; however, it is also telling that those words were part of his famous shtick.

Zweig uses the subjects of his films as a way to explore his own dilemmas and problems. *When Jews Were Funny* explores the director's conflicted relationship with his faith, since he says comedy is what he loved most about growing up as a Jew.

Alan Zweig (left) with comedian Andy Kindler

Judaism did not appeal to Zweig much as a child, and he moved away from this heritage as an adult. "I felt coerced by my father [to be a devout Jew]. I don't blame him. I went to Hebrew school four days a week, two hours after school, and then I went to Jewish summer camp," he says.

"But it's not like I don't connect to it. If I'm at my sister's seder or if it's Chanukkah and I bring my daughter and they light the candles, those tunes… that's all in my head. I still have a feeling for it. Being around Jews, the Jewish attitude toward life, the way Jews talk – what others might consider negativity, the world-weary withering sarcasm – I love all that."

He also recalls the influence his parents had on his sense of humour. He says he loved watching his father's favourite comics, Alan King and Buddy Hackett, perform.

Comedy was also a shared pride between Zweig and his mother. "My mother is very old-fashioned compared to my father. My mother and I didn't share much of the same taste in anything," Zweig says. "But somebody told me that 'He had a hat' joke and I was like, 'Thank you. I'm going to tell that joke to my mother.'

"The next time I was home, I told my mother that joke. She laughed exactly like I hoped she would and it's one of my favourite memories of my mother."

Zweig had a wish list of around 40 Jewish comics he wanted to interview for the film, such as Jerry Seinfeld, Jon Stewart and Sarah Silverman. His top choice was Mel Brooks, whom he cites as "the reason I knew there was such a thing as Jewish humour."

Although many current stars were unavailable, he says it was still a joy to meet some of his heroes. "Whoever thought they would meet Shecky Greene? I was completely starstruck by [him]," he says. "It was just fun to hang out with Jews and talk about being Jewish."

The doc is also Zweig's third film to premiere at TIFF, and his first in 24 years. In 1989, he premiered a fiction short called *Stealing Images*, which won the festival's Best Canadian Short Film award.

HBO doc on Marty Glickman

Joe Winkler
JTA

In 1936, despite calls for a boycott of the Olympics in Nazi-controlled Germany, 18-year-old Jewish track phenom Marty Glickman wanted to show Hitler that Jews could compete.

The Brooklyn native had made the U.S. team and was slated to run the 400-metre relay race, but was pulled along with the other Jewish team member, Sam Stoller, a day before the race.

American officials claimed the decision stemmed not from considerations of religion but were made for athletic reasons. U.S. coaches claimed to believe the Germany was hiding its best sprinters for the 400-metre relay and said they needed their top runners to compete.

It would be more than a half-century before Glickman received a formal apology for the slight.

The story of how the man once known as the "Flatbush Flash" went from hometown hero to media sensation, then to legendary and beloved broadcaster, is the subject of the HBO documentary *Glickman*. Directed by James Freedman, the film is now airing on HBO Canada.

It showcases the late Glickman's magnetism, first through his ascendancy as a competitor, then as a transformative broadcaster who brought a populist appeal to his reporting.

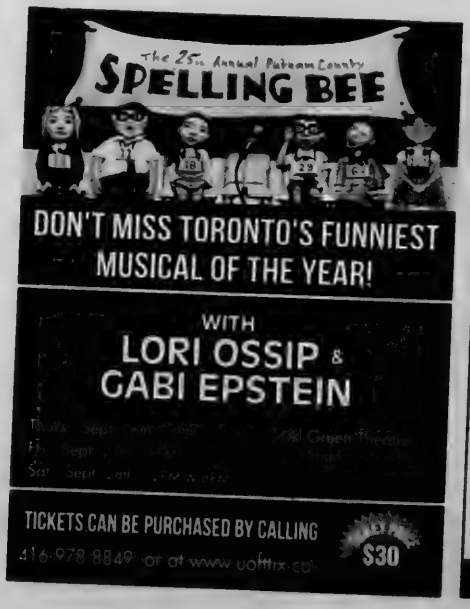
As one of the first regular broadcasters of basketball games, Glickman would watch tapes endlessly until he came up with the jargon now widely used to describe the game. Lane, top of the circle, the wing, the key, the elbow and, most famously, swish — they're all Glickman coinages.

Glickman also took immense pride in his Judaism. At a time when many Jews changed their names for career reasons, Glickman refused.

"Glickman was a superhero to many children, especially the Jewish children," said Jerry Stiller, speaking for a generation who grew up listening to Glickman's broadcasts.

Glickman retired from broadcasting in 1992 and was later inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame, the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, the Broadcasters Hall of Fame and finally the New York Hall of Fame for his work.

Glickman died in 2001 from complications following heart surgery. He was 83.



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Podcast star brings standup show to Toronto

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Marc Maron has done it all – television, standup, and even podcasting.

But this year brought Maron to the small screen in a new format – his own television series, called *Maron*, in which the American comedian portrays a fictionalized version of himself in a single-camera format, à la Larry David's *Curb your Enthusiasm* or Louis C.K.'s *Louie*.

Maron, who will be taking his brutally honest performance to Toronto for two nights as part of the Just for Laughs Festival, said the opportunity for a show of this kind came at a time when he had given up on that goal.

"It was something I didn't think I'd be able to do," he said, "[but] the opportunity came and I took it."

He described the format as an evolution of the technology that has allowed comedians to feel comfortable playing comics on television.

"It's OK to not pretend to be a UPS driver now," he said, adding that his playing himself – even a fictionalized

Marc Maron

version – gives the show a sense of intimacy. "The world becomes your stage."

On the show, Maron tells an embellished personal story from a few years ago, when he was at a difficult point in his life.

"My career wasn't going anywhere, I was broke, and I had gone through a second divorce," he said. "I knew people were doing podcasts, so I committed to a schedule and let the show evolve."

And evolve it did. These days, the real-life podcast, *WTF with Marc Maron*, gets more than 2.5 million listeners a month.

Maron is a scripted show about an unscripted podcast show, with many of Maron's comedian friends stopping by for interviews – also playing fictionalized versions of themselves.

Audiences wanting to really get to know Maron should listen to the podcast, where they will find a much more authentic version of the comedian than his on-screen persona.

The podcast, which is mostly recorded in Maron's garage in Los Angeles, gives him a platform to speak his mind freely. He tackles every type of subject, often in conversations with famous guests – just like in the TV show. His real-life guests have included Chris Rock, Mel Brooks, fellow Just for Laughs festival performer Bill Burr, and even musicians like Iggy Pop.

"It doesn't necessarily have to be funny. It just has to be immediate," he said. "It's vey nourishing to the soul, and exciting and interesting."

He described himself as "undeniably Jewish" – culturally, not religiously.

"I think I represent somewhat of the contemporary stereotype of the neurotic self-involved, kind of mildly hypersensitive, a bit defensive and also probing and searching," he said.

Fans of his work rave about his honesty and willingness to touch upon any topic with his guests. He's candid about his own struggles, never shying away from difficult topics like his past addictions to alcohol and drugs.

Despite his forays into TV and podcasting, he is a standup comedian at heart.

"At some point when I was a little kid, I wanted to become a comic," he said. "They seem to have a way figured out through the world. It's at the core of who I am."

Marc Maron will perform two shows for Toronto's Just for Laughs Festival, both on Sept. 24 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

Jeweller's song makes it big 17 years later

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Sam Rosenbaum's recent experience of what he called divine intervention brought his words and music to a show about the supernatural.

Almost 20 years ago, the Toronto jeweller's father, who had died seven years earlier, came to him in a dream.

"We were sitting in this beautiful garden. We didn't speak. We looked at each other," he said. "It was really an incredible feeling."

When he woke up in the middle of the night, he ran down to his basement and wrote a song called *Why Did You Leave Me Now?*

A singer he was managing at the time, Liz Rodrigues, recorded the song. Nothing big came of it – until this summer, when Rosenbaum, 61, got a call from Gary Calamar, musical director of the popular HBO show *True Blood*.

Apparently, the producers had been searching for him for a long time. They somehow got a hold of the song, and wanted to use it during the credits of the penultimate episode of the season.

"It was one of those bizarre things in life," Rosenbaum said, adding that at first he was wary, wondering how they could have found his song. But he did some research and realized it was the real thing.

Continued on page 34

Sam Rosenbaum's *Why Did You Leave Me Now?* aired on *True Blood*.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

ISRAEL MUSEUM ACQUIRES GIFT OF WORKS BY RICHARD AVEDON

Some 74 photographs by famed photographer **Richard Avedon**, created between 1969 and 1974, have been gifted to the Israel Museum of Jerusalem. The works include Avedon's iconic oversized mural – 20-feet-wide and eight-feet-high -of **Allen Ginsberg's** family.

Avedon began his career in the mid-1940s as a genre-bending fashion photographer, who introduced narrative elements into traditional fashion spreads. In 1969 he adopted what would become his signature portrait style – subjects posed singly and in groups against stark white backgrounds that allowed their personalities to emerge. The works gifted to the Israel Museum capture this moment of transition in his career.

The Avedon photographs are scheduled to go on view at the Israel Museum in the spring.

• • •

Beth Tzedec Lectures: Educator **Hana Werner** discusses "Family Feuds in the Bible" in a series of 10 lectures, five in October and five in May, at Beth Tzedec Congregation. The first session, "The Rift: Joseph and his Brothers," takes place Oct. 2; dessert 1 p.m, lecture 1:30 p.m. $10 at the door, or $50 for 10 sessions. Sponsored in memory of **Cantor Joseph Cooper.** Please RSVP to 416-781-3514 ext. 225, or 416-781-3511.

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'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Richard Avedon's iconic oversized mural of Allen Ginsberg's family is on view, along with around 70 others photographs at the Israel Museum of Jerusalem.

Jewish Cuban Fusion: Musician **David Buchbinder** teams up with pianist **Hilario Duran and Odessa/Havana**, a crew of top jazz musicians, to perform Jewish-Cuban fusion music at the Small World Music Festival. The CD release celebration is $20 in advance, $30 at the door. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. Sunday Sept. 29, 8 p.m. http:// smallworldmusic.com

• • •

Political Corner: One might expect an organization that purports to care about justice and peace in the Middle East to speak out about the recent poison-gas atrocities in Syria or the millions of refugees and displaced people there. Perhaps it might also spare a word or two about Iran, the chief supporter and exporter of terrorism across the Middle East, which is in the final stages of building a nuclear weapon. And then there is Egypt . . . the list goes on.

Despite its misleading name, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is largely a propagandistic pro-Palestinian advocacy organization. In the ridiculously simplistic and myopic view of CJPME members and the Israeli-apartheid left, Israel is irredeemably tainted, deserving of boycott, divestment, sanction and worse.

As expected, its membership is leavened with some of the country's most ardent anti-Israel activists, including **John Greyson**, the Toronto filmmaker currently languishing in an Egyptian prison after being arrested while on his way to Gaza. Greyson gained notoriety in 2009 through an attempt to shame the Toronto International Film Festival for highlighting the city of Tel Aviv.

Recently a group of Canadian writers issued an open letter under CJPME's banner, protesting an Israeli plan to relocate some Palestinians and Bedouins in the Southern Hebron Hills. Four respected writers – **Wayson Choy, Nino Ricci, Kyo Maclear** and **Terry Fallis** – are giving a reading in Toronto this week in support of that protest and CJPME in general.

Without wishing to diminish the right of the writers to express their political opinions, it seems a shame that they have lent their good names to bolster the reputation of the seriously biased CJPME. The writers should bear in mind that their own credibility is also at stake. Future biographers will certainly wonder at their precipitous rush to adopt Israel as their political-protest "Flavour of the Month," to the telling exclusion of countless, far more pressing concerns in every corner of the world.

Series known for ending credit music

Continued from page 33

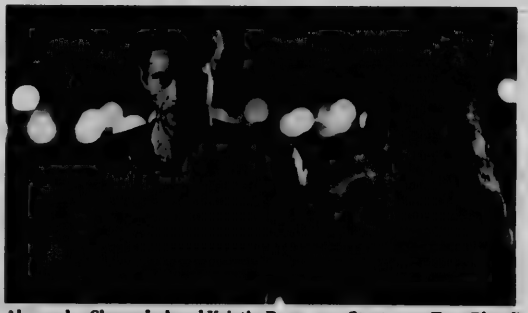
True Blood is known for its ending credit music. The title of the song each week becomes the name of the episode. Calamar told the *Toronto Star* that it was the title of the song that attracted the producers after they found it on iTunes.

Rosenbaum described watching the episode as very surreal.

"Even until the last second, I wasn't sure it would be on. I've had so many disappointments in the music business," he said, explaining that he had hoped to make it big in the industry, but it never worked out.

Hearing it on TV, Rosenbaum said it felt like a gift from, and a tribute to, his father – and it's also been nice to have validation of his work.

"I've loved all the comments I've been getting," he said. "When you go on YouTube and read the comments, a lot of people relate to the song. A lot of people said it made them cry or it puts them in a good place. It makes them feel good."



Alexander Skarsgård and Kristin Bauer van Straten as *True Blood's* Eric and Pam [HBO photo]

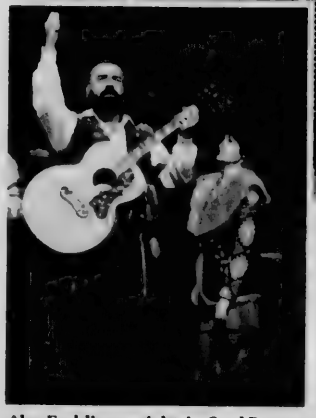
He said people have been downloading the song on iTunes, and tens of thousands of listens have been logged on sites like YouTube.

"One of the lines is, 'Why did you leave me now just when they said you are fine?'" he said. "Everyone can relate, everyone has had a loss of some kind."

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Three young Winnipeggers 'live the dream' in NYC



Alex Frohlinger, right, in *Soul Doctor*

Josh Assor just completed his first run on Broadway.

Lindsay Nelko, centre, with dance contestants Paul Karmiryan and Makenzie Dustman

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — This city's Jewish community has historically been known for exporting talented performers – among them Monty Hall of *Let's Make a Deal* fame and comedian David Steinberg.

Three young Winnipeggers – Alex Frohlinger, Josh Assor and Lindsay Nelko – are following in the footsteps of Winnipeg Jewish actors who have gone before them.

Nelko, 27, is a choreographer for the TV series *So You Think You Can Dance* and will be choreographing her own show in New York City next summer.

Assor, 24, just completed his first run on Broadway in *Mary Poppins*.

Frohlinger, also 24, has just made her Broadway debut in *Soul Doctor*, the musical based on the life of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach.

"I am still just taking it all in," says Frohlinger. "I told my parents when I was seven that I wanted to have a career on the stage."

Her entire family flew in from Winnipeg and elsewhere for opening night on Aug. 15 at the Circle in the Square theatre. Frohlinger plays the role of a holy beggar and is the understudy for another role.

Frohlinger and her two younger siblings, Joey, 22, and Becky, 19, have been performing in musical theatre almost all their lives. (Becky is currently enrolled in a musical theatre program in North Carolina while Joey just started working for Microsoft in Seattle.)

They all began their careers early in life on Winnipeg stages. Alex learned tap, jazz and ballet at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School. After graduating from the Gray Academy of Jewish Education, she moved to Boston to study music and dance at the Boston Conservatory, graduating in 2010.

Immediately afterward, Frohlinger was signed to a touring production of *West Side Story*. Over the next two years, she travelled all over North America. The tour finished in the summer of 2012 in Japan.

"It was a life-changing period," she says of the tour. "I learned a lot about life on the road and life in general."

As for her current production, she says she watched the show evolve from the beginning. "There's a piece of all of us [the actors and production staff] in the show," she says. "We are receiving standing ovations after every performance. It's an open-ended run, and we hope *Soul Doctor* runs for a long time."

Josh Assor was bitten by the performing arts bug in high school in Winnipeg. He started as a dancer in his high school's performing arts program and moved into singing as well. But it has been as a dancer that he's making his mark.

In 2009, Assor was performing at Stratford. Over the past few years, he has found himself in demand as a dancer, choreographer, teacher and dance judge throughout North America. He has won numerous awards for his choreography including a national award at L.A. Dance Force. He was recently a featured choreographer for *I Move Forward*, a cancer benefit show, as well as for the Toronto Choreographers Ball.

As with Frohlinger, his path to Broadway began with an extended road tour – in his case in the *Mary Poppins* road production – which also toured North America. After a year, he was promoted to the long-running Broadway show.

Assor played the role of Neleus, a Greek statue in the park that comes to life at various times and dances.

"Opening night for me was very special," he says. "I loved the role. It was made for me. It was an unbelievable experience."

The Broadway production came to an end in March after seven years. Since then, Assor has received his green card and has been doing a lot of teaching and workshops. He also filmed a commercial in Florida and was back in Winnipeg to appear as a dancer in a Manitoba Opera Company staging of *Aida*.

He's also busy auditioning for future roles.

Unlike Assor and Frohlinger, Nelko prefers to remain behind the scenes.

The rising star has dancing and choreography in her genes. Her mother, Shelley Shearer, is a lifelong dance teacher in Winnipeg (the Shelley Shearer School of Dance) and Lindsay began her own training at a very young age. By age 14, she was an assistant teacher at he mother's school, and she won her first choreography award at the Manitoba Dance Festival when she was 15.

Nelko's big break came through her participation in the annual Pulse on Tour dance conventions in New York, which allowed her to showcase her work in front of the industry's biggest names.

She won four Choreographer's Pick Honours between 2010 and 2012 culminating in the Pulse Featured Choreographer award last year. As a result, leading choreographer/producer Brian Freedman took her under his wing. He hired her to work on *The X Factor*.

Another famed choreographer, Desmond Richardson, recommended her for *So You Think You Can Dance*. Her first choreographed piece for the show was shown on July 9 and won rave reviews.

"Being a choreographer on *So You Think You Can Dance* was such an incredbile experience and I am so grateful," Nelko says.

In early August, Nelko finished as second runner-up at the Capezio A.C.E Awards (for choreographic excellence) in New York. Although she's now based in Los Angeles, she is looking forward to returning to New York next summer to stage a show which is part of her prize.

In the meantime, her recent exposure has opened a lot of new doors for her in Los Angeles.

"It is a very exciting time," she says.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Due to the holidays, deadlines will change. Sept. 30 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 10. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Sept. 19

WINGS AND WINE

Chabad Markham sponsors a sukkah open house, 3-5 p.m., 242 Green Lane, Thornhill. RSVP required. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221, or visit www.chabadmarkham.org.

SUSHI IN THE SUKKAH

Temple Sinai invites young adults (22-39) to enjoy sushi in the sukkah, 7 p.m. Call 416-487-4161, or email hayley@templesinai.net.

Sunday, Sept. 22

SUKKOT FUN

PJ Library celebrates Sukkot at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, Lebovic JCC, 3 p.m. Enjoy music, crafts and snacks. Registration required at www.pjlibrarytoronto.ca. Call 416-621-5675.

Morris Winchevsky School celebrates Sukkot at Dufferin Grove Park, 11 a.m. Call 416-789-5502.

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism holds a Sukkot festival, 10 a.m., St. Andrew's Junior High School, 131 Fenn Ave. Call 416-385-3910.

Temple Sinai celebrates local, organic foods, especially garlic, at a lunch in the sukkah. To reserve, call 416-487-3281.

Shoresh Jewish Environmental Programs celebrates Sukkot at Bela Farm, Hillsburgh, Ont., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Email sabrina@shoresh.ca for directions.

NEW ISRAEL FUND

The New Israel Fund presents "Meeting the Challenge: Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State," 1-5 p.m., Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St. Visit www.nifcan.org, or call 416-781-4322.

A MORNING OF JAZZ

The York Jazz Ensemble presents "A morning of classic jazz," 9:15 a.m. at Beth David Synagogue. Email brotherhood@bethdavid.com.

WHY THE ROMA?

Temple Emanu-El shows the film *Never Come Back*, about Canada's Roma community and hosts a discussion, 7 p.m. 416-449-4880.

Monday, Sept. 23

MITZVAH KNITTERS

Mitzvah knitters meet to knit and crochet for charitable groups, 1:15 p.m. and 7:15 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue. 905-889-4975.

Tuesday, Sept. 24

ADATH ISRAEL BOOK REVIEW

Heather Kassel reviews *419* by **Will Ferguson**, 8 p.m. at Adath Israel Congregation. The series is $50 for members, $85 for non-members or $10/$15 per review. Call 416-499-6920.

THE CHORALAIRS

The Choralairs of North York, a singing group, starts its new season, 7:15 p.m. at the Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. No auditions needed. Call **Sally** 416-636-8247, or email sallyl@sympatico.ca.

Wednesday, Sept. 25

NEW TO TWO

New to two, songs and games for babies and toddlers, meets at Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 10 a.m. Call 905-889-4975.

Other News

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Baycrest Freeman Family Day Centre is looking for a volunteer who can teach music and incorporate music education into a program. To volunteer, visit www.baycrest.org/volunteer, or call 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

Reena is looking for creative arts volunteers to work with the Reena Theatre Troupe helping to prepare for a major production. Volunteers with skills/interests in dance, music, acting, lighting, sound, scene design and production are needed Sundays 1-5 p.m. from September 2013 to May 2014 at 972 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill. Call **Millie Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org.

HOLOCAUST SUPPORT

Baycrest's Holocaust Resource Program offers support groups for child survivors of the Holocaust and adult children of Holocaust survivors. Group meetings begin in September. Call **Shoshana**

Continued on page 37

STRONGER TOGETHER SUPPORT The Canadian Jewish news

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Continued from page 36

Yaakobi, 416-785-2500, ext. 2271, or email syaakobi@baycrest.org.

YIDDISH CLASSES

Yiddish classes for beginners through advanced will be taught Sunday, 10 a.m. to noon, Beth David Synagogue. Yiddish culture for kids, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Adults $150/10 sessions; kids $20. Classes start Sept. 29. Call **Barbara** 416-631-5843, or visit www.committeeforyiddish.com.

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Friends of Yiddish hold its membership breakfast, Sept. 29, 10 a.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. **Yitzhak Argaman** entertains. RSVP by Sept. 23, call **Sandy** 416-736-8073 or 416-458-1440, or email Yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

TIKVAH TOTS

Tikvah Tots, singing and games for children ages one to three, resumes Sept. 29 at Beth Tikvah. Call 416-221-3433.

MORASHA CLASSES

Registration is open for new Morasha classes at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Starting Oct. 15, **Jerry Fink** teaches "Western Art and Music from a Jewish Perspective." Call **Loretta**, 416-789-7400.

MY HERZL

Beth Tzedec Congregation shows the film *My Herzl*, Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m.

YARD SALE

City Shul holds a yard sale, Sept. 29, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Christie Pits Park. Proceeds to City Shul's tikkun olam fund. www.cityshul.com.

BREAST CANCER MONTH

Felicia Marie Knaul discusses her book *Beauty Without the Breast*, about her journey with breast cancer and the BRCA gene, Holy Blossom Temple, Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m. For details, call **Elana Fehler** 416-789-3291.

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Are you 15 to 29 years old and looking for work? JVS Toronto can offer you financial supports and employers' hiring incentives. Call 416-787-1151.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Registration now open for Beth Tikvah's lunch and learn series. First session is Oct. 1, with **Paul Saltzman** discussing his relationship with a KKK Klansman. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or www.jfandcs.com. All classes held at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2-10. Starts Oct. 2.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Oct. 16, 35 Madison Ave., 2:30 p.m. or Oct. 17, Lipa Green, 7 p.m.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement Group: A 6-session group for those under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage-preparation group. Offered with the Rabbinical Assembly-Ontario. Starts Oct. 22, Adath Israel Synagogue, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers 60+: A 6-session group for men and women over 60 who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts Oct. 23, 1 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

When You're About to Separate, What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups for bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors Sukkot lunch and entertainment, Sept. 24, 11:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. $20/$25. Reservations required. Call **Tammy** 416-635-2900, ext. 458, or email ajs@circleofcare.com.

Baycrest Learning Academy for Older Adults is offering courses in partnership with the Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University. Classes start in October. Call **Laura Hogan** at 416-785-2500, ext. 5209 or www.Baycrest.org/LearningAcademy.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors Club. Kosher food, card games. 416-256-1892.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie**, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine Sept. 25. Dance with live music Sept. 22. Monday to Thursday, mah-jong, Rummikub and dominoes, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Register now for courses, which start first week of October. Sept. 24, **Rosalin Krieger** discusses "Chagall 1911-1914," 10 a.m.

Beth Sholom Seniors Group, 416-783-6103, ext. 228. Book review of *My Russian Grandmother and her American Vacuum Cleaner*, Oct. 2, noon. Trip to see *Cirque de la Symphonie*, Oct. 16.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Register for the Opera Appreciation Series with **Iain Scott,** starts Sept. 24. Oct. 6, 12:15 p.m., 60th-anniversary brunch with the **Jordan Klapman Trio.**

Active 55+ Miles Nadal JCC Seniors helping seniors volunteer fair, Sept. 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Joshua Gelber** discusses "Aging without aches and pains," Sept. 30, noon. Call **Colin Blayney** 416-924-6211, ext. 526, or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Now accepting registration for limited spaces for junior and senior kindergarten full-day program with kosher lunch and snacks and for nursery program. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4351.

Dr. Jonathan Breslin discusses "Ethics in Health Care: Current Challenges," Oct. 8, 22 and Nov. 5, 1 p.m. To register call ext. 4235.

Amnon Zohar discusses social and political change in the Middle East, Tuesdays starting Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

Tickets available for *I Love Lucy*, Oct. 30, 2 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Teen Sukkot pool party, Sept. 21, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Celebrate with Havdalah and games in the pool. RSVP, ext. 154.

Free programs at the JCC, Sept. 22-25. Ext. 0.

Sukkot dinner and a showing of the movie *Protektor* for people in their 20s and 30s, Sept. 22, dinner at 5 p.m., movie at 7:30 p.m. Ext. 154.

Toronto Jewish Film Society shows the film *Protektor*, Sept. 22, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Ext. 606.

Lorne Blumer and **Elaine Cooper** discuss the joy and meaning of Sukkot, Sept. 24, 8 p.m.

Adult choir meets Tuesdays 1 p.m. No experience or sight reading needed. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Three movie critics discuss the work of film directors **Robert Altman, David Lynch** and **Steven Spielberg,** Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

The Ontario Jewish Archives at 40, photos from the Ontario Jewish Archives are on display at the gallery until Oct. 3. Reception, Sept. 23 at 7 p.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gurman and Mr. & Mrs. Joel Pink are pleased to announce the engagement of their children Elissa and Daniel.

Mazel tov to Jason Aginsky, son of Lauren Kramer & Mark Aginsky on the occasion of his barmitzvah, August 31 at Chabad Lubavitch of Vancouver.

Mazel tov to Rebecca and Vlad Hotin on the birth of Benjamin Irwin.

Happy birthday Sara on September 12th. Best wishes for the coming year!

Happy 99th Birthday to Gina Jancovici on Oct. 20! Lots of love from Rosita & Irwin, Sharon & Jeff, Joanne & Dennis.

On Aug. 1, Marian Adam turned 95. With love & best wishes for continued health and happiness.

Email your digital photos to cbleclumandthecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

New Year musings: the 6 a.m. club

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

It was another typical morning. I arrived at the health club Body and Soul, which is close to my home so that I can manage to get my exercise in before going to work. I generally arrive by 6 a.m. on weekdays and 7 a.m. on weekends.

The best thing about that time of morning is that there are only a few members there, including three Jewish women who, with me, have become part of an informal early morning "club" who share, besides our exercise routines, issues of life, family, film, books and all the minor but at the same time central subjects of humanity. Some of us have had professional or personal connections prior to meeting at the club: the ties are convoluted in the usual way of zero degrees of separation that often occur once one delves beyond the obvious identifying attributes.

Rosh Hashanah week, while we were congregating, the conversation naturally was directed to the meals that we all shared with our families and friends. At one point I was on one of those supposedly beneficial upper and lower body "elliptical machines" that avoid putting too much pressure on joints, which, for me, is necessary because of my 72-year-old less-than-perfect knees. As I read my latest novel on my Kobo, I overheard the conversation of my three "buddies" near me using various exercise machines.

The conversation naturally turned to the dishes that they served and ate over the holidays, with explicit descriptions of the content, the taste and, in some cases, the accompanying recipe. One of the group bemoaned the fact that her apple cake was a bit of a "flop," literally and figuratively because she used cake flour instead of self-rising flour, a detail I did not really understand, but the two other women did, as they shared successful and unsuccessful Rosh Hashanah baking stories, experiences and favourite recipes.

One common theme is the traditional honey cake, which is not just a hallmark of Rosh Hashanah baking, but in some ways, a reflection of the baking talent of a Jewish woman's kitchen skills. To say that someone's honey cake is "the best," because of its moistness, flavour, appearance is a great compliment and one I know I honestly espouse because my wife's honey cake recipe is indeed "the best."

The humour in this interchange is that it reflected the new paradigm of the educated late middle age and early geriatric (which is me) population. The other three members of our group are in their mid-50s to mid-60s. We are all very knowledgeable about the importance of exercise and healthy eating in long-term health. But a countervailing force is our collective love for many of the traditional Jewish holiday dishes, and, like the name of our health club, it represents the "soul" of our identity beyond what is "good for us."

The soul part of our love of sharing special recipes, even if modified to be "healthier," still mirrors our long collective history of the devotion that goes into food and its ability to bring families together as part of a special shared experience.

Some exercise machines indicate how many calories are burned during the workout, but what they do not do is tell us how many calories were in the slice of honey or apple cake, potato kugel and challah we ate, which is a good thing.

If they did, we would likely have to move into the club for a day and night of constant exercise in order to burn off Rosh Hashanah dinner. Since that is not going to happen, at least we can collectively share how much we ate, how wonderful it was, and prepare for the next holiday meal with the commitment to keep exercising in-between – making sure that we follow the dictum of our club's name, "Body and Soul."

SCHOOL BUDDIES: The buddy program of the Thomas & Marjorie Schwartz Preschool Centre (formerly the MNjcc Nursery School) and Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School is off to a sweet start! Paul Penna Grade 6 students were introduced to their preschool buddies during the first week of school and will continue to engage in a range of activities together – such as swimming, planting and holiday themed crafts – throughout the school year. Pictured enjoying a good book are Levy and Stella.

Simchat Torah – roll those scrolls

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Leah Schapira and Victoria Dwek are on a roll with the publication of their latest cookbook in their popular Made Easy Series. When *Passover Made Easy* was completed, they decided that their next project should be a cookbook that featured the type of food they loved to cook and eat. Dwek explained: "After polling all our neighbours, we concluded that everyone is always looking for more starter and side dish ideas."

Starters and Sides Made Easy (Artscroll) features 60 of their favourite triple-tested recipes for scrumptious starters and side dishes that will enhance any meal. Each recipe is accompanied by a colour photo.

"When I am entertaining or having the family over for a holiday meal, I don't want my kitchen to be messy when guests arrive. I like to prepare everything in advance, pull it out of the fridge or freezer and pop it in the oven, so Leah and I added "Ahead" tips for every recipe in this book," Dwek said.

Schapira added: "When I am looking for a side dish to go with a dinner, I want something quick and easy to make. But sometimes easy doesn't mean quick. The recipes in our book are about having ideas you love at your fingertips or using ingredients that you can find at your local supermarket."

Here are some suggestions to serve your family and friends for your Simchat Torah celebrations. Let the good times roll!

CORNED BEEF SPINACH SPRING ROLLS

Leah Schapira writes: "Give me a spring roll, and I'll eat it. I've stuffed them with avocado, brisket, vegetables... I've even stuffed these wrappers with brownies and fried them for dessert. These, though, are my best spring rolls yet. Of course they're better fried, but these also actually work very well when they are baked."

2 tbsp. oil
1 onion, diced
1 16-oz. bag frozen chopped spinach
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. onion powder
3/4 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. mayonnaise
2 tsp. mustard
1/8 tsp. black pepper
12 spring roll wrappers
6 oz. deli corned beef, cut into thin strips
1 tsp. cornstarch dissolved in 3 tbsp. water
Dipping Sauce
2 tsp. yellow mustard
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1 tbsp. brown sugar

Heat oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until completely soft, about 7 minutes. Add spinach and continue to sauté until spinach is completely cooked, about 15 minutes. Add garlic powder, onion powder, salt, mayonnaise, mustard and black pepper.

Place a spring roll wrapper on your work surface. Shape 1-1/2 tbsp. of spinach mixture into a log-shaped mound in the centre of the wrapper. Place 1-1/2 tbsp. corned beef over spinach mixture. Fold in the two sides, then fold the bottom half of the wrapper over the filling. Roll up to completely enclose. Brush the top edge with a bit of the cornstarch mixture to seal. Spring rolls can be frozen at this point.

To bake the spring rolls, preheat oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and grease with nonstick cooking spray. Place spring rolls on the sheet, leaving space between them. Spray the tops and sides with nonstick cooking spray. Bake for 18 minutes, or until crispy. (Alternatively, you can fry the spring rolls: Heat 1-2 inches oil in a saucepan. When hot, add spring rolls and fry until crispy, 3-4 minutes per side.)

Prepare the dipping sauce: In a small microwave-safe dish, combine mustard, mayonnaise, and brown sugar. Stir to combine. Microwave for 30 seconds, or until sugar has dissolved. Stir again. Serve with spring rolls. Makes 12 spring rolls.

Variation: Keep this recipe pareve by omitting the corned beef. Or even better... swap the meat for cheese if you want to serve these at a dairy meal.

Ahead: The spring rolls will freeze well. Freeze raw after Step 2 and bake or fry fresh. You can also prepare the dipping sauce in advance and refrigerate. Let it come to room temperature before serving.

CRISPY CHICKEN ROLLS WITH HONEY-GARLIC DIPPING SAUCE

Victoria writes: "Whenever I sit down to create a menu for a party I'm hosting, I think about how I can dress up my family's latest weeknight favourites. One of these favourites is Leah's crispy chicken wraps, which she stuffs with onions, red cabbage, well-seasoned schnitzel, and an awesome sauce, because, as she believes, a good sandwich deserves layers. And I agree! This adapted version takes the dish from the dinette table to the dining room."

1 tbsp. oil, plus more for frying
1 onion, cut into very thin strips
5 (10-in.) whole-wheat wraps
Chicken:
1 lb. chicken cutlets, pounded thin
1 tsp. salt, divided
pinch coarse black pepper
1 1/2 tbsp. minced garlic, divided
3/4 cup panko crumbs
1 tsp. chili powder
3/4 tsp. paprika
1 egg
Red Cabbage Salad
1 1/4 cups red cabbage
2 tbsp. vinegar
1 tsp. oil
1/4 tsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. salt
Honey Garlic Dipping Sauce
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup water
2 tbsp. honey
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1/4 tsp. paprika
pinch coarse black pepper

Heat oil in a sauté pan over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until soft and lightly golden, about 10 minutes. Set aside.

Season chicken with 1/2 tsp. salt, pepper, and 1/2 tbsp. minced garlic.

In a shallow dish, combine panko crumbs, chili powder, paprika, 1 tbsp. minced garlic and 1/2 tsp. salt. Lightly beat egg in a second shallow dish. Dredge chicken in egg, then coat in crumbs.

Heat a thin layer of oil in a sauté pan over medium heat. When oil is hot, add chicken and cook for 3-4 minutes per side. Remove to a paper towel-lined plate. When cool enough to handle, cut chicken into thin evenly sized strips.

Prepare the red cabbage salad: in a small bowl, combine cabbage, vinegar, oil, sugar and salt. Set aside.

Prepare the honey-garlic dipping sauce: in a small bowl, whisk together mayonnaise, water, honey, garlic, paprika and pepper.

Assemble the wraps: Spread a tablespoon of the honey-garlic dipping sauce across the bottom-centre of the wrap. Top with onions, chicken strips and 1/4 cup red cabbage. Make sure the filling is evenly distributed. Fold the bottom of the wrap over the filling and tuck under very tightly. Fold in the sides and continue to roll, egg roll-style, holding your fingers under the roll so that it remains very tight. Slice each wrap, sushi-style, into six pieces. Secure by threading a skewer through the edge of the wrap and the chicken. Repeat with remaining wraps and serve with remaining honey-garlic dipping sauce. Yield: 30 roll-ups.

Ahead: Although best fresh, these skewers can be assembled earlier in the day. Serve at room temperature or reheat briefly so as not to cook the cabbage.

CINNAYUMS

1 frozen challah defrosted, not baked
2 tsp margarine, melted • 1 egg, beaten
2 tbls cinnamon • 1/4 c brown sugar

Unravel dough braids & gather dough together: on floured surface, separate dough into into 2 lg. rectangles; roll to ¼" thick. Brush with margarine. Sprinkle with cinnamon & sugar; leave 1" border on all sides. Roll dough, jelly roll style into 2 long rolls. Seal edges into dough. Coat 9"x13" pan with baking spray. Slice each log into ½" discs; place in pan, touching. Allow to rise 30-45 min. Brush with beaten egg. Bake in preheated 400 °oven 10-12 min until golden. Remove from oven; spread with icing while warm.

ICING : 1 ½ c icing sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract • 1-3 tbls water

In small bowl mix together sugar, vanilla, 1 tbl. water. Smooth with fork, adding water as needed for creamy, spreadable consistency.

Source: Cooking for the King

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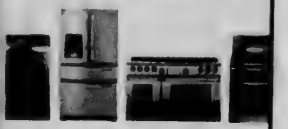
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Community Focus

The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

This year's Community Focus supplement highlights some of Canada's influential, impressive, up-and-coming Jews – people who may be on their way to becoming household names in the Jewish community, and beyond. We've profiled a variety of professionals from areas such as business, the arts, media, technology and community service. One thing all of the subjects have in common is a passion for their craft and a drive to succeed, which we hope will inspire our readers to believe that no dream is unattainable.

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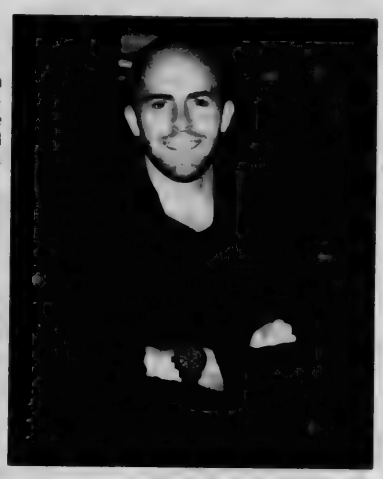
Professional network founder's hard work pays off

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter



He's not yet in his 30s, but Julian Brass has spent years working tirelessly to make a name for himself as founder of the national young professional network Notable.ca.

He'll be the first to tell you that when he launched the site in 2008, which was then known as NotableTV.com, it wasn't all smooth sailing.

Brass had to "work his ass off," to turn the site, described as "a premier lifestyle guide for young professionals across Canada," into the brand that now attracts more than one million readers each month.

After graduating from the University of Guelph's Bachelor of Commerce program with a major in hospitality management, Brass moved to Silicon Valley in California to work for a social networking and online dating website called Engage.com.

Brass spent just over a year with the startup before parlaying the knowledge he gained into starting a business he described as his passion.

"Notable was created to really help people [feel that] they're not the only one out there who's facing these highs or facing these lows. It's really intended to be that online resource – that toolkit – that brings content and a brand to like-minded young professionals, which helps them go further in their careers and their lives in general, every day," Brass said.

The site, he added, is intended "to be the digital brand that connects young professionals across Canada with everything they need to empower themselves to live the most notable life they can."

Notable.ca – which was named a finalist in nextMEDIA's Digital Hot List contest, and runner-up in the KPGM-sponsored competition called "Canada's Next Great Start-Up" – features pieces on travel, entertainment, the hottest restaurants, the newest trends in technology, and business profiles on other successful young professionals.

In the years since Brass launched Notable.ca, the site has expanded into cities across Canada, and now has a presence in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary.

Continued on page B3

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Brass hopes to make Notable bigger and better

Continued from page B2

"We have localized editions that, from a street level, and a local level, give young Canadian professionals all those different perspectives," he said, adding that he also has ambitions to expand into the United States.

Brass said in addition to entrepreneurship, another of his passions that fits well with the Notable mantra, is motivational speaking.

He said he loves the idea of helping people "figure out exactly how to go after what it is that they want to do with their life."

Tapping into his motivational speaker persona, Brass insisted that the secret to success is the age-old adage that if you believe in yourself, nothing can get in your way.

"I really believe that we're all pretty equal, but everyone has different talents. And it's just a matter of harnessing yours, staying true to what your vision is and what you really believe in," said Brass, who was recently named one of "Toronto's Hottest Young Entrepreneurs" by the *Globe and Mail*, and recognized as one of the "Five Geeks and Gurus Every Marketer Should Meet" by *Marketing* magazine.

He understands that many people have fears about diving headfirst into a risky venture.

And even if people can put their fears aside and gain the courage needed to take the plunge, they may not be preparing themselves for the challenges of keeping their business afloat, he added.

"Staying afloat is being ready for all of the curveballs that come your way, whatever they may be. There are so many when you're starting a business. But stay positive and stay confident in yourself and your abilities and your capabilities, and the ideas that made you say, 'I'm going to go after this,' in the first place. That's the toughest part for me as an entrepreneur."

He said it's all too easy for people to start beating themselves up when they run into roadblocks, and ultimately, to give up.

"The reason why Notable is where it is today is because during the tough times, I really carefully looked at what wasn't working and [thought about] how I could make it work. When you do that enough, you really start to become an expert at seeing opportunities," Brass said.

Of course, there are ideas that may not ever come to fruition, but "if you say, 'I'm going to build a business no matter what,' you will build that business no matter what. It might be slightly different than you originally anticipated, but you can do it. Because if it's not you, it's going to be someone else."

Brass added that it's also helpful to seek the advice and mentorship of successful people who have already gone through the ups and downs of building something from nothing.

"Find your mentors, find your colleagues… Do your market research, have a solid business plan. But understand that in today's rapidly changing world, you have to be flexible and you can't be stuck in your ways," he warned.

Despite his business being his primary focus, Brass also makes time to volunteer for Jewish organizations including Technion Canada, which raises funds and awareness for Haifa's Technion – Israel Institute of Technology.

Formerly the vice-chair of the organization's Generation Next group, Brass is now the youngest board member.

He said he's donated time and even ad space on his website to other Jewish organizations including Israel Cancer Research Fund and Jewish National Fund.

"It's extremely important [to me to be involved in the Jewish community], and it's something I'm really passionate about. A lot of these causes that these organizations believe in are very relevant to young professionals, both Jewish and non-Jewish. It allows me, as the final decision-maker, to leverage the huge audience that Notable.ca has to help support these great causes," Brass said.

While he enjoys his motivational speaking gigs and volunteering for organizations that resonate with him, he said his primary focus remains Notable.ca, which he hopes will continue to grow bigger and better.

"We're constantly changing and evolving and really trying to make sure we're always getting back to our vision of connecting young professionals with Notable and helping them live their best life," Brass said.

"We really do work our asses off every single day to make sure we're delivering on that promise."

Applying to Medical School? Law School? Dental School?

It is increasingly difficult to gain admission to many professional school programs, such as medicine, law, dentistry, pharmacy and business, given the dramatic rise in applications for a limited number of positions. Since applications to professional schools have doubled in the last ten years, gaining admission requires careful planning – even for students with impressive credentials. No aspect of the application process can be overlooked.

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Canadian TV exec sets his sights on TV Guide Network

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Critics may be pointing to the demise of television, but for Bradley Schwartz, a leader in the North American television industry, there's nowhere to go but up.

The Toronto native recently landed a new job working in Los Angeles as president of entertainment and media at TV Guide Network (TVGN) – a CBS/Lionsgate partnership.

"I feel like everything I've done in my career has led me to this opportunity. I could not be more excited about it. I feel it is the greatest entrepreneurial opportunity in all of television," Schwartz said.

And there's a reason they wanted Schwartz for this particular job: he's spent more than 20 years in the field developing new channels – such as bringing MTV to Canada – and revitalizing failing channels, like when he brought an American channel, FUSE, back to life.

He'll be tasked with rebranding the 32-year-old TVGN, in charge of programming, scheduling and marketing.

For most people, the words "TV Guide" conjure images of a magazine that once listed show times.

But the channel, which lists TV channel locations and programming information, running in more than 80 million homes, is ready for a change – and Schwartz has been brought on to maximize its potential.

Bradley Schwartz, credited with bringing MTV to Canada in 2005, posed with the cast and crew of one of MTV Canada's hit shows, *The After Show*.

"We just have blue sky in front of us to turn this thing into a wonderful success," he said.

Schwartz, who has been in the business since he was 21, has had opportunities to learn from some of the industry's biggest names.

At 21, he landed his first job in the media business working as an assistant to Lorne Michaels at *Saturday Night Live*.

"That's where I learned TV. It was like getting an MBA in television," said Schwartz, 42.

"It was 1992 to 1993. The year that Letterman left NBC and Michaels was given the reigns to *Late Night* and created *The Conan O'Brien Show*.

"For a young kid in the business, to watch all that and learn from all that, it was awesome. Lorne became a mentor in many ways. I ended up working for him for many years," he said.

For Schwartz, the desire to be part of the entertainment business came from a strong passion for marketing.

"Marketing came very naturally to me. As long as you really love marketing, then you might as well market what you love. For me, that was entertainment," Schwartz said.

But it was thanks to the experience he gained from working with the legendary Michaels that he caught the eye of MTV in New York, and would soon take on the project for which he became most famous: launching MTV Canada.

Continued on page B5

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TV industry is 'a thrilling place to be,' Schwartz says

Continued from page B4

When the opportunity to bring MTV to Canada came out of a strategic partnership between CTV Inc. and Viacom Inc. (the owner of the MTV Networks), Schwartz didn't hesitate.

"They looked around to see if there were any Canadians in the room. I put my hand up. And then they said, 'Are there any other Canadians in the room?' And when there wasn't, I guess I was by default the best option," he said, laughing.

So after years away from his hometown, Schwartz returned to Toronto in 2005, with the task of building a brand from scratch.

Without a business plan or employees, Schwartz was handed the keys to the Masonic Temple in downtown Toronto, which was to become the home of MTV Canada.

"It was one of the most thrilling moments of my career. We put together one hell of a team. Along with the leaders at CTV, we launched one of the most successful television launches in Canadian TV history," he said.

"Six shows that we produced were on the air in the U.S. Those things just didn't happen in Canadian television for a cable network," Schwartz boasted, adding that 46 per cent of young Canadians were tuning in each week to shows including *The*

Toronto native Bradley Schwartz is TVGN's president of entertainment and media.

After Show, *Peak Season*, and *1 Girl 5 Gays*.

Just two years after the MTV launch, CTV's parent company, Bell Globemedia, bought CHUM Limited.

"All of the MuchMusic and MTV channels came together. We became a 400-person staff," said Schwartz, who then became senior vice-president and general manager of the Much MTV Group.

Schwartz, who remembers the gig as a "fun ride," said it was the "kind of job that wasn't a job," especially for someone who grew up surrounded with music.

He remembers turning on the TV to watch MuchMusic after his parents put him to bed at night.

While Schwartz was having the time of his life creating content for one of the most iconic Canadian brands, he discovered that he had a knack for creating something fresh and new, and revitalizing old, long-forgotten brands.

So in 2011, he again left Toronto to work for FUSE, a New York-based network that needed a push and a rebranding strategy to become the success it had the potential to be.

"I felt like I should go out on top. Go cash in all my chips and put them back on the table. I've never been one to sit back and hit your stride," Schwartz said.

"I came down and grabbed a hold of FUSE and wanted to turn that into something special."

His hard work paid off. FUSE received its first-ever Emmy nomination this year, along with the highest rated day, month, and quarter in FUSE history.

Schwartz is not one to shy away from a difficult task, and in this business, he's known as someone who can be trusted with turning around a less-than-successful brand. Thanks to his unique mix of business savvy and creativity, Schwartz was named one of the top 40 under 40 by Caldwell Partners International in 2011.

Schwartz's advice for those who strive to make it in his industry is to learn about both the business and entertainment aspects to the job.

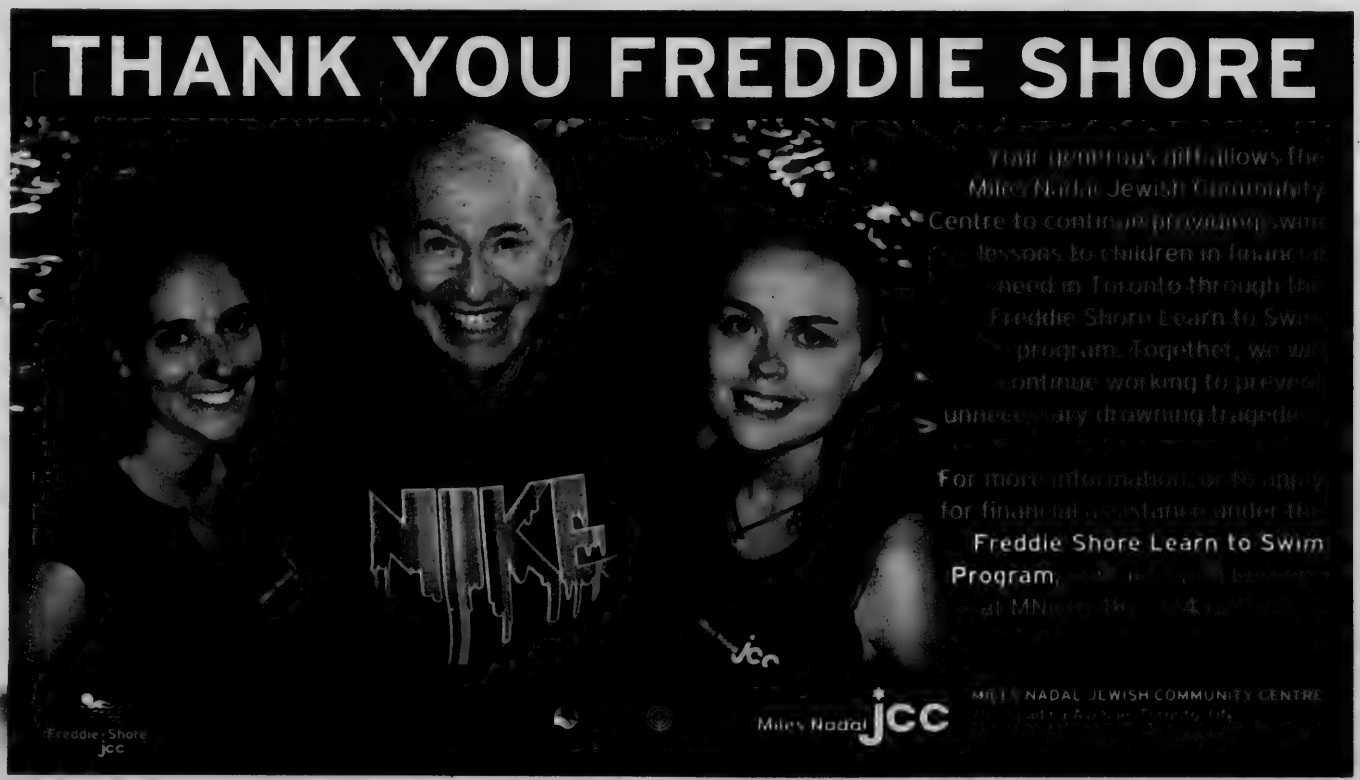
"If you can put those two together successfully, you'll be a rare commodity. And people in this business are always looking for that," he said.

"I credit that to my mom and dad back home in Canada. Mom has an unbelievable creative background and a big heart and my dad ran businesses – those two things that I got from my parents have a lot to do with where I am today."

And as the nature of television radically changes every day, Schwartz says he's not worried about the place that television has in the future.

"The ability to have people watch your content wherever they want, whenever they want is only a good thing," he said.

"You just have to stay on top of it and ahead of it. That's why it's such a thrilling place to be right now."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Sweet Melissa founder could be Toronto's Cake Boss

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The countless reality baking shows on television, like *Cake Boss*, *The American Baking Competition* and *Cupcake Wars*, have spawned a worldwide fascination with outrageous custom cakes, and fostered competition between talented pastry chefs who are always trying to outdo one another.

But Melissa Abbou, the 24-year-old founder of a baking company called Sweet Melissa and one of Toronto's most promising new talents, insists it wasn't the TV genre that turned her on to her baking passion.

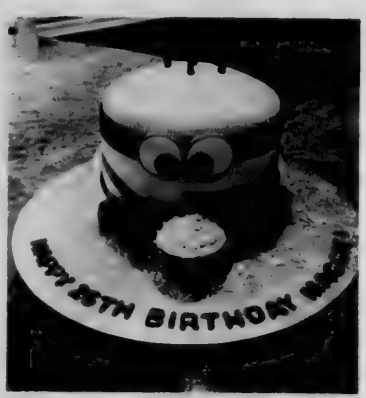
"I've always loved it. Initially, it wasn't something that I wanted to do professionally because I wanted to keep my passion and my thing that calmed me down... to myself," Abbou said.

"Then I was having a conversation with one of my teachers from high school and he said to me, 'Why wouldn't you want to do the thing you love most every single day?'"

That conversation inspired Abbou to completely alter her career path.

After applying for and getting accepted into York University's psychology program, she declined the offer, opting instead to take a year off from school to work.

She then applied to George Brown College, where she earned a baking and pastry arts management degree.



This *Despicable Me* minion cake is one example of Abbou's edible art. [Melissa Abbou photo]

Since Abbou registered Sweet Melissa as a business in 2011, her clientele has been steadily growing.

When she first started out, Abbou's baked goods were entirely commissioned by friends and family.

"Now I'm doing orders for people that I have no idea who they are. They are getting my information from other people, hearing about me through word of mouth, they are finding me on Facebook."

Abbou said her clients call on her to make specialty custom cakes that you can't find on grocery store shelves.

"People come to me for an original cake, they want something creative, out of the box, that's why they come to me. And my cakes don't taste like store-bought cakes – they actually taste really good. And the flavours keep bringing them back. Almost all my clients are repeat clients," Abbou said.

But beyond the flavours, the cake has to look amazing too, Abbou said. She understands that for some functions, like birthday parties or even weddings, the presentation of the cake can be one of the highlights of a celebration.

Most recently, Abbou made a custom birthday cake in the shape of a minion from the *Despicable Me* films, and a *Little Mermaid*-themed cake.

"People always assume I'm such a great artist or painter, but to be honest, I can't do anything with a pen or a pencil. But if you put a piping bag in my hand or give me some fondant to sculpt, I can do that. That comes naturally to me. That's how I'm artistic in my own way," Abbou said.

Continued on page B8

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Photographer brings out the exotic in the ordinary

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Photographer Gil Tamin can make an unsuspecting couple sitting on a bench look like they're posing for a magazine cover shot. He can make a European coastline look like a postcard.

Armed with his Canon EOS 5D Mark III DSLR camera, he's able to capture awe-inspiring beauty in the utterly mundane.

But until two years ago, 30-year-old Tamin didn't even own a camera. He stumbled onto his talent for photography by accident.

When he told his fiancée that he was looking for a hobby, she encouraged him to pick up a camera and have fun with it.

"I started out with a $500 camera, and after [I became] comfortable with it, a friend of mine hired me to help him take pictures at different events," he recalled.

Tamin quickly discovered that, although he was untrained, he had an innate talent for taking pictures. Beyond that, he said, working with cameras brought out another side of him.

"I can be a shy person, but for some reason, the camera makes me the opposite. It just makes me comfortable. I almost think about it as being in my own zone," said Tamin, who also works at his family-run auto body shop called Natanya Auto Body.

"It brings out a different side of me. I get really excited."

In the two years since Tamin dove head first into photography, he has landed corporate gigs, including photographing an event for the high-end makeup company Stila. He also freelances for non-profit organizations such as Weizmann Canada, and of course, he is often commissioned for weddings, bar mitzvahs and other important milestone events.

But what really inspires Tamin is being alone with this thoughts and his camera, while exploring beautiful landscapes.

"For me, I love landscapes. I just see something, and there's a light bulb in my head and I get excited," he said.

"I could be driving anywhere and I could just see something, and in my head I'm like, 'Oh my God, that would be a perfect picture'... I see something that may look like nothing to somebody else."

He explained that earlier this year, he was invited to his friend's cottage on the lake. On the way up, Tamin noticed an old, tiny, dilapidated cottage sitting next to a big tree.

His friend, who had driven past that old cottage every time he went up north, never noticed it.

"I stopped to take a picture, and he says, 'Why would you take a picture of that?' When he saw the photo I took, he was like, 'Wow,'" Tamin said.

"I try to make things that aren't so special look special. It doesn't have to be a crazy view of the water. It could be a door with an interesting colour. It's seeing something that draws my attention and [might] be nothing to somebody else, but to me, it's something special."

Continued on page B17

The man behind the camera, Gil Tamin.

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Abbou turns her passion into a career

Continued from page B6

Abbou, who works for the Royal Bank of Canada by day, and tends to her baking orders with every free moment she has, said her ambition is to open a storefront in Toronto within the next five years.

"I've been talking to the business account manager at RBC about government loans and business loans and how it would work. I really, really want it to happen. I think if I just build up my client base a little bit more, then my store should be successful."

In addition to custom cake orders, Abbou also hosts cupcake birthday parties.

"And hopefully, ideally, when I have a storefront, I'll have a little party room where people can do little birthday parties in my shop," she said.

"At the end of the day, I'm still only 24, so anything can happen. I'm trying, I really am trying. And the support that I'm getting from people – like, I have people referring me that I never would have even thought that they would pass on my name."

Sweet Melissa founder Melissa Abbou. [Sheri Shefa photo]

Abbou is currently working out of her home kitchen, which is kosher, but not COR-certified.

"There's nothing non-kosher about any ingredients that I use… And if a client really needs me to [bake in a certified] kosher kitchen then I can, for a fee, come to their place and do it there," she said.

While Abbou's cakes look like they should be featured on a TV baking competition, she doesn't think she could handle the anxiety that comes with those high-pressure situations.

"It's very intimidating, and I think being in such an intense environment like that, it might make me very anxious," she said with a laugh.

But of course, there are other ways to make it big in the baking industry.

You've got to work hard, and put in the hours, Abbou said.

"You've just got to try it. You can't be afraid and if it's something you really want to do, make it work for yourself. Because if it's going to make you happy, you should do it."

For more information about Sweet Melissa, call 416-825-1732 or check out her work at facebook.com/sweetmelissatoronto.

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Farming Faulkners invest in Western Canada

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

With her salon hairstyle, designer outfits and downtown Toronto office, Joelle Faulkner could easily be taken for a high-achieving urban professional.

At 29, she's got degrees in chemical engineering, business administration and law (bachelor's and master's, no less), but the subject that puts a smile on her face and really gets her animated is land.

Not the kind you build condos on, but the kind that's used to grow things that require irrigation, crop rotation, drainage and silos.

Her style notwithstanding, Faulkner is a proud farm girl whose ties to the land go back at least a generation. Her family immigrated to Canada in 1938 as farmers; her dad, Tommy, is in the alfalfa seed business; and a great-granduncle is in the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame for bringing forage mixes to Canada.

Apparently, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Faulkner, together with her brother Benji, 31, is also in the farm business.

About a year ago, they launched Area One Farms, an enterprise that sees them pool investors' money and partner with local farmers to purchase land in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. They clear it and drain it – when necessary – and raise crops on it.

To date, they've acquired 22,000 acres of land spread over six farms. The main crops being raised are canola, wheat, soya beans, yellow mustard and corn.

If her projections are correct, they stand to generate a return of between 8 and 10 per cent from crops. Add in land appreciation, and the return could reach 14 per cent.

"You rarely get that from a crop here," she said, referring to her home province, Ontario.

Joelle is predicting that Area One will earn a profit of around $2.1 million. That's based on expected crop yields and current forward prices for September and October delivery.

"Right now, prices are below the five-year average," said Faulkner, suggesting her estimate could even be considered on the conservative side.

No doubt, that's what appealed to investors, who helped her raise nearly $23 million for the project. About 30 per cent of that was borrowed from banks. The rest came from family, friends and wealthy individuals with cash to invest.

The return on investment goes beyond what their capital would have generated from Ontario farms. The main reason goes back to the price of real estate. Out west, Area One can acquire land for $800 to $2,500 an acre.

"A lot of Ontario land is trading at $6,000 to $25,000 an acre," she said. There's a reason for that: "Most of the land in southern Ontario is going to be better than any of the land I'm buying."

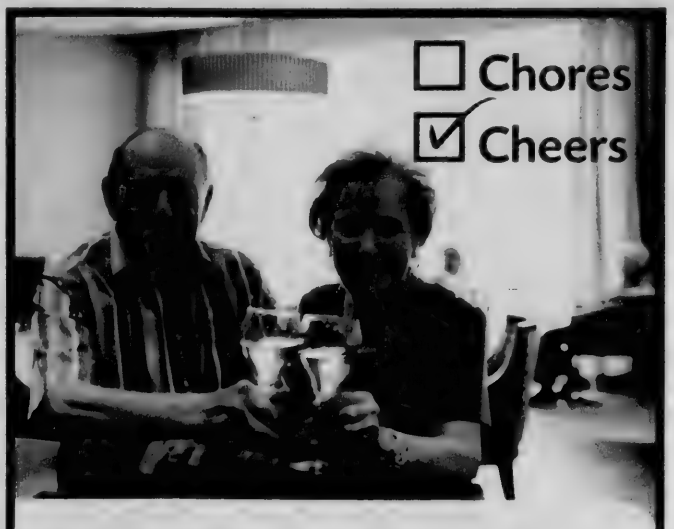
Even the best land in Western Canada sells for only $8,000 an acre, Benji pointed out.

"Ontario land is more expensive, but it's also more productive. You can grow 40 per cent more crop in Ontario," largely because "you have more growing days" in a season, he said.

Some of the land purchased in Manitoba and Saskatchewan requires work to get it ready for farming, Joelle explained.

Continued on page B10

Benji Faulkner, surveying a soybean field in Saskatchewan, about 160 km southeast of Regina in 2012. (Joelle Faulkner photo)



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Rhodes scholar works the land

Continued from page B9

"We clear trees to make more cropland. We remove fences and we drain wet spots. All of which opens the farm to make more arable acres."

"It can be expensive, but it's way cheaper than buying the land cleared," she added.

An important element of their business model is to collaborate with local farmers.

"Each farm has a partner, somebody with a really good track record for crop farming who is invested in the place," she said.

That person manages the land, does the planting and determines how best to sell it – whether to hedge or not. Often, Area One's partners are young farmers looking to expand their properties, but don't have the capital to acquire adjacent land. Area One buys into the property as well as their equipment and they share the profits, Joelle said.

"The deal with the farmers makes them more profitable and us more profitable. It's a win-win and if we can't find a win-win, we don't do it."

An added bonus is that Area One brings the farmers together to share skills. Some may be better at planting, others at selling.

"We'll take the more successful ones to teach the others how they did it," she said.

"The reason we can partner with these guys is that we're farmers. We can identify with them and if there are problems, we can help them."

Yes, she is a farmer, but perhaps what sets her apart are her four degrees, each earned "one year faster than normal." Oh, and she's a Rhodes Scholar and a Fulbright Scholar to boot.

Her LinkedIn profile notes that while studying law at Stanford University, she was involved in the development of a device to treat pulmonary edema as well as a mechanical ventilator; she worked at Cooler Solutions, helping develop products for Alzheimer's sufferers; and she worked at ROY-L Capital in Ontario to support various health initiatives.

So how did a clearly accomplished woman with four degrees come back to farming?

Credit her brother with coming up with the idea. Benji manages two Ontario farms, one in Guelph, as well as a large dairy farm in London with 1,000 milk-giving Holsteins and another 300 to 450 "dry cows" that are pregnant.

He traveled to Manitoba quite a bit on business and, seeing the price of land out west, came up with the idea.

It was a concept that appealed to Joelle and though they were more familiar with the dairy industry, they found the land there more suitable for raising beef or crops.

"I like crops and if the price is low, or you don't like it, you can put it into a silo until you do like it," she said.

She and Benji travel to the prairies twice a month to check on the investments, look for new opportunities and discuss with their partners any issues that might crop up.

"I look for new land and for people who want to expand their farms," Benji said.

The Faulkners have become familiar figures to lots of prairie folk. That's helped them in their quest for new farm partners.

"They know us," said Benji, who lives on his London farm. "We're pretty established. We've had the business for 30 years and been out west for the last 10."

Farm folk take to farm folk. The money flows in, land gets cleared, crops are raised and taken to market and profits flow back.

It's the cycle of life, 21st century style, planned from a downtown Toronto office tower by an urbane young professional.

Earlier this year, Joelle Faulkner, right, visited one of her partners on a western Manitoba farm owned by the Faulkners. (Hayley Faulkner photo)

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CP24 reporter loves being a part of the story

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Technically, Sandie Benitah's job at *CP24* requires that she work behind the scenes as the Toronto news channel's supervising web producer, but whether she likes it or not, she's also occasionally thrust into the limelight as an on-air reporter.

"It's a really great experience, but I'm like, the shyest girl in the world, so... that's actually the most nerve-wracking part of my job. It's something that I would never go for if I wasn't pushed into it," said the 32-year-old journalist.

"I'm a writer – that's what I've always wanted to do and that's what I love to do – which is why I joined the web. The camera stuff happened accidentally, but you know, it happens from time to time," she added.

Whether she's behind a desk or in front of a camera, Benitah said she loves being a reporter.

"I love the news aspect, and I love to write. As long as I'm covering the news, as long as I'm part of the story... and telling the story in whatever way, then that's great for me. But at the end of the day, I'll always be a writer at heart."

In 2007, Benitah joined Bell Media as a web journalist for *CTVNews.ca*. Three years later, she moved to *CP24.com*, where she's currently responsible for news content on the website. She can also be seen on air providing viewers with online reaction to top stories.

Sandie Benitah, CP24 supervising web producer, says she'll always be a writer at heart.

But before making the transition to broadcast, Benitah, a graduate of Ryerson University's journalism program, began her career as a print journalist with the *Town Crier*, a Toronto community newspaper.

Benitah, who was also a regular columnist for other newspapers including the *Toronto Sun* and *The CJN*, covered the city hall beat for the *Town Crier*.

"I love city politics. I just think that people should really understand that the municipal government is an important level of government and that it affects our everyday life more than any other level of government," she said.

With all the controversies surrounding Toronto Mayor Rob Ford – who has most recently been under fire for allegedly appearing drunk in public, for admitting he "smoked a lot of" marijuana, and of course, for the infamous video that reportedly showed the mayor smoking crack cocaine – people are starting to pay more attention.

"But people often think that municipal politics is boring and they don't see it as very sexy. Politics is just... I find it fascinating," said Benitah, whose career highlights include interviewing Prime Minister Stephen Harper, former Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty and former governor general Adrienne Clarkson.

Continued on page B12

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Benitah feels lucky 'to work with people who get it'

Continued from page B11

Paris-born and Toronto-raised, Benitah can boast another attribute that is perhaps uncommon with Toronto-based journalists.

At the behest of her parents who encouraged her to retain her mother tongue, Benitah earned her French proficiency certificate from Sorbonne University in Paris in 2002.

At *CP24*, where she's been for the last three years, Benitah said her main focus is refining, editing and "making sure our site is as great as it can be. And just making sure our Twitter account is as good as it can be."

With more than 412,000 followers, Benitah said *CP24*'s Twitter account is the most-followed of any Canadian news organization. Comparatively, fewer than 265,000 people follow *CBC News*' Twitter account, while *Global News* has about 28,000 followers.

"That's pretty big for us, and we really take a lot of pride in that," she said.

In addition to being proud to work at *CP24*, Benitah said she feels fortunate to be working with "strong, very inspiring, very empowering women.

"I'm just surrounded by people who are so smart and they get it. And in the news industry, especially today, it's really kind of great to work with people who get it," she said.

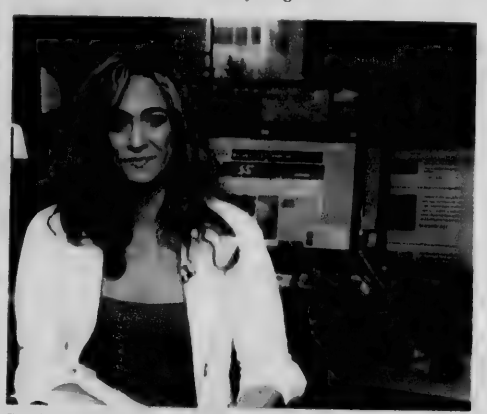
"I've worked in a lot of places where the people just don't get it. I'm really lucky."

The woman who inspires her most, Benitah said, is *CTV News* vice-president and *CP24* general manager Joanne MacDonald.

"She's unbelievable. She's done such a great job of taking the station and making it into something that people respect and look forward to tuning into and keeping on all day. I think she's a really big part of that," Benitah said.

Having moved around from one news organization to another throughout her short, yet impressive career, Benitah is always open to new opportunities for growth.

"I guess something I often ask myself is, 'OK, what now? What next?' And I don't really ever have a satisfying answer to that. I just want to do a million things. I'd love to write a book. I know every journalist says that, but I've been thinking about it for a really long time."



Benitah during one of her on-air reports.

After someone close to her, who was suffering from a mental illness, passed away a few years ago, she decided to take a step back from news and "re-evaluate news in general and think about how we… tell stories."

Her ambition, Benitah said, is to write a book about mental illness that addressing the stigma surrounding it.

Until then, Benitah will be hard at work providing breaking news to Toronto's news junkies.

"I absolutely love my job… I love reporting."

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A healthy mentality leads to a healthy lifestyle

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

Marni Wasserman's life is rooted in healthy eating. As a graduate of the Institute of Holistic Nutrition in Toronto and the Natural Gourmet Institute in New York, Wasserman is the founder of Delicious Knowledge, a company that focuses on teaching people how to cook whole foods.

Forget fad diets, says Wasserman, who insists that the key to maintaining a healthy weight is to change the way you think before you change the way you eat.

"People get so caught up in counting calories or carbohydrates and are always looking for a quick-fix to weight loss. I find the people who are able to let go of that mentality are the ones who are the most successful."

Wasserman's best advice for people who want to change their eating habits is to let go of the idea that they need to follow a conventional, often restrictive, diet.

"There is so much information on healthy living that it's overwhelming and hard to separate facts from myths," said Wasserman, who has been living a vegetarian lifestyle since she was 13.

Wasserman uses her passion, experience and expertise to educate her clients about adopting a realistic, plant-based diet that is both simple and delicious.

"The goal is to educate people on how to use wholesome whole food ingredients, and how to put them into recipes that can be used everyday so that people aren't intimidated," says Wasserman.

The mission of Delicious Knowledge, which she founded in 2009, is to inspire people to connect with their health. Her personal journey, from a personal trainer, to a certified chef, to a culinary nutritionist, has led her to where she is today: running a business that helps people live a plant-based lifestyle.

Wasserman, who started her business running cooking classes and workshops out of her home, before moving to her Eglinton Avenue studio in June, says, "My kitchen is a comfortable space – it's not one of those big industrial kitchens. The idea is to make people feel like they're cooking at home."

The Marni Wasserman Food Studio and Lifestyle Shop, Toronto's first plant-based food space, offers cooking classes, urban retreats and healthy living workshops that are all designed to help people focus on a healthier lifestyle.

The food space runs cooking classes on topics including easy weekday meals and healthy snacks, in addition to classes that focus on foods that can help prevent cancer, cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis.

With Wasserman's take on classic foods like pizza, pancakes, spaghetti and meatballs, and even chocolate cake, she promises people will not miss anything.

"One of the biggest fears people have is that healthy food doesn't taste good. They're worried about feeling deprived or that their families won't like the foods they make," she says.

"I see the response in my classes and people who take on my recipes and go home and say, 'Oh, my family loved that!'"

Ethnic cooking classes, for Asian, Indian or Mediterranean-inspired dishes, are also offered.

All the recipes in Wasserman's classes are built around fruit, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds and healthy fats like avocado.

"Not only are these foods good for you," says Wasserman, "but they are also much less expensive than a diet that relies on animal proteins."

Continued on page B16

Marni Wasserman is the owner of Toronto's first plant-based food space called the Marni Wasserman Food Studio and Lifestyle Shop.

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Actor perseveres in an unforgiving industry

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Growing up as a middle child in a big family, actor Noah Cappe always had to find creative ways to draw attention to himself.

"I grew up in a family of eight kids and I was in the middle, so a big part of it was, 'Look at me! Look over here!' I was trying to get my share of the spotlight," said 35-year-old Cappe.

"Once I started to get laughs and reactions, I was drawn to it."

Cappe, who's appeared in over 100 television commercials and radio spots, got his start in musical theatre. He's a self-proclaimed performer and entertainer at heart.

Born and raised in Toronto, Cappe has come a long way since he landed his first gig in the late 1990s as a camp counsellor in a Cheerios commercial. But one of the highlights of his career was being asked to host live shows for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay.

Cappe spent over three months following the torch across Canada, performing two shows daily in each city, in front of crowds of up to 30,000 people.

"I got to perform in front of millions of people across the country, in stage-based, high energy shows," said Cappe.

"It was the coolest opportunity. I was just so proud to be Canadian and do all those things."

Other highlights in his career include a recurring role in a TV movie series called *The Good Witch* and recently being cast as the new voice of Molson Canadian for their radio, television, and Internet ads.

But like many in the entertainment business, with every high, there are many lows.

"People watch [celebrity gossip shows] *TMZ* or *Entertainment Tonight* and it's the glitz and glamour, but you've got to live with constant rejection. Going into a room and auditioning and putting yourself out there – you have to be comfortable with the fact that they didn't pick you," he said.

Continued on page B15

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Avoid the shortcuts, Cappe advises

Continued from page B14

But even when he had to get other part-time jobs to pay the bills throughout his career, there was always a performance element to his jobs, such as being a part-time bar mitzvah DJ.

"It's been a long process, 15 years of working my way slowly and gradually up the ladder to finally being able to walk into an audition room and know the casting director and have a relationship with people in the industry. It's made me appreciate the process."

He knows first-hand how difficult it is for young people, especially in the Jewish community, who want to break from the traditional career path and follow one that's riskier.

"At what point do I pull the cord and say, 'I have to be an accountant because it's a guaranteed pay cheque?' But I've just been able to stick with it," he said, emphasizing that perseverance and patience are two vital skills anyone hoping to break into the entertainment business must have.

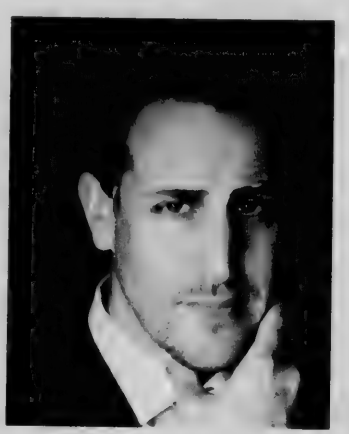
It's especially important not to get discouraged as you watch your friends and classmates land big roles, Cappe added.

"Scott Speedman was a buddy of mine. He auditioned for *Felicity*, and the next thing I knew, he was in movies," said Cappe.

"Rachel McAdams was in my class at York [University] and all of a sudden she was this mega movie star."

While it can be difficult to watch, he says that he learned not to compare himself to others and just believe in himself.

"You have to be comfortable enough to say, 'I have to steer my own ship and if I believe that I do good work, my time will come.' It may not be measured in dollar signs or awards won, but if you have a love for it, then at the end of the day, I'm [happy that I'm] able to live a great life, pay my bills, travel. I can't ask for more."



His advice to other up-and-coming actors is to avoid the shortcuts, like walking into a Hollywood agency that promises to make you a star – "all you have to do is give us $400 for headshots," he said.

"Do everything the right way. Spend the time and do the work."

In some ways, he's come full circle. He just recorded a voiceover for a new Cheerios commercial, the same company who gave him his first gig. But he's definitely a more confident actor and performer than he was 15 years ago, he said.

Like many actors, his goal is make it big and win an Oscar.

"Is that the real goal? No, my real goal is to be on *Cribs*," he joked. "My goal is just to keep moving forward."

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Dr Joseph Gilbert is passionate about combining his love of opera, music, and their relationship to Judaic content. Through a series of four sessions, he will discuss opera and the Jewish experience

Session 1: Wednesday, October 2, 2013, 7:30 p.m.
A brief history of opera and the involvement of Jewish composers
The works of some famous Jewish opera composers had no mention or relationship to Judaism. Is this true? The works of *Giacomo Meyerbeer, Jacques Offenbach, Kurt Weill*, and others will be explored to reflect upon this question

Session 2: Wednesday, October 9, 2013, 7:30 p.m.
How have Jews been portrayed in opera? (Part 1)
Dr Gilbert will consider composers such as *Giuseppe Verdi, Richard Wagner*, and *Camille Saint-Saens* and probe their perceptions, among others, toward Jews from the 18th to the 20th centuries

Session 3: Wednesday, October 16, 2013, 7:30 p.m.
How have Jews been portrayed in opera? (Part 2)
Opera can be used for propaganda and political purposes. Recently, anti-Israel propaganda has crept into the opera world

Session 4: Wednesday, October 30, 2013, 7:30 p.m.
Jewish myths and folk tales have been the background for many operas
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Superfoods are essential to healthy living

Continued from page B13

Wasserman encourages people to include superfoods – natural foods that are low in calories and high in nutritional value – in every meal. She says one ingredient that is essential to healthy living is leafy green vegetables.

"People are often afraid of greens like kale, bok choy and Swiss chard because they don't know how to cook it. I show people how easy they are to prepare," Wasserman says.

Other superfoods featured in Wasserman's recipes are quinoa, tempeh (an Indonesian soy product), sweet potatoes, blueberries, goji berries and pumpkin seeds.

Wasserman insists that there is nothing healthier than a home-cooked meal that includes fresh, nutritious ingredients.

"Cook as much as you can from home, and focus on clean ingredients that are as close to nature as possible," Wasserman advises.

This means avoiding processed foods, take-out, and most products that come from a box.

On the other hand, she understands that busy families are often pressed for time. In addition to teaching people how to cook healthy foods, Wasserman also helps her clients make meal plans and manage their preparation time.

"I encourage people to spend a few hours once a week to get the basics done ahead of time," says Wasserman, who has ambitions to write and publish a nutrition book.

"Cook batches of whole grains like rice or quinoa, make salad dressings and sauces and prep proteins like tofu, tempeh or beans. Then, when it's time to eat, all you need to do is mix things together. When you take the time to plan ahead it makes everything more manageable."

In addition to group classes, Wasserman welcomes private events, such as corporate team-building events, and even bachelorette parties, in her food space.

For more information or to sign up for one of Wasserman's classes visit http://www.marniwasserman.com.

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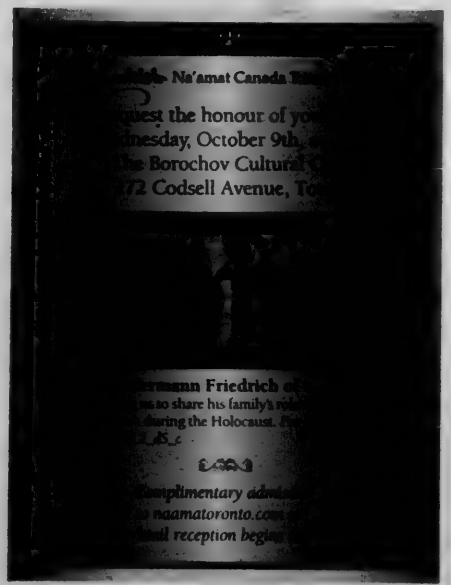
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Tamin tells stories through photos

Continued from page B7

Of course, photography is about more than having a good eye. He said understanding how to properly use lighting and how to edit a picture to enhance it, can make the difference between a professional and an amateur.

According to his website, Tamin believes a picture should "tell a story that leaves you wondering," and should be able to be interpreted differently from one person to the next.

"Where one person sees sorrow, another can see hope and beauty," he wrote.

Tamin recently travelled on a European cruise, stopping in cities in Spain, Italy and France, where he was able to indulge in his passion.

"I'd never been to Europe in my life, and I'd never seen all that architecture before," he said. "It was all so foreign to me... I feel like I didn't get enough of it because I was there for such a short time. The pictures I took mean so much to me because they are reminders of what I was doing and where I was."

He said his favourite places to take pictures were Rome and the Amalfi Coast.

"Amalfi was the craziest thing I've ever seen. It felt like a dream. Going up the coast... you'll never see something like that anywhere else. It doesn't even feel real. Even when I look at the pictures I took, the pictures don't even do it justice."

With the experience Tamin has gained shooting corporate events, weddings and even landscapes, he hopes to turn his passion into his full-time career. He's currently working to establish himself enough to open his own photography studio.

"My expectations are so high... Every week, every day, they get higher and higher and I'm so critical of myself, so I always want so much more," he said.

Check out some of Tamin's work at www.giltaminphotography.com.

The Amalfi Coast, one of Tamin's favourite places in the world to photograph.

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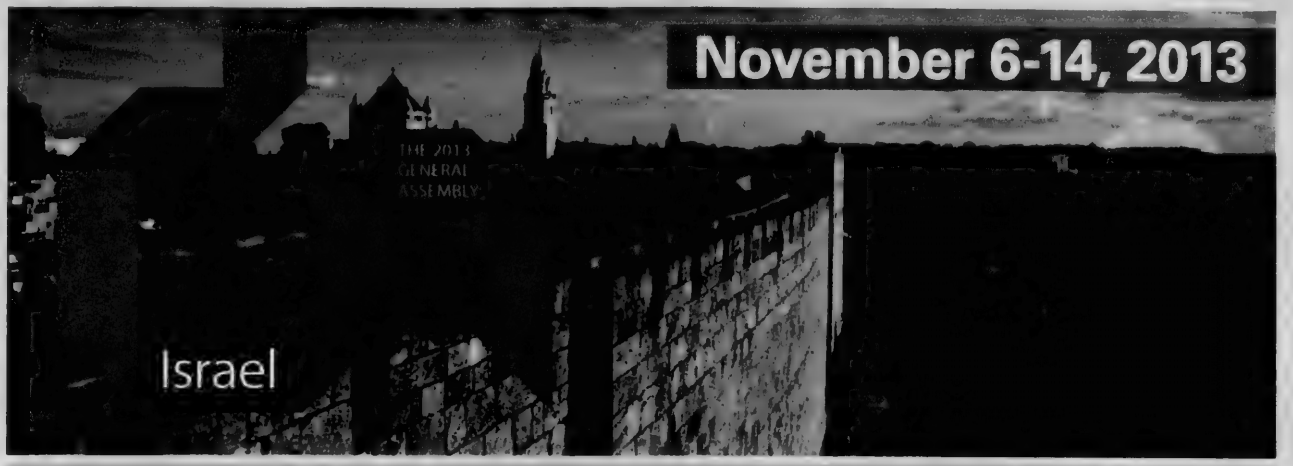

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Don't miss this amazing opportunity to attend the General Assembly being held in Jerusalem for the first time in 5 years with over 3,000 Jews from all over the world!

The General Assembly (the GA) is an annual gathering of Jewish Federations of North America and Jewish Communities from around the world held each year in November where the major issues affecting the Jewish World and Israel are discussed. This year's GA in Jerusalem will no doubt be an amazing experience, especially as part of UJA Federation's exciting and unique Mission.

Hear from a remarkable constellation of Israeli leaders who are changing the world and blazing new trails in politics, philanthropy, business, religion and culture.

Confirmed speakers include: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Finance Minister Yair Lapid, Minister for Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs Naftali Bennett, El Al CEO and Former Commander in Chief of the Israeli Air Force Eliezer Shkedi and CEO of SodaStream International Daniel Birnbaum.

The GA will culminate as we celebrate the centrality of Jerusalem to all Jews when we walk from Safra Square at Jerusalem's City Hall to the Kotel, and on to our closing gala at the Davidson Center (adjacent to the Kotel).

In addition, the UJA's Mission will include spending 3 days in Tel Aviv and enjoying a unique Shabbat experience; taking part in exclusive briefings with some of Israel's leading politicians, journalists and philanthropists; attending a performance by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra; and travelling to UJA Federation's partnership region in beautiful Eilat where you will see how your UJA support has transformed this vital and flourishing region. Extensions are available. Enjoy luxury accommodations at the Carlton Hotel in Tel Aviv and the David Citadel Hotel in Jerusalem.

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We look forward to travelling with you!
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*Land cost does not include air, registration fee & gratuities

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Gilad Schalit says thank you to Toronto

Pictured with Gilad Schalit at the Beth Tzedec event are, from left, spiritual leader Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl; Josh Cooper, JNF Canada CEO; JNF Canada board member Jerry Werger, and Nathan Disenhouse, JNF Toronto board chair.

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When you first observe Gilad Schalit in person, it's a little surprising how young he looks, and frail, as if a good gust of wind would blow him over.

Graciously, he took to the stage at the Beth Tzedec Congregation Sept. 16 to thank the Toronto community for the support and prayers it gave him during his five years of captivity in Gaza. And though he's appeared at similar public events around the world, he still looks somewhat uncomfortable and awkward at all the fuss being made in his name, sort of like a fidgety bar mitzvah boy. It's amazing such a slight young man could have survived what he did.

Toward the end of the evening's proceedings, he was handed a pair of gifts by JNF Canada, which sponsored his appearance – starting with a weighty aboriginal carving, which looked like it might snap his fragile limbs with its mass.

The other memento, a Toronto Maple Leafs sweater with his name stitched on the back and bearing the number 18 – representing life – brought a broad smile to his face, as he had acknowledged that one of his passions is sports. It also drew the loudest cheer of the night in an evening that provided many occasions for the crowd of 3,000 to stand and express their support.

Schalit received a standing ovation, as did Jason Kenney, federal minister of employment, social development and multiculturalism, in appreciation of the Canadian government's steadfast support of Israel, as did Jason Kimelman.

Kimelman's moving address particularly touched the hearts of many in the crowd, which drew yet another link between Toronto's Jewish community and Schalit.

Schalit, of course, was a corporal in the Israel Defence Forces' (IDF) Armored Corps who was captured by Hamas in a 2006 cross-border raid. He was held in captivity for five years and released only when the Israeli government agreed to free 1,027 Palestinian prisoners, including many with blood on their hands, in exchange for him.

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Israelis help in Nairobi mall attack

JTA

JERUSALEM — Kenyan troops, reportedly backed by Israeli agents, launched an assault to end the siege by Somali militants at a Nairobi shopping mall.

A Kenyan security source confirmed that Israelis "are rescuing the hostages and the injured" at the upscale Westgate mall, the French news agency *AFP* reported. The Israeli Foreign Ministry refused to confirm or deny its agents were involved in the operation, which took place shortly after nightfall on Sunday.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta had said he received "numerous offers of assistance from friendly countries" but that for now it remained a Kenyan operation.

Citing an unidentified Israel security source, *Reuters* had reported earlier Sunday that Israeli advisers were helping with negotiation strategy but were not involved in "any imminent storming operation."

The death toll in the attack was at least 62, with police warning that it could rise "much higher," *AFP* reported. Some 200 people have been injured in the attack, which began Sept. 21.

Militants from Al Shabab, a Somalia-based terror group linked to Al Qaeda, claimed responsibility for the attack.

The five-storey shopping centre features several Israeli-owned outlets, according to wire services. Among them is the Art-Caffe – the attack by eight gunmen took place near the coffee shop and bakery.

One Israeli was injured and three others escaped harm, according to Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A ministry spokesperson said Israelis had not been specifically targeted.

Continued on page 25

Bereshit
Candlelighting: 6:48
Havdalah: 7:54
Greater Toronto Area

Pillar of strength patrols outfield for Jays

See Sports — Page 30

Soldier lured to his death in W. Bank — please see page 26

CANADA

Cantor Dies

LONDON, Ont. — Cantor Joseph Freiman, who served Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ont., for almost 40 years, died Sept. 7, 10 days before his 94th birthday. Freiman was born in Romania and survived the Holocaust, including time in Auschwitz. After the war, he received cantorial training in Italy and began his career in Uruguay. He and his family moved to London, where he became cantor at the Conservative Or Shalom in 1968.

WORLD

Site Defames Israel

BRUSSELS — A Belgian Education Ministry website compared Israel and Nazi Germany, a Jewish newspaper reported. The comparisons were made on the KlasCement.be website, a major teaching resource offered by the Education Ministry of the Flemish Region, one of three entities comprising the federal Belgian state, the Jewish monthly *Joods Actueel* reported Sept. 16. The site featured an exercise with a drawing depicting a Jewish man impaled on the fence of a concentration camp next to a man wearing Arab headdress, their limbs arranged in the form of a Nazi swastika. The caption "Never Again" appears above the image of the Jew, and the words "Over Again!" are written at the Arab's right foot. It was drawn by Brazilian artist Carlos Latuff, whom the Simon Wiesenthal Center has accused of anti-Semitism. The exercise was reportedly pulled after the article appeared.

Biden To Speak

WASHINGTON — U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden will be the keynote speaker at J Street's annual conference. Also speaking at the Sept. 28-Oct. 1 parley of the liberal pro-Israel group will be Martin Indyk, chief U.S. Mideast peace negotiator. The conference will feature speakers from across the Israeli political spectrum, including from the Shas, Likud, Labor, Hatnua and Yesh Atid parties, as well as leaders from the U.S. Jewish establishment. J Street advocates an active U.S. role in bringing about a two-state solution and is critical of Israeli settlements. It refused to weigh in recently on President Barack Obama's appeal to Congress to authorize a strike on Syria's Assad regime to degrade its chemical weapons capability. The vast majority of Jewish and pro-Israel groups had backed Obama in his effort.

Rabbi Was Kabbalist To The Stars

LOS ANGELES — Rabbi Philip Berg, who brought the teachings of Kabbalah to a celebrity following that included Madonna and Britney Spears, has died.

Rabbi Philip Berg

Rabbi Berg, the founder of the Kabbalah Centre in Los Angeles, died Sept. 16 at a hospital in that city. He had been ill since suffering a stroke in 2004. He was 86.

His followers also included Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher. Rabbi Berg had four million students in Kabbalah centres around the world.

He spurred controversy by bringing Kabbalah, a form of Jewish mysticism believed to be reserved for top Jewish scholars, to the masses. His widow, Karen, and two sons, Yehuda and Michael, have led the centre since his stroke. He founded the centre in 1969.

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service opened a tax evasion probe into the centre last year, though it's unknown if the probe is still being pursued, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. The centre, which is believed to have assets in the hundreds of millions, reportedly emphasized cash donations from members.

Born Shraga Feivel Gruberger in New York, he was ordained as a rabbi in 1951. He was buried Sept. 17 in the Israeli city of Safed, a centre of Jewish mysticism.

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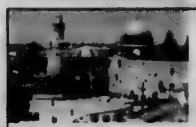

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Holy Blossom dedicates tower to late teen

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Holy Blossom Temple's tower, a structure that brought mystery and a little mischief to generations of congregants, was dedicated to the memory of Jacob Hertzman earlier this month.

Jacob, a "deeply religious" little boy who was born with multiple congenital anomalies, died in 1996 at the age of 14.

Years ago, David Hertzman, Jacob's father, decided he wanted to do something special in honour of his son's short life.

"He loved the temple. When he passed away, I wanted to memorialize him there," he said.

Holy Blossom's acting senior rabbi, Yael Splansky, recalled when Hertzman first approached her about dedicating the tower in his son's memory.

But because the shul's $30-million renewal and renovation project was always just over the horizon, his idea had to wait, Rabbi Splansky explained.

"He didn't want something that had all the bells and whistles. He wanted the tower safe and clean, and he wanted it open for people to enjoy. It had been locked for decades, because the stairs weren't safe and it was being used as a [storage area]," she said, adding that the restoration of the tower was a perfect way to launch the renewal project, which is set to begin Phase 1 of construction next fall.

During her Rosh Hashanah sermon the day before the Sept. 7 dedication ceremony, Rabbi Splansky described Jacob as "a very thin boy... a bright light. A big toothy grin, and a shock of platinum blond hair, a big personality and he would dress to the nines."

She talked about the thrill he got from finding the tower door unlocked and sneaking up the rickety steps to the top of the tower, where he enjoyed a great view of the city.

"The steps are now secure, there's lighting that's been put in, new windows," she said.

The interior of the tower at Holy Blossom Temple

"But what remains are the signatures. All these decades, kids have been sneaking up there and adding their names to the wall," she added. "Now there is going to be a whole new generation of kids adding their names to the wall."

During the dedication, which drew about 600 friends, family and congregants, Jacob's father read an excerpt from *The Jacob Stories*, a book published by the Hertzman family to memorialize "his ceaseless string of adventures."

The Tower, written by Hertzman, describes the excitement Jacob felt when he and his father first snuck up to the top of the tower.

"We entered the narrow space. It was dark, dusty and mysterious... The windows were grimy and cracked, but that did not bother Jacob.

Continued on page 19

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U.S. credibility takes a hit with shift on Syria

The staggering blanket coverage of U.S. President Barack Obama's shifting plans for dealing with Syria's Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack on its own civilians was followed by countless analyses of who emerged as "winners" and "losers" after the Russian and American "diplomatic" agreement, announced Sept. 14 in Geneva, to identify and eliminate Syria's chemical arsenal. This is the very arsenal that, until forced to admit otherwise, Syrian President Bashar Assad denied even existed.

According to Reports

PAUL MICHAELS

In his Sept. 15 *Bloomberg* column, Jeffrey Goldberg argued that the biggest winner was Assad himself. He's safe from armed attack by the United States (even if such a strike was to have been limited only to degrading his capacity to use chemical weapons again, not to removing him). And thus he's free to continue his onslaught against huge numbers of his civilian population. Most estimates say more than 100,000 Syrians have been killed by the regime, 98 per cent with conventional weapons.

Moreover, as Goldberg notes, "By partnering with Russia and the West on the disarmament process, a process that is meant to last into 2014 (and most likely won't be finished for years, even if it is carried out in good faith, which is a big 'if'), Assad has made himself indispensable."

Not far behind was Russian President Vladimir Putin. By brokering the deal, which provided Obama a way out of his predicament in the U.S. Congress, in effect, balking at using military force, "[Putin] has shown up an American president, and he will be considered, by the perpetually naive at least, to be something akin to a peacemaker, when, in fact, he's a bloody-minded autocrat," Goldberg wrote.

In fact, Putin runs an authoritarian system based, according to some analysts, on mafia-like rules where political opposition and investigative journalists pay a heavy price – especially, in the latter case, sometimes with their lives. Not to be forgotten is Putin's response not all that long ago to the Chechen independence struggle: during the second Chechen war (1999-2000), Russian forces killed tens of thousands of Chechens and destroyed much of the capital, Grozny, through artillery shelling and carpet-bombing. Yet this is the very Putin who dared to lecture Americans on the opinion page of the *New York Times* earlier this month about the need to adhere to the rule of law, foremost international law. This was the same Putin who insisted that it was the rebels – not the dictator Assad, whom Putin supports and arms – who used chemical weapons last month.

At the bottom of the list, but not out of contention, was Obama. In Goldberg's reckoning, "In the narrowest political sense, it's a victory because the president is no longer compelled to launch military strikes that the American people clearly didn't support. In a broader sense, it's a victory because, by threatening to attack, he has forced the Syrian regime to acknowledge that it does, in fact, possess chemical weapons."

While there were as many compelling arguments against limited U.S. military strikes on Syria as for them – which shows just how complicated the situation is in Syria – it was Obama's indecisiveness about the use of force that undermined his position. Obama's core decency and caution are no match for the ruthlessness of those, like Putin and Assad, who'll do whatever's required to get what they want.

The result, of course, is that it's perfectly valid to ask why Iran should take Obama seriously when he insists – as he has on many occasions – that he won't allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons and that "all options are on the table" to make sure that doesn't happen.

On Sept. 15, Obama warned Iran not to misread his change of mind over Syria. "My suspicion is that the Iranians recognize they shouldn't draw a lesson that we haven't struck [the Assad regime] to think we won't strike Iran," he said.

In short, if there's one "loser" – in addition, that is, to the hapless and beleaguered Syrian people – it may well be America's credibility.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house

The *CJN* moved recently and to dedicate its new premises in Toronto, mezuzot were affixed to the office's doorposts. Seen here placing a mezuzah are, from left, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl of Beth Tzedec Congregation, Elizabeth Wolfe, vice-president of *The CJN*'s board of directors, and Donald Carr, president.

[Paul Lungen photo]

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We, too, must fight for good

When Daniel Patrick Moynihan fought the UN's infamous "Zionism is racism" resolution as US ambassador, he telegrammed his boss, Henry Kissinger, saying that he hoped people in the future would say, "An issue of honour, of morality was put before us, and not all of us ran." Once upon a time, Canada was more well known as the land of even-handed niceness and appeasement than as a bastion of courage, especially internationally. But, in the Jewish tradition of *hakarat hatov*, recognizing good deeds, we should salute those who are helping to change Canada's reputation for the better.

We commend Prime Minister Stephen Harper, his foreign minister John Baird, his minister of multiculturalism Jason Kenney and others who have made it clear that Canadian decency cannot abide the indecency of the new anti-Semitism and the assault on democratic values reflected in the delegitimization of Israel.

We applaud former justice minister and current Liberal MP Irwin Cotler for a lifetime of dedication to human rights, an activist far more worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize than recent winners such as the European Union, the International Atomic Energy Agency, former U.S. vice-president Al Gore or former president Jimmy Carter, let alone former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

We salute MP Maria Mourani of the Bloc Quebecois and Thomas Mulcair, leader of the NDP, among others, for standing up heroically against the absurd Parti Québécois "charter of Quebec values," which will pervert Canadian and democratic values by discriminating against devout people.

While applauding this all-party parade of courageous role models, we should look closer to home as well, challenging ourselves and each other to stand tall for what is right. As citizens in a proud democracy, just because professional politicians have done the right thing does not absolve us from leading the way, too, not just joining them and affirming their moves. Our culture tends to encourage too much passivity, and the old saw is still true – it's our civic duty to mobilize and fight for truth and justice.

Similarly as Jews, we need a lot more courage in our lives. It begins with activism against our enemies: anti-Semites, anti-Zionists and delegitimizers who threaten the peace process by questioning Israel's right to exist. But we need a different kind of courage in the Jewish world today. We need the courage to embrace tradition in a world that worships change, and to champion change when the traditional ways no longer work. Too many of us are passive Jewish consumers and not active doers or change agents in the Jewish community. Jewish life is also deeply democratic. Unless we start learning more, doing more, participating more and engaging more, our souls will wither, our communal institutions will decay and our tradition will lose its spark.

Former U.S. president John F. Kennedy often quoted Dante that "the hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a time of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality."

But hot places are also reserved for those who, in a time of great opportunity to lead, grow, inspire and thrive, maintain their passivity and complacency.

Gil Troy

Dry Bones

SHULDIG AND HIS DOG, DOOBIE
SUKKOT! THE HOLIDAY IN WHICH WE ARE SUPPOSED TO SIT IN FLIMSY "BOOTHS"...
PERHAPS AS A REMINDER OF THE FRAILTY OF OUR EXISTENCE!
WE NEED A REMINDER?

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The world needs fewer Beinarts

Rabbi Dow Marmur starts his encomium to Peter Beinart and other left-leaning Jewish critics of Israel with a bit of a pout ("Canadian Jewry needs a Peter Beinart" *The CJN*, Sept. 4). Even the Harper government's strongly pro-Israel stance is seen as an unkind blow to the "Israel is the obstacle to peace" crowd.

Beinart, though he may keep kosher (according to Rabbi Marmur), has some pretty unkosher suggestions when it comes to Israel. Beinart calls for a boycott of Israeli products made on the other side of the 1948 armistice line. But Rabbi Marmur refers to Beinart as a Zionist. It is a strange kind of Zionist who does nothing but criticize Israel, never comes to its defence, and makes common cause with its enemies.

Rabbi Marmur also pleads that "those currently on the fringe" should "be on the inside and not be shut out by 'community discipline.'" Contrast these idealistic words with Rabbi Marmur's support for trying to shut down Pamela Geller, the well-known critic of political Islam. When you contrast his attitudes toward Beinart and Geller, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that for Rabbi Marmur, criticizing Israel is good and criticizing political Islam, the fundamental cause of Arab/Muslim anti-Israel aggression, is bad.

He laments the fact that they aren't more Beinarts. I say what Israel and the world needs is fewer Beinarts and more Gellers.

Jack Micay
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Shakespeare was not a bigot

Shakespeare's masterpiece, *The Merchant of Venice*, is a "bigoted piece of trash," according to your very ill-informed letter writer Philip Goldig ("Play should be tossed away" *The CJN*, Sept. 11).

Shakespeare was no bigoted, virulent anti-Semite as Goldig claims. There is not an iota of evidence to support such a claim. Actually, very little is known of Shakespeare's life. No manuscripts of any of his plays, in his own hand are extant, which, importantly, would include his stage directions, which means that how he wished Shylock to be portrayed is completely unknown today. And Shakespeare never met a Jew, since there were none, except perhaps Jews who had converted to Christianity, in his London.

Stratford director Antoni Cimolino is not the first stage director to have his actor portray Shylock as "a whimpering degraded character," nor will he, unfortunately, be the last.

Goldig should perhaps question why the director set the play in Mussolini's Italy. Shakespeare didn't – that's for sure.

Richard Samuelson
Montreal

• • •

Production was best I've ever seen

After reading Philip Goldig's review of *The Merchant of Venice* ("Play should be tossed away" Letters, *The CJN*, Sept. 11) I think we must have seen two different plays. This was the best production of *Merchant* that I have ever seen.

I hate to disagree with Goldig's absolute certainty that Shakespeare was a "bigoted, virulent anti-Semite." In fact, I do remember Shylock's famous speech "Hath not a Jew eyes..." – the first time a Jew is portrayed as a three-dimensional, attacked human being.

Shylock is wronged, suffers, and demands extreme revenge. He is a bad person who happens to be a Jew, not the other way around. He is hurt by the rejection of his daughter and goes to the extreme. People do that all the time, but we don't blame it on their religion... or do we?

David Sklar
Montreal

• • •

Arabs and Jews are both Israelis

I'm writing to object to the caption "Israelis and Arabs carry gas mask boxes outside a gas mask distribution centre in Haifa on Sept. 1" (*The CJN*, Sept. 11). What the caption *should* have said is: "Jews and Arabs carry gas mask boxes..." or, arguably even better (especially given that the photo was taken in Haifa): "Israelis carry gas mask boxes..." and let the photo speak for itself.

In response to any readers who might object to my objection, imagine a caption under an analogous photo in the *Toronto Star* that read "Jews and Canadians line up for [whatever]."

Paul Milgram
Toronto

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Syria's chemical weapons a concern for Israel

Alex Trainman
JNS.org

On the same day that the U.S. and Russia agreed to a deal stipulating that Syria must remove or destroy its chemical weapons stockpile by mid-2014, Israelis were happy to spend Saturday's 40th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War in synagogue and not on the battlefield or in safe rooms with gas masks.

Yet Israelis' long-term outlook on the situation in Syria isn't as rosy.

"Israelis are relieved in the short term but concerned in the long term," Mitchell Barak, an Israeli political pollster and director of Keevoon Research, told *JNS.org*.

"Right now, they don't have to get their gas masks ready, and it doesn't look like there is going to be war in the region right now, but we still have a long-term problem," he said.

The long-term threat for Israel, according to Barak, is that Syria officially possesses chemical weapons. Syria in August deployed chemical weapons in a bloody, two-year civil war, but the fear is that those weapons could one day be turned on the Jewish state, either by the Syrian government or by other radical groups that may get their hands on them.

"Syria has now admitted to having chemical weapons. Up until now, they were denying it. Now they're admitting it. And that doesn't sit well with Israelis," Barak said.

Syria's usage and public admission of possessing chemical weapons has garnered newfound outrage from members of the international community, yet Israel has long been aware of sophisticated weapons movements and developments by its northern neighbour.

Numerous experts have cited Syria as being a likely destination for Iraqi weaponry, evacuated prior to and during the Second Gulf War.

Israel takes weapons movements in its neighbourhood very seriously, considering any sophisticated weaponry in the region to be an existential threat.

The Israeli government has admitted to launching a successful air strike on a nuclear reactor in Syria in late 2007. More recently, Israel is believed to be behind an airstrike on a convoy of anti-aircraft weapons moving from southern Syria toward Lebanon.

Protesters outside the Russian embassy in Tel Aviv demonstrate Aug. 30 against the use of chemical weapons in Syria. *[Flash90 photo]*

"Israel has gone into Syria four times in the last few years to take out threats," Barak said.

As a result, many Israelis were welcoming the idea that the United States may have unilaterally succeeded in removing the Syrian weapons threat, while Israeli warplanes remained glued to their bases.

On the other hand, many Israelis hold the oft-stated position of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Israel can and must defend itself, by itself. The fear is that foreign military intervention can create region-wide instability and a potential host of worst-case scenarios, including a multi-front confrontation between Israel and several of its neighbours.

"We can only rely on ourselves, but Israel has a problem going at it alone in certain instances, because there will similarly be repercussions toward Israel," Barak said.

While a U.S. strike on Syrian targets may have succeeded in eliminating the weapons cache, Israelis were bracing for the potential fallout. Both Syria and Iran insisted that any U.S. strike would result in punitive attacks on Israel. And Hezbollah, which had dispatched militants from Lebanon to fight against Syrian President Bashar Assad, was likely to shift its attention back toward its favourite longtime target, Israel.

According to Barak, allowing Russia to be the guarantor of a known stockpile of weapons of mass destruction just to the north of Israel's border is not necessarily reassuring.

"The problem for Israelis is that they don't completely trust the Russians," Barak said.

"Israelis believed that the United States had what it takes to take care of the situation. Israelis are not confident that the current solution will take care of the problem," he said.

Addressing a memorial ceremony for Israeli soldiers killed in the 1973 Yom Kippur War Sept. 15, Netanyahu said, "We hope the understandings reached between the United States and Russia regarding the Syrian chemical weapons will yield results."

Netanyahu called for "the complete destruction of all of the chemical weapons stockpiles that the Syrian regime has used against its own people."

Israelis and other key U.S. allies are concerned that the U.S. is losing credibility and deterrence in the region, by not acting on its threat of military intervention if Syria were to deploy chemical weapons – a stated "red line" of U.S. President Barack Obama.

At the same time, many in Israel have questioned why the use of chemical weapons represented the crossing of a red line when the murder of more than 100,000 Syrian citizens over the past two years with conventional weapons did not. Similarly, Israelis are wondering where the red lines lie with regard to Iran's illicit nuclear program – an even greater existential threat to Israel.

In an *Israel Hayom* poll that was published Sept. 13, a day before the U.S. and Russia agreed to the chemical weapons deal, a majority of Israeli Jews – 66.7 per cent – characterized Obama's handling of the Syria crisis as "not successful." Meanwhile, 65.3 per cent said that given Obama's conduct regarding Syria, he would not be able to successfully deal with the Iranian nuclear program.

Netanyahu said Sept. 15 that it's "incumbent on the efforts of the international community to stop Iran's nuclear armament." He said that as is the case for the Syria crisis, for Iran "it is not words but actions that will determine the outcome."

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also made his latest visit to Israel last week in an attempt to convince Israeli officials that the Russian-proposed chemical weapons plan represents a strategic victory and that American deterrence remains in effect should Iran advance its nuclear ambitions.

Additionally, Kerry planned to monitor the progress of jump-started Israeli-Palestinian conflict negotiations, which have largely been taken out of the spotlight by Syria.

According to Barak, most Israelis have been ignoring the current U.S.-backed negotiations due to a lack of confidence the initiative will bring about a change in the status quo, following two decades of failed attempts. The 20th anniversary of the 1993 Oslo accords was Sept. 13.

"Israelis over the last number of years are just skeptical when it comes to the peace process. Most Israelis want peace, but are skeptical that peace will come through this process. There have been a lot of false starts, and a lot of crying wolf," Barak told *JNS.org*.

"I think most Israelis believe that there are more urgent and pressing matters in the Middle East right now than between Israelis and Palestinians. Compared to everything else going on in the region, there's no urgent need to solve this problem," the pollster said.

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The nature of dreams

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Two men walk along the Jerusalem promenade: one is short and stocky, a former kibbutznik, the other is tall, white-haired, patrician in aspect, his clothes those of a midwestern American professor.

One is Israeli author Amos Oz, the other Sari Nusseibeh, president of Al-Quds University. They're at ease with each other. Oz jokes about his artificial knees setting off alarms in airports, bringing security down on his head.

Jerusalem sprawls in the distance. Oz: "We were both born in this city. Sari, what will become of it?"

Nusseibeh: "Well, I'm coming to believe it is a little bit overrated. We have given it far too much as human beings... But... it's certainly losing its mystical element – from my perspective as a result of how we as human beings behave towards each other." He has a wonderful Oxbridge accent.

Oz: "What drives me furious is the fact that we all know the solution... Everybody knows that this [he gestures in one direction] will be the capital of Israel and this [points the other way] will be the capital of Palestine... There will be an Israel embassy in Palestine and a Palestinian embassy in Israel... within walking distance of each other."

Nusseibeh: "It makes me angry, too, that the holy sites, the holiness of the place, our memories, our religions, are actually making us live such miserable lives and create so much pain to each other. Once again I say we keep forgetting the human side, the human element, for the sake of rocks and places."

This dialogue is part of a TV documentary titled *Amos Oz: the Nature of Dreams*.

Oz has dreamed much for his native land, dreamt of peace, only to see it recede into the far future.

The two discuss the refugee issue.

Nusseibeh: "People have often assumed on the Arab side that not to address the refugee problem... is in itself a good thing, but I think it is an immoral thing to do. Imagine how many children are being born today in the refugee camps in Syria, Jordan who do not have any chances, any hope for a life that's decent. All because people are hoping the past can be brought back to life."

Oz: "This is the inscription I would inscribe on the skies over east Jerusalem and west Jerusalem alike: 'The past cannot be brought back alive.' [Israelis and Palestinians] both have this disease about restoring the past."

Nusseibeh: "The future is more interesting than the past. The future is still all the things we can do – you know, human beings can make their history... I believe in political miracles."

Oz responds: "I would like to have the role of sound technician in the talks. I would give the sound technician an instruction to disconnect the mikes each time one of the negotiators is referring to the past, only to plug it in when they talk about the present and the future."

One says, "We need to come here more often." The other replies, "Let's do it – without the cameras."

By the time you read this, we'll be finishing the most solemn period of the Jewish year, while fires in Syria threaten the tenuous stability of the Middle East – a stability based on fear of other possibilities. Can this dialogue between Palestinian and Israeli be relevant as we approach the end of the High Holiday season?

Rabbi Alan Lew in *This is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared*, a meditation on the High Holidays, writes, "It is precisely those who insist on remembering history who are prepared to repeat it." For him, the cycle of the holidays from Tisha b'Av to Yom Kippur is the time to change direction, write a new history for our future – maybe not in the Middle East, but certainly for ourselves.

At Slichot this year, our rabbi (a child of Holocaust survivors) and a professor of New Testament studies (a child of committed Nazi parents) talked about reconciliation, forgiveness and memory. How much history had to be committed before these two men could reconcile their family histories and consign memories to the past?

Each one had to create a new story about themselves, their families, and how they would like their lives to depart from the old stories.

We all have stories we like to tell ourselves. Can we change them for the new year?

Two stories to start the new year

Norma Raumel Joseph in Montreal

Facing the new year requires some amount of determination to be able to begin with a sense of balance, with an ability to merge both the feelings of pessimism and optimism that naturally assail us.

It's difficult to be positive listening to the news. We're surrounded by negative happenings. Bad things and crises are the love children of the news media. Add to that our own Jewish communal leadership, which feeds on negative predictions of demographers and sociologists, since they believe these foster closer communal ties and better philanthropic conditions. (I disagree on both counts.)

On the other hand, if one espouses only positive thoughts, we'd be deigned foolish, since reality doesn't align well with such dreams. Moreover, people don't exactly enjoy such discussions and tend to avoid alliances.

My husband taught that we should walk in the world with two slips of paper in our pockets. One should state: "For me the world was created." On the other should be written: "I am but dust and ashes." With those two concepts carried forward, we might have a chance at harmony in our lives.

I think we need balance, but a special kind, one that leans toward optimism.

Let me tell you two stories. Taking care of a special-needs person has brought me into contact with many aspects of our society and many different types of reactions. I was appalled at the abrupt way we were discharged from the rehabilitation hospital without adequate preparation or guidance. Many things about that time and subsequent neglectful conditions have amazed me. They could have left me angry, and sometimes did. So here come two crazy opposite stories that have, overall, left me smiling and very positive.

We flew to Denver to see my daughter in her new home. My husband was joyous, as the trip went very well until we came home. Air Canada, with its monopoly on direct flights, had lost his wheelchair – twice! It's breathtaking. They left it on the bridge in Denver as the plane took off. No one there panicked, thinking, "Oh my God! Someone must need this!" No, it was just left there, until we noticed that we couldn't get off the plane in Montreal. Eventually, hours later, at the delayed luggage counter (lovely euphemism), they found it. It was flown home quickly, but we didn't receive it, because no one put a tag on it to deliver it to us. So it sat in Trudeau Airport, lost again. Meanwhile, there's resource to loan us a wheelchair, but it takes 24 hours to get to us. How was I supposed to get my husband home? Don't ask. It was a terrible experience that will inhibit future trips. Sadly, I'm now afraid to travel, and my husband wants to visit his children.

But here's a good story. We had a ramp put in for the wheelchair. The CLSC social worker didn't feel it was safe enough, especially in the winter. She was correct. She helped me apply to the Quebec government's Programme D'Adaptation de Domicile. A wonderful agent came to the house and immediately agreed. She put us on her priority list. In every way, our experience with this department was overwhelmingly positive. I spoke English and they helped me in every way, translating any document I couldn't understand. There was a lot of paperwork. I was helped with it every inch of the way.

The design of the lift was prepared. A list of contractors was sent to me. I chose four to call for estimates. I received responses and chose one because he spoke English. The government representative agreed that was a good reason. The lift is very expensive, but the government paid 4/5 of the cost. Once all the parties agreed and everything was signed, it took four days to install. The men who worked were kind, efficient and capable. When my husband wanted to go out, they carried him and his wheelchair over the steps until the lift was working. It's completed, and I'm proud of the way this department worked with me to enable my husband easy access to the world outside.

Things can work, even in Quebec, even in English. So I can see a way forward, with a touch of optimistic thinking.

Syria's civil war seen as posing grave threat

Israel likely to act alone versus Iran: analyst

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Israel faces dangers on a number of fronts, but according to Washington-based security analyst Clifford May, not all perils are created equal.

Hamas, he said, presents Israel with a tactical threat; Hezbollah, with 60,000 missiles at its disposal, poses a strategic threat, and Iran, with its program of nuclear armament and repeated threats of genocide from its leaders, poses an existential threat to the Jewish state.

It's a threat that at one point during the Obama administration, Israel had hoped it would not have to face alone. But given recent developments in Syria, where the United States set a "red line" on chemical weapons and then backed away from it, Israelis are convinced that in the end, they'll have to deal with Iran alone.

May presented a rather pessimistic evaluation of the current situation in the Middle East as part of Honest Reporting Canada's Insider Briefing Series. May, the president of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, an organization founded following the 9/11 attacks, likened the current geopolitical situation to Europe in the 1930s.

There's Islamic scripture cited by radical Muslims to support their goal of a Middle East without Israel, with "only Muslims of a certain stripe" and of a region in which Islam must dominate, he said.

The Syrian civil war poses a grave threat to Israel, May said. If Syrian President Bashar Assad prevails, then "Iran triumphs. Syria becomes a province of Iran." Hezbollah also wins and will prevail in Lebanon, and Hamas will come under the Iranian umbrella. It would mean Iranian hegemony in the Middle East and the withdrawal of the United States.

Clifford May (Rivka C. photo)

The prevailing view in Washington policy corridors is that "if the United States won't defend this red line [in Syria] it won't defend the red line in Iran."

For their part, Israeli leaders believe "we are really on our own."

May said that by mid-2014, Iran is expected to acquire the nuclear capability that "would make it difficult to deal with it." To prevent Iranian nuclear capabilities, Israel will have to act within that time frame, and the best that can be expected of the United States is political and diplomatic support, plus re-supply, he suggested.

The United States under former president George W. Bush did not have a good strategy, but its war on terrorism was at least the right approach, he said.

Under the Obama administration, U.S. officials won't even acknowledge a "war on terrorism," choosing instead to use the term, "overseas contingency operations," he added.

The United States has withdrawn militarily from Iraq and is doing so from Afghanistan. It won't connect the dots between events in these countries and Syria and Mali, May said.

You have to have a strategy and goals, but "I don't see what our strategy is," he added.

May suggested the United States must learn from western leaders in World War II, who set a goal that went beyond military victory to defeat, discredit and delegitimize opposing ideologies.

Like Communism and Nazism, Islamism is a supremacist creed, he argued. "We have to wage a war against supremacist ideologies."

In a question period, May was asked whether an honest discussion about Islamic expansionism, on campus and elsewhere, was being inhibited by self-censorship and accusations of Islamophobia.

"Islamophobia is a kind of jiujitsu," May replied.

Criticism of Islamic supremacy is called Islamophobia, while at the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, formerly the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), is pushing to ban criticism of Islam, he said.

"We're being fought with warfare, 'lawfare' and 'jawfare' – the whole idea of turning it around so that any frank discussion is one that can't be done in polite conversation."

An emotional welcome for an unlikely hero

Lila Sarick
CJN Staff

It can be hard sometimes to wrap our arms around the messy, contradictory, miraculous and mundane State of Israel. But it was easy for my family to wrap our arms around the skinny shoulders of Gilad Schalit.

Guest Voice

When my kids and I visited Israel a few years ago, we stopped by the protest tent his parents had set up outside the prime minister's house. Truth be told, it felt like making a shivah call.

We bought T-shirts bearing his solemn face and tied bits of coloured ribbon on our knapsacks. We shook hands with Gilad's father, and in my halting, stilted Hebrew, I told him that we in the Diaspora hadn't forgotten his son, that we were praying for his boy.

And we were.

We set a place for Gilad at our seder, a plate and an empty chair at a crowded table, to remember the Jew who wasn't there, who at the very best, was wasting away in a Hamas-created hell.

My teenage sons, just a few years younger than Gilad, and our guests debated the ethics of trading one soldier for hundreds of terrorists, murderers with blood on their hands, men who would potentially kill innocents again.

Gilad Schalit on the phone with his parents, after his release from captivity. *[Wikimedia Commons photo]*

"What are they talking politics for?" asked an elderly guest.

"Dad, they're talking Torah, they're discussing *pidyon shvuyim*," the obligation to ransom captives, explained his daughter.

And then came the amazing day when Gilad emerged from Gaza, not in a coffin like so many other Israeli POWs, but on his own unsteady legs, blinking as he surfaced from the darkness.

It was not surprising then, that I took my kids to hear Gilad speak when he came to Toronto last week.

"You know, Gilad made a lot of mistakes when he was captured. We learned about it at camp," said my 13-year-old daughter. "But I still think we should go hear him."

And so last week, we stood with 3,000 other Jews and gave Gilad a heartfelt standing ovation.

But sometimes the emotional punch to the gut comes when you least expect it. For me, it was not hearing Gilad speak.

It *was* deeply satisfying to see him healthy, worlds away from the pale and emaciated soldier released two years ago.

He looked younger than I expected and ill at ease. He remains an unlikely icon, a man reluctantly thrust into the vortex of politics and publicity. But he was gracious in thanking us for remembering and praying and advocating for him during his captivity. And he persevered, stumbling through his 10-minute speech, much of which sounded as if someone else had written it.

But the emotional kick came from an unexpected quarter, from the bravery of Jason Kimelman, whose sister, Marnie, was killed in an explosion on a Tel Aviv beach 23 years ago.

I had completely forgotten the gut-wrenching local twist to the story – that one of the terrorists accused of murdering the Toronto teenager was included in the ransom for Gilad Schalit.

It was agonizing for Jason and his family to realize that the man who had murdered Marnie would soon be free, but their compassion was boundless.

I felt tears welling up as Jason described the day he learned his sister's murderer was to be included in the prisoner swap. And how his family, after some reflection, reached into some hidden depth to give their blessing to the deal, to allow Gilad to walk free of blame or guilt.

Marnie's sunny smile, a girl forever 17, was projected on screens around the synagogue, as her brother spoke. Gilad had volunteered to serve in the IDF, the family reasoned. And if they could help bring him home, they would.

In the end, controversies aside, we witnessed some amazing things. We saw a young soldier literally return from the dead. We heard him say he will never forget his five years of captivity, but he will be starting university soon. And we saw a man who suffered a grievous loss give his blessing to that soldier.

It was an evening where we saw that heroism comes in many forms. Not a bad night's outing.

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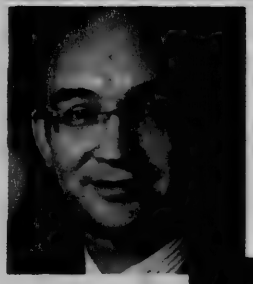

PEACEMAKING IN A TURBULENT WORLD: ISRAEL'S POLICY PRIORITIES IN THE CHANGING MIDDLE EAST
DJ Schneeweiss, Consul General for Israel for Toronto and Western Canada
Wednesday, October 2, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
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THE JEWISH ADVOCACY CHALLENGE: FEELING GOOD OR DOING GOOD...WHY WE CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS
Shimon Fogel CEO of CIJA (Centre for Israel & Jewish Affairs)
Wednesday, October 16, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

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Schalit's release was heatedly debated in Israel

Continued from page 1

Among those released was Yasser Hijazi, who had been tried and convicted for the 1990 murder of a Toronto teenager enjoying the sun on a Tel Aviv beach. The 17-year-old girl killed by an exploding pipe bomb was Marnie Kimelman, Jason's sister.

Hijazi was a member of Izzedine al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of Hamas.

As Jason told the story, a friend in Israel informed him by email that Marnie's killer was being released as part of the deal to free Schalit.

"Obviously, I was shocked and upset," Jason said.

In Israel, Schalit's release was heatedly debated, with many arguing against releasing killers with blood on their hands.

When they heard the news, the Kimelman family met to discuss the issue. Their conclusion: "This was and is the right thing to do. This was the only thing to do. In the end, Israel had no choice but to bring Gilad home and ensure he was safe," Jason said.

In that, the Kimelman family was being consistent with Jewish tradition.

Earlier, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, spiritual leader of Beth Tzedec, explained that the Talmud considers *pidyon shvuyim*, the freeing of captives, to be a great mitzvah.

As Kimelman expressed it, "If my brother is in trouble and needed my help, there is nothing I wouldn't do – nothing.

"From where I stand, we are Jews, and from an early age, I was told to do the right thing. Here the right thing was to bring our own brother home."

Schalit, who was the only captured Israeli soldier to be freed in 26 years, stood before the applauding crowd and said he was honoured and humbled by the experience.

He had been living a normal life in northern Israel when he was inducted into the IDF. He volunteered for a fighting unit and felt that "it was an honour to serve my country and my people."

He had expected to conclude his service, go to university and get married – in short, to lead a normal life.

He "never imagined" being captured and held, he said.

He learned only later of the way his situation had galvanized Jewish communities around the world, and he told the Toronto audience he was grateful that "you never forgot about me."

Although not a religious Jew, he appreciated the prayers for his release and the principle that "all Israel is responsible for one another. It is one of the highest values in Judaism."

The prayers and support gave his parents strength to get through a difficult period, he said. Schalit also thanked Prime Minister Stephen Harper "for everything Canada did to advocate on my behalf."

Today, he said, his life could not be considered normal. When he's out, people come up to him to have their pictures taken with him. In the shuk, merchants rush over to ply him with food.

Last year, he indulged his passion and covered the NBA finals for the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Achronot*, "which was a fantastic experience."

His plans for the future include studying economics and sustainability – new challenges in his life.

He concluded by thanking everyone and saying how touched he was by the outpouring of support on his behalf.

Kenney, the evening's keynote speaker, cited Kimelman in saying the prisoner exchange that freed Schalit wasn't a sign of Israeli weakness, but of its strength and "moral courage."

It demonstrated a proposition upon which Israel was founded – "the sacred principle of the inviolate dignity of the human person created in the image of God," he said.

Israel, he continued, respects the sacredness of human life "in the midst of a culture of death."

Canada has stood with Israel, even when it was politically disadvantageous to do so, "because we understand that Israel alone in the Middle East stands for civilization."

Canada and Israel share those same values, Kenney added.

Among those taking in the proceedings were dignitaries from all levels of government, including Liberal leader Justin Trudeau and Israeli Consul General DJ Schneeweiss.

Schalit was scheduled to speak in Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver. His Toronto appearance marked the kick-off of this year's 65th Negev campaign, which culminates Dec. 1 with the Negev Dinner in honour of Harper. That dinner is in support of the Stephen Harper Hula Valley Visitor and Education Centre.

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Reena in the News

President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

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- Ensures the culture promotes a caring environment where clients can develop spiritually and feel connected to the Jewish culture and community
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- Oversees the effective day-to-day operation of the organization.
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Canadian Tire picketed for carrying Israeli product

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs is encouraging supporters of Israel to buy SodaStream drink makers and flavoured syrup at Canadian Tire stores as a way to combat a boycott of the Israeli-made products.

CIJA issued a "buycott" alert on Sept. 17 to thwart supporters of the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel who were planning to picket an Ontario Canadian Tire store, which turned out to be a location in Hamilton four days later.

Organizations including Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War (HCSW), Canadians for Peace and Justice in the Middle East (CPJME) and the Palestinian Association of Hamilton (PAH) said they want that Canadian Tire location to stop selling the drink-maker's products after its current inventory runs out, something organizers say some other stores have promised.

Counter-protesters buy $600 in merchandise
See cjnews.com

The anti-Israel protesters were met by a counter-protest led by London, Ont., resident Mark Vandermaas, a non-Jewish supporter of Israel and a former Canadian Forces peacekeeper in the Middle East. Vandermaas told *CJN* correspondent Abigail Cukier that he was joined by Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Jews. Each side had about 20 to 30 people show up in the pouring rain.

In support of CIJA's "buycott" call, the counter-protesters ended their rally by buying more than $600 worth of SodaStream products. Vandermaas said he hopes the store manager will now feel more confident about carrying the product.

The "buycott" aims to support Israeli companies targeted by the BDS campaign, said Sara Saber-Freedman, executive vice-president of CIJA.

"Our objective here is to send a real simple message, which is that when people attempt to boycott Israeli products, the consequence will be that more of that product will be sold… that Israel will get more favourable attention," Saber-Freedman says

SodaStream machines can make soda water from ordinary tap water, while consumers can also buy a variety of flavoured syrups to create a carbonated soft drink. The company's headquarters and three of its 13 production facilities are in Israel.

The largest factory is located near Ma'ale Adumim, a West Bank settlement, and the majority of the employees at the facility are Palestinian Arabs who work alongside Jewish Israelis.

The Palestinian workers receive Israeli-standard wages and benefits, Saber-Freedman said.

"The way you build peace is by building economic opportunity," Saber-Freedman said. "It's not clear to me how the [Palestinians workers'] lives will be improved if that factory were to close, as I imagine the boycotters hope that it would."

Boycotters argue that SodaStream is an unethical company, since its products are manufactured in an Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank. The boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel claims that the company's profits benefit the Israeli economy and development of illegal settlement in the West Bank and do not provide Palestinians with equal labour protection.

"It's been documented that Palestinians working for Israeli businesses that are established in the West Bank are not protected by Israeli labour laws," says Thomas Woodley, president of advocacy group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East.

"[Palestinian workers] are less willing to speak out or claim their rights. They are easily fired. Would they prefer another employment? Absolutely," Woodley says.

A promotional video released by SodaStream, however, says Palestinian Arabs at the factory are building peaceful relationships with their Israeli co-workers.

Canadian Tire is one of 50,000 retailers in 42 countries who carry SodaStream products. A Canadian Tire spokesperson wrote in an email that the company is "committed to ethical business practices here in Canada and internationally."

Sears and Hudson's Bay also sell SodaStream products. In April, a similar protest against the company at a Halifax Planet Organic retailer went largely unnoticed and only attracted a dozen boycotters.

Anne Mirvish dies at 94

CJN Staff

Anne Lazar Mirvish, wife of the late "Honest Ed" Mirvish, died Sept. 20 at age 94.

A native of Hamilton, Ont., she was married to Ed Mirvish for 65 years until his death in 2007.

Mirvish was a sculptor who was devoted to the arts, including theatre and opera. A Mirvish spokesperson said she had inspired her husband's love of the theatre and had coaxed him into attending.

He later bought the Royal Alexandra Theatre and saved it from demolition. Mirvish Productions is now Canada's largest live-theatre company.

Her funeral was held Sept. 23 at Holy Blossom Temple.

Regesh celebrates 30 years helping at-risk youth

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

When 19-year-old Jason was in his early teenage years, he was having trouble with anger management. He spoke to several counsellors, trying to find the right one to help him.

Finally, he found support in Ed Schild, executive director of Regesh, an organization that works with at-risk youth.

"It was pretty helpful," said Jason, who, years later, still recalls and uses the skills he learned from Schild. "[I learned] how to deal with anger… breaking it down and figuring out ways to deal with it."

Jason is just one of the thousands of people Regesh has helped over its 30-year run. At the beginning, the organization provided residential services – foster and group homes, but for the past decade, it has shifted its focus to outpatient programs.

"The world keeps changing. It's difficult for kids to be kids these days, and difficult to parent the kids," said Schild, who founded the organization in 1983. "A lot of kids are very unhappy, and parents have trouble dealing with it and keeping their kids safe."

He said lots of schools are trying to offer programming for their students, but it isn't enough to help the many students dealing with difficult home lives and issues like anger management.

Participants in the Regesh summer program

He and his 12 staff members believe that every child should have access to help – most referrals are seen within two to three weeks, as opposed to the six-to-eight-month wait often found at other agencies, Schild said.

The 30th anniversary celebrations will unfold on Oct. 1 at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre with a gala that includes a performance by Zero Gravity Circus and features Newstalk 1010 host John Tory as MC.

"I went out to see this Reconnecting Youth program at the R. H. King Academy in Toronto, and I was absolutely blown away by it," Tory said.

Reconnecting Youth is a high-school credit class that helps students in small groups learn coping mechanisms and other life skills. The Regesh website lists three goals for the program: increase school performance, decrease drug involvement and decrease suicide-risk behaviour.

Tory described seeing two groups of kids in the classroom – those who were just starting in the program and those who had been through it for some time. The people who had just begun their experience seemed "uncertain, quieter, looking like, in some respects, they'd rather not be there."

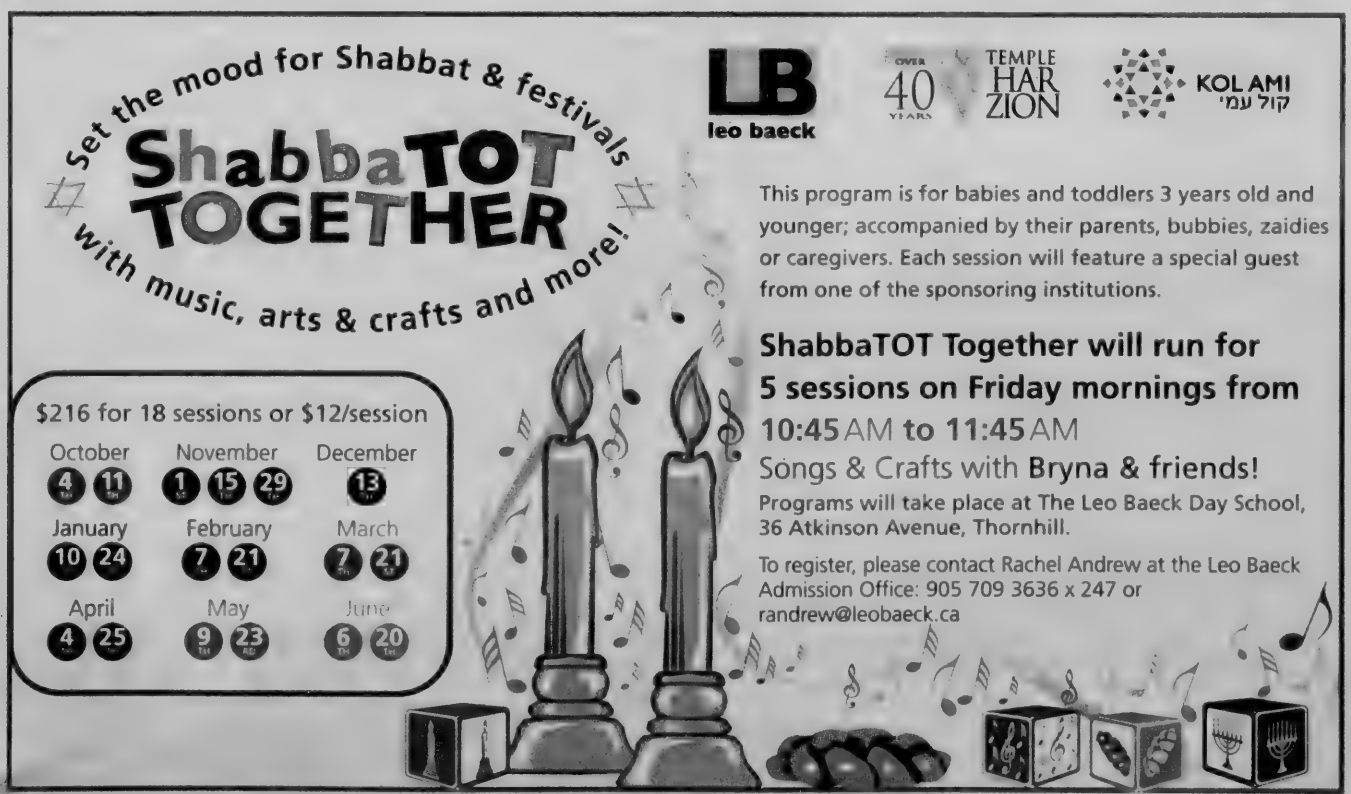
But the kids who had been in the program for awhile said they, too, had begun the program the same way.

Tory described the kids as genuinely enthusiastic and ambitious.

"I am a believer based on the exposure to that program alone," he said, adding that it's a perfect example of how this type of charity and program should be run. "This is the best one I've seen in terms of the unbridled enthusiasm of the kids who went through it."

It's not about visiting the office for 45 minutes and leaving, Schild said, explaining that this is what makes Regesh so successful. "We walk the walk with them. Whatever they need, it's provided here."

For more information and to purchase tickets to the Oct. 1 gala, visit regesh.com.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Tour for Humanity travels across Ontario

High-tech bus promotes tolerance

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The Tour for Humanity, an ambitious project that can be compared to no other, will help the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) bring its message of tolerance, inclusivity, justice and human rights to millions of Ontarians.

A "mobile tolerance education centre," The Tour for Humanity, is a $1-million, retrofitted, 42-foot Fleetwood bus that has been re-engineered to accommodate a 32-seat theatre.

This initiative, for which FSWC has raised $2.4 million, is designed to bring its educational programs beyond the Greater Toronto Area to the entire province of Ontario.

FSWC president and CEO Avi Benlolo said that while his organization offers classes about tolerance and social justice issues at their Yonge Street offices, there are many people living outside of Toronto to whom the classes aren't accessible.

"We thought about building a museum in the hope that people would come. Drawing people from outlying areas is a difficult problem," Benlolo said, adding that small Ontario communities including Stratford, St. Jacobs, Orangeville and Dundas are underserved when it comes to programming that promotes tolerance and inclusivity.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center president and CEO Avi Benlolo, left, Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak and NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, visit the new Tour for Humanity bus.

"The question was, how can we really project our influence much further and get to more people? The answer seemed quite clear: we take our program to them."

The Tour for Humanity will travel from town to town to offer workshops for students, educators and law enforcement representatives on topics including the Holocaust, genocide, bullying, heroes and leadership.

"There is no mobile training centre like this anywhere else," Benlolo boasted. "We completely retrofitted and re-engineered most of it."

The mobile centre features an interactive film that will sync up with iPads. There will be a question and answer component in which students will be prompted to answer questions on the iPads and a program will tabulate their responses.

"We also built in a lift to make it wheelchair accessible because we're all about inclusivity. The first person to have used the lift is the lieutenant-governor of Ontario, David Onley."

Onley – along with Ontario PC Leader Tim Hudak, NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, and Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne – was on hand earlier this month to launch the initiative with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Onley applauded FSWC for developing a community outreach project that can both educate and inspire.

"That's when learning is most effective – when it illuminates and guides who we are… It can change lives," he said.

Benlolo said that although more than $2 million has already been raised, FSWC will continue to raise funds to sustain the project for years to come.

"We've had an incredible amount of people who have pledged to finance it," he said, adding that the Ontario Trillium Foundation gave FSWC a $500,000 grant, with the rest of the funds coming from private donors.

"They love the idea and they are helping."

FSWC board of governors member Dorothy Shoichet, whose family donated funds to realize this ambitious project, said it's the most creative educational tool she's ever seen.

"It is an exciting opportunity to get to young minds before they become corrupted by myth and rumour… I'm convinced it's going to change the world – first Ontario, and then the world," Shoichet said.

She predicted that once people learn about this initiative, other organizations will want to follow suit, and she also anticipates that when more funds become available, FSWC will buy and retrofit more buses to give the project a wider reach.

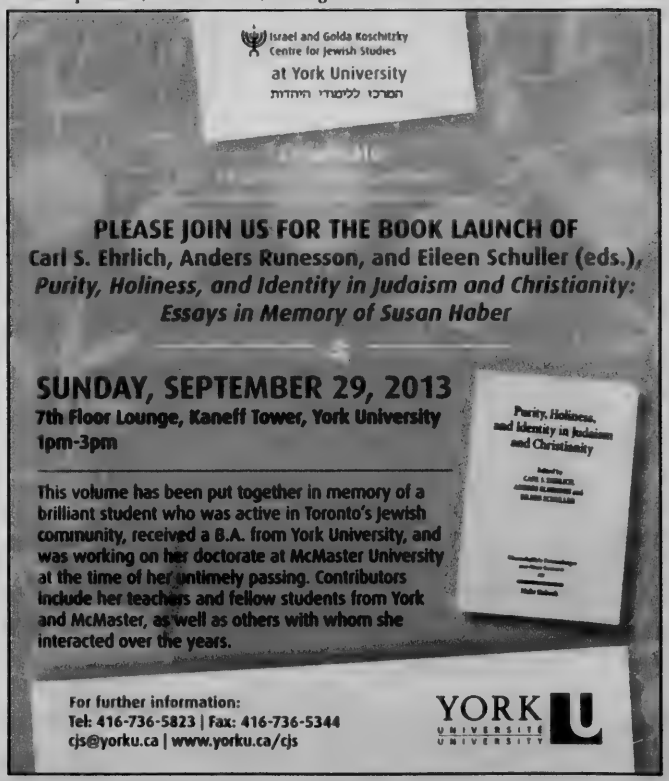
Shoichet, who called her first time on the bus a thrilling, "life-changing experience," said that for this initiative, the possibilities are endless.

"It's the beginning of the end of racism. I don't make that statement carelessly. It's the end of racism and anti-Semitism, first in Ontario, then in Canada, then North America and hopefully the world."

Benlolo said sensitivity training is very much needed, considering the prevalence of bullying and incidents such as the one that involved students at Saint Mary's University in Halifax who were caught on tape singing a chant that promoted non-consensual sex with underage girls earlier this month.

"Communities want these kinds of programs to respond to these incidents."

Benlolo expects that the bus will make its first trip in October. Those who would like to see the bus can come to Dundas Square on Sept. 25 for FSWC's annual Freedom Day celebration, where the mobile tolerance centre will be parked.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Old-school upholsterer retires after 65 years

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — After over 65 years in business, upholsterer Ted Muller's list of satisfied customers is a who's who of the leading families in Winnipeg, both in the Jewish and larger communities.

Among those who have called on him for his services are the Richardson family – the city's first family of business and philanthropy – retired senator Sharon Carstairs, former lieutenant governor Pearl McGonigal, the Aspers, the Spivaks and many more. Many of these people, Muller says, became lifelong friends.

On Aug. 27, many of those longtime customers and friends dropped in to Muller's Art Upholstering one final time to say goodbye to Muller and his wife and partner, Marie.

It is not that Muller, who is 87, wanted to retire. But a mild heart attack at the end of July convinced him that the time had come.

Ted Muller has been doing upholstering since he was 12 years old.

"Today, they would call it child labour," he says. "Back then, it was called an apprenticeship."

Muller's father was a harness maker and upholsterer in their native Transylvania. "I had an uncle in the business, too," he says.

Marie and Ted Muller (*Myron Love photo*)

"He trained me in the art of fabric."

Muller came to Winnipeg in 1948 after losing his parents in the Holocaust.

"I arrived late one evening and, by the next morning, I had a job at GIII (a bedding company operated by the Globerman family)," he recalls. "Skilled upholsterers were in great demand."

After a few months, he went into business for himself under the Art Upholstering and Draperies banner. His first workshop was his garage at home. For the first year, he recalls, he often built furniture right in customers' living rooms.

A year after coming to Winnipeg, Muller met his wife, Marie, a Holocaust survivor from Paris. Although they spoke different languages, upholstery brought them together. Her father had also been an upholsterer.

They were married in 1950.

"We have had our ups and downs," including a fire three years ago that destroyed their previous building, Marie recalls. "It was a struggle particularly in the early years."

Over time, Muller developed a sterling reputation for his work. His corporate clients included Eaton's and Hudson's Bay, the Centennial Concert Hall (for which he did the drapes) and numerous hotels and theatres.

Muller could do anything and everything with fabric and wood, but his specialty was restoring antique furniture. In that category, he has done a lot of work for Parks Canada.

Attention to detail was everything, so the process would take hours. He said that a typical foam-cushioned dining room chair in a typical house would take him half an hour to recover. Back then, with home furniture often imported from Europe, a chair stuffed with horsehair and specific stitching on the fabric would take him two days to refurbish.

"Plus you had to take pictures of it as you were taking it apart, so that when you put it back together, there were no shortcuts," he said. "You couldn't get away with shortcuts.

"Not too many people are trained to do real upholstery any more," he says.

For a number of years, he would make chairs for Na'amat to raffle off at fundraisers.

Their daughter, Laya Kneller, organized the retirement party for them, and she and her daughter, Sky, have been helping tie up loose ends.

Ted Muller said that in retirement, he would like to go to Israel one more time to see family there.

The Mullers also have a son, Marvin, in Winnipeg and other grandchildren in Winnipeg and Toronto.

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Jewish school enrolment steady in Winnipeg

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — For the 2013 school year, overall Jewish school enrolment numbers in Winnipeg are much the same as last year, but the distribution is somewhat different.

The Hebrew bilingual program at Brock Corydon Public School has registered an increase of 20 students, while at the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education's program.

The major difference this year, Paul said, is that the school lost 20 students because their families left Winnipeg. He attributed the loss to immigrant families from Israel or Argentina who moved elsewhere to further parental careers.

Paul said that this year the board has introduced a new fee structure following a two-year study. The WBJE has always billed parents on a sliding scale tied to income and number of kids enrolled. Full tuition for a single student has been raised to $9,900 from $8,400. He said tuition has also been raised for parents who have paid the minimum tuition over the years, but parents with two or more children at the school will be paying less this year.

Gray Academy

While Gray Academy's enrolment has declined for the first time in four years, Brock Corydon's numbers are up for the first time in three years. Enrolment this year is 150, up from 122 last year. Until 2010, enrolment was always at 180 – or full capacity.

Brock Corydon School is in the Winnipeg One School Division. Former Brock Corydon principal Ira Udow reported last year that student enrolment was down as a whole in the school division.

"A number of our families have left the city," he said, "and many of the immigrant families are settling in areas of the city outside the Winnipeg One School Division catchment area."

He added that most of the city's newly arrived Israeli families – many of them of Russian origin – are sending their kids to regular public schools

"We are very happy with our numbers for this year," says current principal Ara Morris.

Brock Corydon is one of two Hebrew bilingual elementary school programs in the public school system. But the original (WBJE) Gray Academy of Jewish Education, enrolment is down by 15.

Rory Paul, head of school and CEO of Gray Academy, said that although the school welcomed 85 new students this year, enrolment is just 590, compared to 605 last year. This is the first time since 2009 that the school population has dropped. (In 2009, enrolment reached a nadir of 572.)

The kindergarten-to-Grade 12 school always loses some students every year after grades 6 and 9, as some students switch to public school or other non-Jewish private schools, or (for older students) attend the University of Winnipeg's high school program, at Margaret Park School in the Seven Oaks School Division in north Winnipeg, is not expected to survive.

With the significant Jewish demographic shift over the past 15 to 20 years from north Winnipeg – where the majority of the Jewish population was once located – to south Winnipeg and elsewhere, the number of Jewish students in north Winnipeg has decreased substantially.

The Margaret Park program at its peak had 180 students enrolled, but this year there are only 26. There's no kindergarten class this year – it's been a struggle for several years to recruit more than a half dozen students for it – and the plan is to phase out the other classes over the next five years, if the program even lasts that long.

Que. charter may change

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — After a week of widespread criticism and a demonstration by thousands in the streets of Montreal, the Parti Québécois government is indicating that its proposed charter of Quebec values is not written in stone.

On Sept. 17, International Relations Minister Jean-François Lisée said at a news conference that the government is open to modifying the plan before tabling a bill to the National Assembly.

Lisée, who is also responsible for Montreal and anglophones, said input from the public will be taken into account.

"We're looking for ways to improve the proposal," he said. "We're listening... We're asking people to participate and we'll take these [opinions] into consideration."

However, Lisée defended the proposed charter as "modern and progressive" and the banning of religious symbols in the public service as necessary.

"We support religious freedom. The debate we're having is about the neutrality of the state – nothing else."

The charter would ban on "overt and conspicuous" religious attire and would apply to all employees of ministries and government organizations, provincial and municipal; judges, police officers, prosecutors and correctional agents; staff of the Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs) and subsidized private daycares, public school boards, cegep and universities, and public health care and social services.

Meanwhile, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) is asking members of the Jewish community to sign a "Manifesto for an Inclusive Quebec," a petition opposing the charter.

Drafted by academics and professionals from across the professional spectrum, this non-partisan manifesto "sets out a principled critique" of the government's plan, which CIJA endorses.

About 19,000 Quebecers have already signed the document, which states that the proposed charter "would force minorities to choose between their conscience and their survival... Quebec identity is not built upon the rejection of the other."

To read full story, go to cjnews.com

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Save the date for 2015: Israel Food for Thought Culinary Tour with Bonnie Stern and Rabbi Goldstein: Feb. 2-9, 2015.

Reform congregation creates quilts for Israel

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — More than 550 babies in Israel have been given symbolic "hugs" by a small group of volunteers from Temple Israel, Ottawa's only Reform congregation.

Each of these lucky babies has been covered by, or wrapped up in, his or her very own, new, specially designed and sewn baby quilt. There is no direct connection between the donors and recipients and most will never meet, but the donor's hands have touched the fabric which in turn touches the child, and somehow the warmth stretches over the ocean and across the miles.

As do many such projects, this one began and grew in a very roundabout way. In 2008, retired teachers and Temple Israel members Patsy Royer and Merle Haltrecht-Matte spearheaded a group of volunteers who created a quilted wall hanging to commemorate the congregation's 40th anniversary. After many hours of work – most of it fun – the quilters wanted to continue.

"At the end of the project, I thought 'Now what will we do?'" said Haltrecht-Matte.

Wanting to try something smaller than the one extremely large wall hanging, they came up with the idea of baby quilts.

"To celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary, we would spend the year making 60 baby quilts," she said. "Then we would have to find places that would take baby quilts and find people to take them and deliver them. We wanted to give them to families that we felt needed a hug from Canada... not poor families necessarily, but people who had been affected by terrorism."

They initially designated families in Sderot, Ashdod and Ashkelon to receive the quilts. Volunteers were recruited to take quilts to Israel when they travelled, to meet up with people in Israel who would distribute them.

Five years later, Royer and Haltrecht-Matte meet weekly in a little house beside the temple, which is piled high with donated fabrics and supplies in various stages of production. They're occasionally joined by other volunteers, but these two dynamos are the team leaders and take pride in their work.

Delivery has been streamlined as well, with volunteers Jane and Martin Gilbert taking quilts with them on their frequent visits to their son, who lives in Ra'anana.

Why do they continue with such a labour-intensive project that has long since surpassed its initial goal?

"I love to sew, I love to design quilts and I love to teach," said Royer. "Creating small quilts out of our many fabrics lets me do a real mitzvah, according to the thank you letters we have received, while using my creative side and learning new techniques."

Diane Koven holds a baby quilt.

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16-year-old law cited as reason for change

Jewish clubs nixed at Montreal high schools

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) is citing a 16-year-old law to explain why extracurricular Jewish clubs at three of its high schools aren't being permitted this fall after having run for as long as five years.

But it appears that promotional efforts by the school board itself about the programs may have alerted board leaders to their existence and led to their cancellation.

The clubs, which met at lunchtime and were open to all students, were led by Rabbi Dovid Pearlstein at Royal West Academy in Montreal West, Westmount High School and Royal Vale High School in Notre Dame de Grâce.

Rabbi Pearlstein, who has been involved for about three years, said he was abruptly told at the end of the last school year (earlier in the case of Westmount) that he could not continue coming to the schools because of Bill 180.

That's the act to amend the Education Act passed in 1997, reforming the public school system after the abolition of denominational school boards and the reorganization of schools under French and English boards.

He was told that the law forbids religious instruction in public schools.

Carolyn Gehr, a Royal West math and science teacher, directed the club at her school. She's on maternity leave this year, but brought the club ban to the attention of *The CJN*. She believes a *CJN* article last March helped spur the move.

"Partially as a result of this article, the EMSB has now banned these clubs in all their schools, saying it is in contravention of Bill 180 regarding religious neutrality in schools," she wrote in a letter.

EMSB spokesperson Michael Cohen acknowledged that a press release his department issued about the popularity of the Royal West Jewish club last spring, and the resulting exposure in the media, including *The CJN*, may have had something to do with the EMSB's decision.

"There was a disconnect somewhere… I imagine this was going on without the full knowledge of the administration," he said.

"It slipped under the radar… It's a big school, 900 students. This appears to have been the students' initiative with a rabbi volunteering to come in to talk to them… The PR we did probably made [the administration] aware of it."

Rabbi Pearlstein, who is associated with the Chabad-Lubavitch organization's Chai Centre, said he received permission from the principals of each of the schools before he began the clubs. Although the primary goal was to strengthen Jewish students' connection to their roots, Rabbi Pearlstein insists he gave no religious instruction as such. He said he focused on ethical issues and worked within the guidelines of the school. There was talk about Jewish customs and values, and celebrations of holidays.

"There was no prayer. I did not ask anyone to put on tfillin. I knew what my boundaries were and never crossed them," he said.

"Everybody was always welcome, boys and girls. There were Christians and Muslims – sometimes half the group was not Jewish."

Gehr describes the ban as "one more indication of the direction in which our province is going in terms of reasonable accommodation," she wrote.

"My school has 150 to 200 Jewish students and yet we are not allowed to do anything to serve this population."

She declined to make any further comment on the record.

Cohen said Bill 180 not only rules out religious instruction, it also prohibits "any religious figure" from coming into a school, even for an extracurricular activity. "It would be the same if it was a Catholic priest," he said.

Cohen's press release last spring described how about 15 students met every Wednesday at Royal West, where 15 per cent of the students are Jewish. On the day described, they were learning about Purim.

The club at Royal West received a grant last year from Federation CJA's Gen J program, which supports innovative programming to connect young Jews to their heritage.

The money, which Rabbi Pearlstein said primarily covered the cost of the kosher pizza, was issued to the school, which in turn gave him a cheque as reimbursement.

Rabbi Pearlstein said the clubs' existence was well publicized in the schools, pointing out that notices of the weekly club meetings were sometimes on the bulletin board or on the school website.

"Every couple of weeks, the spiritual animator [a school staff position] sat in on the club just to see that everything was OK," he said. "I was not sneaking into the school."

Rabbi Pearlstein added that another rabbi from the Chai Centre, which runs a youth drop-in program, continues to lead similar clubs at schools under the Lester B. Pearson School Board, the other English board in Montreal. Rabbi Pearlstein said he started the clubs at the request of some Jewish students. A typical club meeting saw Rabbi Pearlstein present an ethical dilemma to the students and encourage them to offer their views, he said. Topics often centred on the value of human life – suicide, abortion, euthanasia, or whether one should risk his life to save another's.

"Basically, I wanted to hear the kids' opinions… It was all about education. I didn't try to convert anybody… I'm not sure what to think. I'm still trying to figure out what happened. I'm confused," he said.

Cohen, who is also a Côte St. Luc city councillor, is suggesting an alternative that would allow the Royal West club to continue.

He approached Montreal West Mayor Beny Masella, who has agreed to allow the club to meet at lunchtime at city hall, "a two-minute walk away."

"I am sticking my head out to facilitate this," Cohen said. "Something similar at off-campus sites could be arranged for other schools."

However, if the club did meet there, it would not be under Royal West's or the EMSB's auspices, he said.

Cohen noted that he has personally tried over the last 15 years to bring Jewish content of a cultural or intercultural nature into the EMSB, including Holocaust education and exchanges with Jewish schools.

Cohen also noted that Royal Vale and several elementary EMSB schools have for many years offered Jewish heritage language programs, sanctioned by the education ministry and known by the acronym PELO, which teach Hebrew, as well as Jewish history and culture.

He suggests that Royal West students could press for its introduction at their school, or they might ask the school's spiritual animator to help them organize some kind of programming with a Jewish theme.

While Royal Vale is the only high school running PELO now, there are plans for a Jewish heritage program to be offered at Wallenberg Academy, a high school in Côte St. Luc that the EMSB hopes to open in 2014, Cohen said.

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D. J. Schneeweiss, the Israeli Consul General in Toronto and Western Canada, will address current issues facing Israel, and the roles of the Consulate and the Jewish Community in the promotion of Israel's cause. Born in Sydney Australia, Mr. Schneeweiss immigrated to Israel in 1987 and has since served Israel in many important top-ranking positions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
THURSDAY: October 10, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.
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Plans underway to renovate Holy Blossom

Continued from page 3

He was so excited that he jumped up and down… [and said] 'This must be what looking down from Heaven is like!'"

"This memory inspired me to rebuild the tower," Hertzman said. "I hope his spirit can provide some light for the temple to shine again."

Tom Friedland, chair of the Holy Blossom Temple Renewal Project steering committee said he was grateful to the Hertzmans for sharing such a personal event with the congregation.

"It was very rewarding to see what was the formal kick-off of the renewal project," for which more than $18 million has already been raised, he said.

Plans to renovate and restore the Reform congregation's 75-year-old building date back to 2004, when the shul's board approved a plan to turn the sanctuary around 180 degrees to face Jerusalem.

The original design, conceived in the 1930s, intentionally had the sanctuary face west, away from Jerusalem.

The issue deeply divided the 7,000-member congregation, and in 2007, 42 per cent of the congregation voted against the reorientation.

"There was a sense that the people who felt passionately about not reorienting it, felt passionately about it and we were not going to have shalom bayit without rethinking that," Friedland said.

"Shortly after that vote, the board went back to the architects and thought we should just leave it in the direction that it is. That is the tradition of this temple, and it is absolutely the right decision."

But the controversy didn't end there. A 2012 *Globe and Mail* article suggested that when Rabbi John Moscowitz, the spiritual leader who served Holy Blossom for 25 years, endorsed the proposal to shift the main sanctuary's orientation, it ultimately led to his ouster.

The treatment of Rabbi Moscowitz – who is currently on a three-year sabbatical until 2015, when he will retire and continue as rabbi emeritus – also caused a rift, because his supporters felt that "a cadre of old guard board members had been plotting to remove him for years" due to his right-wing Zionist leanings, the *Globe* report said.

But Friedland said the congregation is looking ahead to provide for the next generation of Holy Blossom members.

"We're moving forward with the physical renewal, and the rabbinic transition committee is also trying to confirm who our senior rabbi will be," he said.

"The hope is to have a person in place for the next high holidays… and they are moving forward with the interview process."

As for the renovations, the latest version of the plans – adopted last year when Leo Baeck Day School's south campus moved to a new location – boasts a new central atrium gathering space, a new family chapel, enhanced outdoor areas, a renovated congregational hall, a modernized education wing, a restored main sanctuary and updated, environmentally friendly HVAC and electrical systems.

"There is a palpable sense that we're really moving forward, and people come up to you, and say, 'We're so excited, we've been waiting a long time for this,'" and it is important to show ourselves that we are capable of doing it."

Seinfeld star featured at UJA Federation gala

From left, Lisa Draper, UJA campaign 2014 chair; Stephen Halperin, chair of UJA's major gifts gala; Jason Alexander; Stephen Diamond, UJA campaign 2014 chair; Lori Rosenthal, chair, UJA's women's philanthropy. *[Liora Kogan photo]*

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

More than 400 people gathered at the Ontario Science Centre for UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's annual Major Gifts Gala Sept. 15, hard on the heels of Yom Kippur.

"We have raised to date $33 million dollars, but our work is just beginning," Stephen Diamond, UJA annual campaign co-chair said. "I have heard that if you are Jewish and you live in Toronto, it's likely that your children and your grandchildren will live here as well, so I don't think we can overemphasize the importance of the UJA organization, which has been with us for close to 100 years. It is the basis for our continued unity as a community today, and for future generations."

His campaign co-chair Lisa Draper shared stories about people who have been helped by some of UJA's more than100 partner agencies.

Ben, a recovering addict, she said, "was from a privileged home. He attended summer camp. He participated in Birthright, but he took a dramatic turn in the wrong direction. Today, Ben is three years clean because of the lifesaving work of the Jewish Addiction Counselling Services, and he speaks to our community about his journey and how UJA saved his life."

"Through your gift, each of you here tonight is funding… incentives that… can make a real, transformative difference," she said.

Daniel, whose story she also told, moved with his family from El Salvador because of the political uncertainty back home.

"It was a difficult transition for his family," she said. But through the work of the Jewish Vocational Service and the Women's Philanthropy Project, "Daniel and his wife were able to settle into our community and build a family and gain employment. Today, Daniel is paying it forward by volunteering at our UJA telethons."

"These stories are all part of the mosaic that shapes our community," UJA Women's Philanthropy chair Lori Rosenthal said. "Connecting to the people we help makes our fundraising experience more personal, more meaningful."

Seinfeld veteran Jason Alexander, who has been dubbed by *Entertainment Weekly* as one of the "best television sidekicks of all time," entertained the audience with his comedy and personal experiences.

"Gut yontif, everyone," Alexander greeted the crowd. He then talked about his love of magic, acting and family.

When *Seinfeld* ended, Alexander said, he wanted to return to New York to perform in the theatre. Unfortunately, theatre life meant late nights.

"My wife said, 'Do you believe you will remember your great nights on stage, or the nights you tucked your boys into bed?' I stayed at home with my boys, and am so happy I did."

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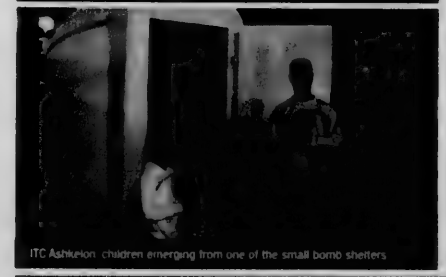
June 2, 2013, Toronto - ITC children visit Toronto to raise money for the Bomb Shelter Campaign (shown with Joe Freberg (centre) Kerth Alexander (right))



ITC Ashkelon children emerging from one of the small bomb shelters

Racquets Not Rockets Campaign Update

Thank you to each and every one of you, who helped make possible through your donations, the purchase and installation of 26 portable bomb shelters and 7 large shelters so far - at our 14 tennis centers throughout Israel.

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www.israeltenniscentres.org

Message from the Israel Tennis Centers CEO regarding the situation in the Western Galilee:

Thursday, August 22, 2013

"Yesterday at about 4:00 pm, the newly installed portable bomb shelters at the Israel Tennis Center in Akko were used for the first time, as 4 rockets were fired at the western Galilee. As soon as the alarm sounded the children moved swiftly into the shelters with the staff. Having these shelters made a huge difference in the safety and feeling of the children and staff.

Thank you to all our friends in the USA and Canada for SHELTERING OUR CHILDREN WITH LOVE. May we never have to use the shelters again. With much gratitude and appreciation,"

Danny Gelley, CEO
Israel Tennis Centers, Ramat Hasharon, Israel

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Programs for Developmentally and Physically Challenged, Arab/Jewish Coexistence Doubles, Coexistence Kindergartens, and Ethiopian community programming are among the many ITC programs - all focused on tolerance, belief in one's self and the virtues of teamwork.

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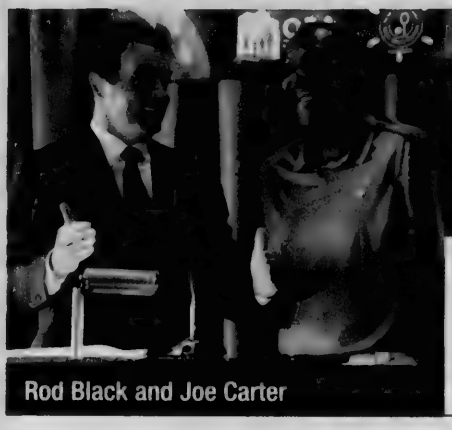

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Chemical weapons make a difference

Money Matters
Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Jewish law doesn't recognize the concept of a separate small claims court. All claims in Jewish law are to be treated equally, and a court must hear cases in the order they arrive before it. A $10 case may not be pushed aside in order to hear a class-action multi-million dollar claim.

Theft is theft, and the amounts involved are, philosophically, almost secondary. It's the violation of another and a denial of God's role in "assigning" wealth to whom He see fit. Just as one cannot be a "little pregnant," one cannot be a "little dishonest."

I was thinking of this as U.S. President Barack Obama made his case for intervention in Syria. As long as 100,000 plus people were killed using "conventional means," there was little call for action, but gas 1,000 people to death and there's great outrage. Does it really matter how evildoers perpetrate their wrongdoings?

Not surprisingly, the issue is complex and nuanced. While it was rarely carried out in practice, capital punishment was meted out in one of four possible ways, reflecting the varying levels of the crime involved. In explaining the need for the courts to ensure as painless a death as possible, the Talmud invokes as its source the verse "you shall love your neighbour as yourself." Apparently the method of death is something to consider seriously.

And so is the method of theft. Jewish law distinguishes between a *ganav* and a *gazlan*. The former acts surreptitiously, engaging in say, white-collar fraud, expecting that no one will notice. A *gazlan* however is more brazen and open about his dishonesty, and would not hesitate to mug you on the street or walk into a bank demanding cash.

While I imagine most people would prefer that someone defraud them than put a gun in their back, the *ganav* receives a greater punishment than a *gazlan*. While an armed robber must pay back the amount stolen, a fraudster must pay back double the amount, something our criminal justice system might want to copy.

While the amount stolen might be the same, methodology makes a huge difference. Our sages teach that a *ganav* is afraid of man but not God, a sad inversion of priorities. At least a *gazlan* isn't hypocritical, as he fears neither God nor man.

"Fighting fair" while terrible is still better than stabbing someone in back. Chemical weapons do make a difference.

While some might find any analogy between killing and monetary wrongdoing jarring, there's much that unites them. Many have been murdered over financial disputes and many wars have been fought over economic issues. One can rest assured that had, for example, there been a threat to world oil supplies, western intervention would have happened long ago. And such economic considerations are no less a legitimate reason for war than most others.

The link between money and life wasn't invented by Shakespeare. In biblical Hebrew, the word *damim* means both blood and money. And the laws of self-defence, including killing the potential perpetrator, are recorded in regard to someone who breaks into your home.

Respect for life begins with respect for property.

Repentance, mysticism & kreplach

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

The evening begins with a festive meal that includes a steaming bowl of soup with a couple of kreplach. The next morning, the final day of Sukkot, seven circuits are made around the synagogue. And then, with some willow branches in hand, we give the floor a good thwacking. Although Hoshanah Rabah may sometimes be overlooked in a season full of festivals, this spiritual day plays a unique role reminiscent of Yom Kippur.

According to Chabad.org: "The custom of beating the willows on the ground has great mystical meaning known only to the very wise who merit the knowledge of these secrets." **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab1]** Rabbi Yisroel Miller says that causing the leaves to fall away symbolizes "the falling away of the sparks of Divine Judgment; and we cast it away as an end to the Days of Judgment." For an explanation, see the rabbi's essay *Beating the Branches*. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab2]**

As for what to say while circling your shul, download a booklet from the Rabbinical Assembly with Hebrew, English translation and annotation from the Talmud, Midrash and Zohar. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab3]** And to find out HOW to do it (Do you do the circuit clockwise or counterclockwise? Can you reuse the willow branches?), check out the FAQ from Aish.com. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab4]**

Hoshanah Rabah does not share the same work prohibitions as other Jewish festivals. That's why you can watch a video of the late Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach as he conducted a holiday service at New York City's Congregation Kehilath Jacob. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab5]** Or check out excerpts from an early morning service at the Kotel. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab6]** You can get a very different feel for the day by listening to a Yemenite congregation reciting the central, hypnotic refrain of the day, "Hoshanah. Ana HaShem Hoshiah Na!" – "Please save. Please, God, save now!" **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab7]**

On Hoshanah Rabah, the chazan dons a white *kittel* and chants prayers using quotes from a midrash in which God says to Abraham, "I will give your descendants a special day for forgiveness: Hoshanah Rabah. If they are not forgiven on Rosh Hashanah, then let them try Yom Kippur; if not, then Hoshanah Rabah." **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab9]**

Yom Kippur and Hoshanah Rabah share something else – kreplach, triangular pockets of dough with meat or other stuffing. Robin Treistman explains, "These holidays are connected to each other because they involve some sort of striking or beating: On Yom Kippur, we beat our heart in prayer, on Hoshanah Rabah we beat willow branches." **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab10]** The Nishmas site suggests that judgment (symbolized by meat) is clothed in kindness (symbolized by the dough). **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab12]**

Now that you know the reason, you can take your pick of kreplach recipes from the Jewish Food Archives including beef, bite-sized, chicken liver, kasha and cheese. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab13]** If you still haven't had your fill, the RFCJ Recipe Archive includes kreplach with spinach and with shiitake mushrooms. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab14]**

As Hoshanah Rabah draws to a close – and before things get a bit wild on Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah – we wish family and friends special greetings that hearken back to Rosh Hashanah: have a gutten kvittel (Yiddish) or Pitka Tava (Aramaic). Literally, may you merit "a good note" of God's judgment. **[http://bit.ly/hoshrab15]**

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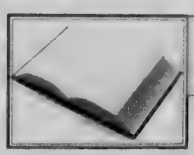
Wear your Judaism

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler



Rabbinic Reflections

Quebec's government recently released its proposed "Charter of Quebec Values." According to reports, this law would ban public employees from wearing kippot, turbans and other religious symbols. Most political commentators have explained that the PQ party is seeking to win the next election through divisive identity politics. This is deplorable.

As Jews, we must ask what this means to us as members of Canadian society. What is today absurd tomorrow may be taken for granted. Many of us are aware of the norms is Spain and Sweden, where without laws requiring they do so, Jews refrain from publicly identifying themselves. They wear hats or remove their kippot when in public.

A charter of values like this has two effects. It rallies those who have fear for those who are different, and it besets those who are different with a fear of being different. Even if this charter is never enacted – the proposal itself affects us as a minority. Sikh, Muslims, and Jews are less likely to identify themselves because of this hateful approach to minority culture.

I would like to propose a counter-offensive. If we are to defend ourselves, we must find ways (even outside Quebec) to proclaim that we are proud of what makes us different. We should champion the kippah and other forms of distinct Jewish dress – for both Jewish men and women.

Yet, in order to do so, we must understand why it is that the kippah is worn. Now, it may come as a surprise to many, but a kippah is never mentioned in the Torah, and it is not described as an obligation in the Talmud. Why then do we wear it?

The Talmud (Shabbat 156b) relates a story: A woman was told by astrologers that her son would become a thief. To prevent this from happening, she insisted that he always cover his head, to remind him of God's presence and instil within him the fear of heaven. Once, while sitting under a neighbour's palm tree, his head covering fell off. He was suddenly overcome by an urge to eat a date from the tree. It was then that he realized the effect that wearing a kippah had on him.

We wear the kippah to be aware of God. We do so not as an obligation – rather, we do so to achieve a special cognition. We take a mundane non-holy material and imbue it with meaning. A simple textile upon our heads becomes a reminder of God's presence in our lives.

The claim that the crucifix that hangs in Quebec's national assembly is a mere cultural symbol cynically takes what Christians have taken for generations as holy and makes it mundane. By contrast, our tradition takes that which is mundane and makes it a means of divine awareness and holiness.

As we conclude the yom tov season, let us find ways to imbue our lives with holiness. Let us recognize that God does not reside in our synagogues alone. God is everywhere that we let Him in – everywhere that we acknowledge His presence.

Wear your Judaism, and wear it with pride.

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler is spiritual leader of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in Toronto.

What's missing from PJ Library

From the Bimah
Rabbi Catharine Clark

For congregational rabbis, every Shabbat is "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day." Considering that my daughter, Naomi, is two years old and cannot object (yet!) to going to shul, my "mom-self" and my "rabbi-self" are usually in complete agreement.

But rumblings of dissent make themselves heard when I read the books in Naomi's PJ Library to her. PJ Library is a project of the Harold Greenspoon Foundation, in partnership with local Jewish communities. As a subscriber, Naomi receives a free book each month.

As a mom, I love PJ Library. I love it because Naomi loves the books. Many selections, such as *Nosh Schlep Schluff: BabYiddish* by Laurel Snyder and *When It's Purim* by Edie Stoltz Zolkower, feature excellent rhythm and rhyme, two adorable qualities in children's books.

Bright and engaging illustrations add to the appeal of other books, most particularly *Thank You, Trees* by Gail Langer Karwoski and Marilyn E. Gootman, and I am always amused by the interest Naomi shows in *Where is Baby's Dreidel*, a "lift-the-flap" book by Karen Katz.

I love PJ library also because it makes parenting easier. A few of the books, such as *Good Night Israel* by Mark Jasper and Anne Rosen and *Goodnight Sh'ma* by Jacqueline Jules, are about going to sleep, a beloved theme in children's books for reasons obvious to any parent of a toddler. A new book arrives each month, too, never mind that I have not had time to order anything off Amazon, let alone go to Chapters to select a book to add to our evening repertoire.

As a rabbi, however, my feelings about PJ Library are mixed. Judaism is the structure and content of my life, not an exercise in nostalgia. The books in Naomi's PJ Library lean more toward the latter. *Sunrise, Sunset* with lyrics by Sheldon Harnick and music by Jerry Bock, is the worst offender in this category. The words are lifted straight from *Fiddler on the Roof*. In the illustrations, by Ian Schoenherr, Tzeitel and Motel grow into courtship, chupah, and new parenthood under Tevye's watchful but benevolent eye.

Sunrise, Sunset would be a perfect PJ Library selection for families in an idealized 19th-century shtetl, but Naomi and her fellow two-year-olds will need to create their vibrant Jewish lives in 21st-century cities and suburbs.

Another problem is that the books can be pareve. Judaism at its best poses a challenge to secular culture, an opportunity missed by *Thank You For Me!*, by Rick Recht. The book promotes the worthy value of expressing gratitude, but the blessings for which the little-boy protagonist is grateful are exemplified by his words, "Thank you for the faith I have in myself." A belief in the value, even sovereignty, of self is already well-promoted in secular culture. A truer Jewish value to encourage would be humility before God or the importance of community.

PJ Library's website states, "Foremost early-childhood educators and children's literature experts choose our age-appropriate book and music list." The word "Jewish" should appear in this statement. Incorporating input as well from individuals with depth and texture to their Jewish lives would put my "mom-self" and my "rabbi-self" back in complete agreement.

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Was I being tested on Yom Kippur?

Susan Rumack
Special to The CJN

Was Eliyahu, the prophet Elijah, wandering the Streets of Toronto Erev Yom Kippur? Did I show up as less than righteous?

Surrounded by family, I sit in the front pew as the cantor leads the congregation in the holiest of prayers on the most spiritually reflective night of this Jewish year 5774. Little do I know then that by the end of this inwardly reflective Erev Yom Kippur Shabbat evening, I will be challenged to take an even harder look at how I "walk my talk"!

During *Kol Nidrei* and throughout the evening, I ask myself, "How did I show up for my fellow man in the past year? What will I do better in the upcoming year? Will I be tested? How and how soon?"

Services end, two of my oldest friends and I are the last to leave, locking the synagogue doors behind us. The power of the past few hours lingers. As we bid the security guard good night, a youngish man with a backpack approaches from the dark street asking if one of my companions is the rabbi. No, is the answer. Then the young man tells us that he is Jewish and homeless, with nowhere to sleep. My companion apologizes, saying he cannot give him a bed and suggests he return in the morning to speak to the rabbi. My whole body freezes, as I remind him that the young man has nowhere to sleep tonight! Again the young man is shooed away with, "Come back tomorrow." He graciously wishes us Shanah Tovah and moves off down the street.

Guest Voice

Susan Rumack

My world is spinning. Had *I* just allowed a Jewish man with nowhere to sleep on Erev Yom Kippur to disappear into the chilly night? What about all the legends of ordinary women and men opening their hearts to others in need, especially on holy days? What of Eliyahu and his endless quest for the righteous among us? Closer to home, what about all the food bank donations in the basement of the shul and reminders of the Out of the Cold programs? And what of the request from the bimah, only moments earlier, for tzedakah?

Yes, I know all the "right" thoughts… he could be a scammer or a con man, a murderer, a thief or a psycho. Or couldn't he just as easily be a Jewish man in need of help?

I did nothing! I could have asked for the story that brought him to this tiny shul on this night of all nights, but I didn't. I could have offered to get him to a hostel, and pay for lodgings for a night or two, but I didn't. I could have called Toronto's Referral Centre for the locations of available free beds, but didn't. I could have asked if he was hungry and taken him to a nearby restaurant for a good meal but I didn't. Instead, as part of a group, I turned him away on the only night of the year that we ourselves beg our Creator to write us into the Book of Life for one more year *and* to forgive our human failings.

If this was a test, I failed. We were a group of three. We each had our individual reasons. Perhaps we have been scammed before. It was late. We were tired. It was dark and this was a stranger.

The questions I ask myself are: "How long would it have taken to ask a few questions or make a few phone calls? How deep was our individual intrinsic distrust of the story we didn't even ask to hear?"

If this wasn't a test, we callously allowed one of our own to be alone, cold and abandoned when he asked us to step up.

If this was a test, Eliyahu was denied and is still wandering the earth, specifically the streets of Toronto, looking for righteous men and women.

What have I personally learned after a sleepless night? I allowed an old pattern of behaviour to override my natural inclination to respond to a call for help. In recent years, this old behaviour of allowing others to make my decisions has been sidelined, but obviously not eradicated. This is the last time I will ever allow another person to override my sense of right or wrong. In the future, regardless of who I am with, I will speak up and do what, in my heart, I know to be the right thing for me. At the very least, I could have asked for his story and then chosen my actions, but I didn't even ask. Is the lesson that we should ask? Is the lesson that I must strive to maintain my neshamah (soul)?

Erev Yom Kippur 5774: I am ashamed and vow that this will never happen again. The phone number for the Toronto Referral Centre (416-338-4766) is now in my phone, and so is 211 for emergency advice on social services in any city in North America.

To the young man, whoever you are, I am sorry I failed you, please forgive me. To Eliyahu, I hope you did find your righteous man or woman this night of all nights.

Susan Rumack is a resident of Toronto.

WE USUALLY EAT *IN* THE SUKKAH

Students at the Miriam Robbins Chabad Hebrew School in Mississauga had fun creating an edible sukkah as part of their lesson about Sukkot. Here Ayden Goldberg is seen with an edible sukkah.

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Two Canadians killed in terrorist attack

Continued from page 1

"This time, the story is not about Israel," she told the *New York Times*.

The spokesperson told the *Times* that the ArtCaffe, which is located on the ground floor, is popular with foreigners.

Two Canadians died in the attack, while four Americans were injured, according to the U.S. State Department.

On Monday, Canadian officials were investigating reports a 24-year-old Ontario man was among the attackers.

Al Shabab said the attack was revenge for Kenya's military operations in Somalia that began nearly two years ago, according to the *Times*.

Yariv Kedar – who has been living in Nairobi for the past seven years and is the vice-chairman of Amiran Kenya Ltd., an Israeli agriculture company based in Nairobi – was inside the Westgate mall when the attack began and told *Israel Hayom*, "All of a sudden I heard the sounds of large explosions and shooting from every direction. A group of motorcyclists were at the entrance to the mall and started shooting wildly toward the entrance."

Kedar, 53, was holding a business meeting with a Kenyan local at one of the mall's cafés. Westgate mall has four Israeli-owned restaurants, each employing Israelis.

Kedar told *Ynet* news that he and his Israeli co-worker hid his passport and work papers identifying him as Israeli while trying to avoid kidnap or worse.

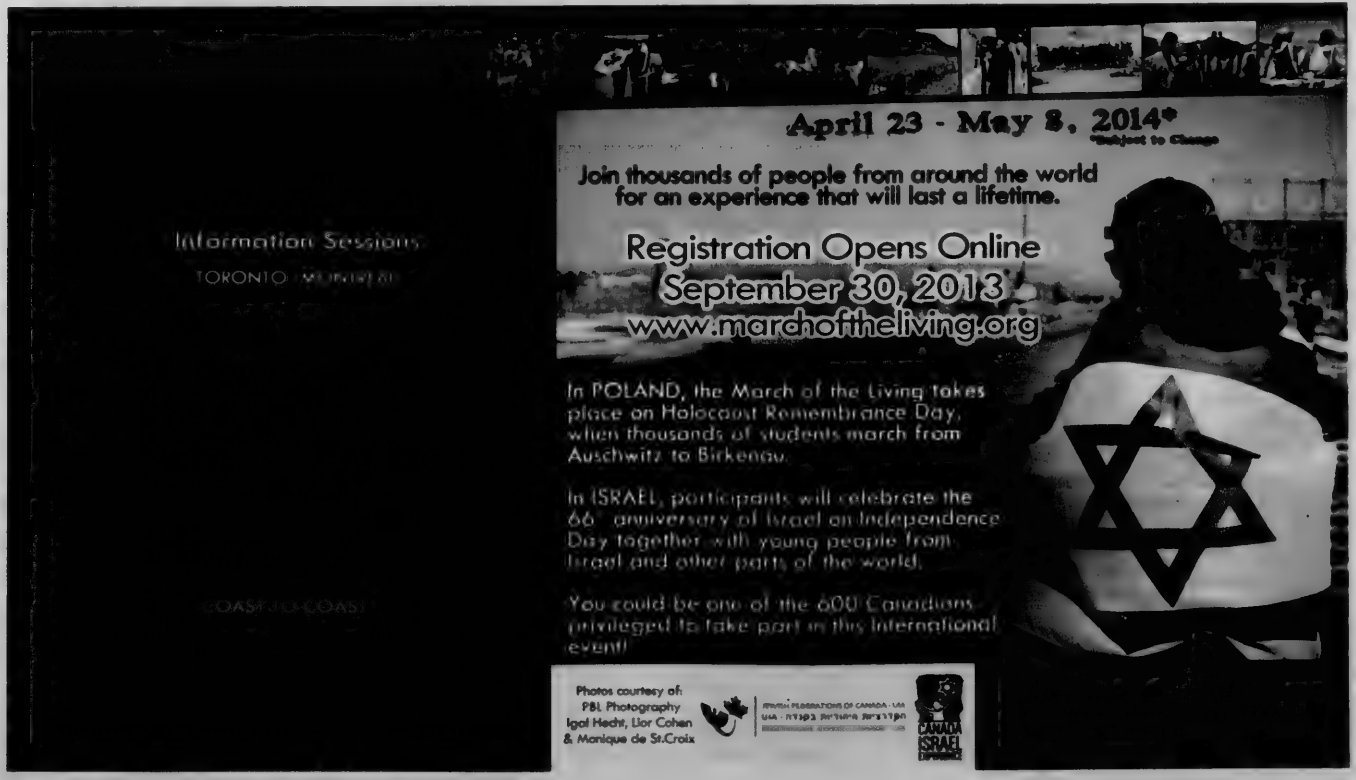
"The entire time I was thinking of how to get myself out of that hell," Kedar said.

"I understood it was a terrorist attack and not a robbery, and I decided to hide my Israeli identity – documents, driver's licence, passport, ID, etc. I managed to call several senior Israeli representatives with my cellphone and tell them what was happening."

Islamist terrorists attacked an Israeli-owned hotel in Kenya in 2002, and three Israelis were among the 13 casualties. Four years earlier, an Al Qaeda attack killed more than 200 people and destroyed the Nairobi-based American embassy.

With files from jns.org.

The Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, site of a terror attack over the weekend.
[Wikimedia Commons photo]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CANADA ISRAEL

Hebron house resettlement ordered after killing

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — In the wake of the killing of an IDF soldier by a Palestinian sniper in Hebron Sunday night, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered the immediate resettlement of Beit Hamachpela, a building near the West Bank city's Tomb of Patriarchs which was previously boarded up by order of the Defense Ministry.

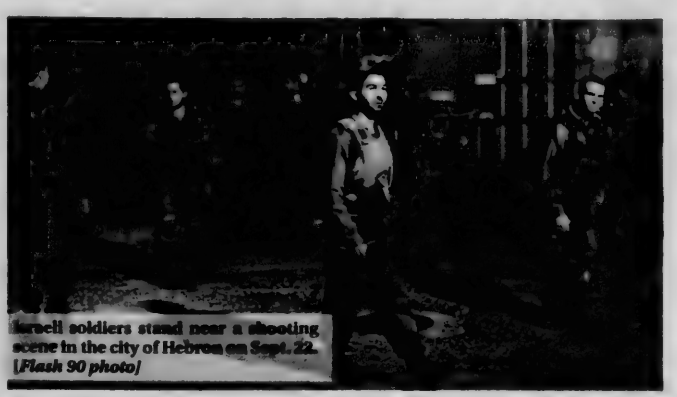
Sgt. Gal Gabriel Kobi, 20, from Tirat HaCarmel was shot in the neck at an IDF checkpoint near the Tomb of the Patriarchs and succumbed to his wounds in Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Center.

"Those who try to uproot us from Hebron, the city of our forefathers, will only achieve the opposite," said Netanyahu in a statement. "We will continue to fight terrorism with one hand, and strengthen settlements with the other."

An Israeli source in Hebron had said earlier in the evening that the city's Jewish community was pressuring politicians to approve the resettlement of Beit Hamachpela. The building made headlines in late March 2012 after settlers made a clandestine move into the building.

At the time settlers produced paperwork showing that the building was purchased from local Palestinians, but the Civil Administration and the Defense Ministry demanded the eviction of the occupants. In July, a military appeals committee ruled that the disputed building was indeed legally purchased and there was no reason to prevent the Israelis from living in it.

Sunday's incident, the second killing of an IDF soldier by Palestinians in the past several days, came amid U.S.-led peace efforts, which resumed in July after a nearly three-year break in negotiations. On Sept. 20, Sgt. Tomer Hazan, 20, was lured to a village near Qalqilya in the West Bank by 42-year-old Nidal Amar, who admitted to the Israel Security Agency that he kidnapped and killed him in the hope of trading the corpse for his brother's release from Israeli prison.



Israeli soldiers stand near a shooting scene in the city of Hebron on Sept. 22. *(Flash 90 photo)*

Washington condemned the killing of the soldiers and called on all parties to denounce the slayings.

"Such violence and terror are unacceptable, and undermine efforts to establish the positive atmosphere the parties need to progress in peace negotiations," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said in an emailed statement.

As part of the renewed talks, Israel agreed to release more than 100 long-term Palestinian terror convicts from its jails, in four phases. A first phase of the releases went ahead last month, and another is due shortly.

The West Bank settlers' Yesha Council called on the government to cease talks with the Palestinian Authority immediately, and stop releasing the Palestinian terrorists.

Environmental Minister Amir Peretz (Hatnua) argued, however, that negotiations are the best response to extremists from either side, and said that what he called the attempt by right-wing radicals to take advantage of the pain of Kobi's family ought to be condemned.

European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton responded to Kobi's death Sunday, saying, "The EU regrets the loss of life, urges for maximum restraint and reiterates its call to all parties to refrain from actions that could undermine the negotiation process and the prospects of peace."

Despite calls by the U.S. to denounce the incidents, the Palestinian Authority's foreign minister said Monday that the slaying of two Israeli soldiers by Palestinians in separate incidents in as many days should not influence peace negotiations. The statement marked the only official comment from Palestinian officials on the issue, which noticeably refrained from condemning the killings.

"This is no reason to shake off the requirements of the peace [process] in any way," Riyad al-Malki told the *Ma'an* news agency on Monday.

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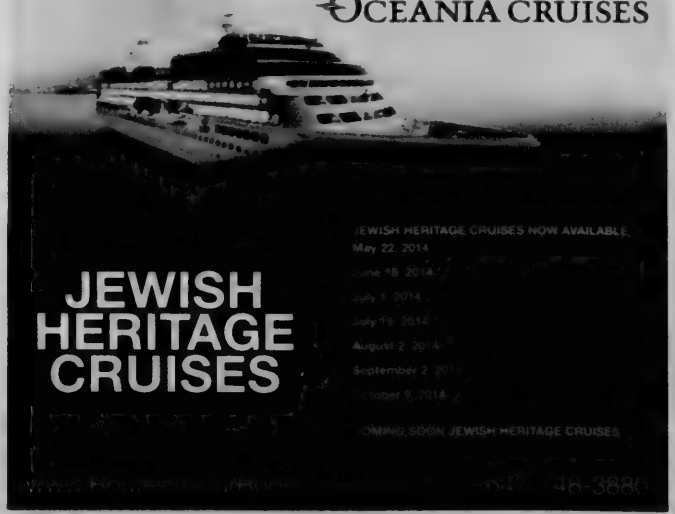


Palestinian father denounces son

Avi Issacharoff
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — The father of a Palestinian man who confessed to kidnapping and killing an unarmed IDF soldier in the West Bank over the weekend expressed shock and disgust over his son's actions Sunday, saying he would kill his offspring if he could.

"I am telling you this from the bottom of my heart... if the military would today give me an M-16 (assault rifle), I would go and shoot my son in the head," Abdullah Amar told *The Times of Israel*.

Tomer Hazan's murder took place in the Palestinian village of Beit Amin, where Nidal Amar's family lives.

On Sept. 21, Nidal Amar, 42, was apprehended by Israeli security forces, who were searching for Hazan. Nidal Amar admitted to Israel Security Agency agents that he lured Hazan, a Bat Yam native, to the village on Sept. 20 before killing him as part of a plan to use his body as a bargaining chip for his brother's release from an Israeli jail.

The Amar family compound is only about 40 metres away from the West Bank security barrier and the outermost houses of the Sha'arei Tikva settlement. Hazan, 20, was killed in a field nearby. His body was thrown into a well.

Nidal Amar's father, shaken and distraught, made it clear that he did not support his son's actions.

"I and all my family, from the youngest to the eldest, condemn the murder of a man who came here without a weapon," he said Sunday. "I could never imagine that Nidal would cause harm to anyone."

TimesofIsrael.com

Festival aims to put Jewish art on the map

Ben Sales
JTA

JERUSALEM — The reader opened with a recitation of Psalm 48 followed by a contemporary poem before yielding the floor to five male dancers, all wearing the standard haredi Orthodox uniform of black pants and white button-down shirt. One had bushy earlocks, but no yarmulke.

So began the inaugural Jerusalem Biennale, a six-week contemporary art festival that launched this week and will run through the end of October.

Seeking to combine the best in Jewish and contemporary art, all of the pieces on display — from oversize worry beads bearing words like "Iran" and "militant Islam" to an installation of a Shabbat dinner table — share a single goal: To show that Jewish art reaches far beyond the kiddush cups and menorahs available in synagogue gift shops.

> ***'Not your grandmother's challah covers'***

"We wanted an event that maps out what exists today in common between the contemporary art world and the Jewish world," said Ram Ozeri, the event's organizer. "I am interested in where the world of Jewish content comes out through art. Because it's a dominant ingredient in Israeli identity, it doesn't make sense that it will have no expression."

Exhibiting in five Jerusalem locations and including works by more than 50 artists, the festival aims to serve as a proving ground for emerging Jewish artists and as an opportunity for more established but still unknown artists to reach a wide audience.

Ozeri is hoping the debut biennale is the first step in a recurring and larger undertaking.

Ken Goldman, a Memphis-born multimedia artist who lives on Kibbutz Shluchot in northern Israel, called the festival "not your grandmother's challah covers."

"It's a chance to get in on the ground," said Goldman, 53. "We're a very small community of modern artists dealing with Jewish subjects. It's a chance to meet the world, show our stuff. I want to have one foot here and one foot there, and be straddling that edge."

Like many of the works in the festival, Goldman's piece – a photograph of his arm with the deep imprint of tfillin straps along with the biblical quote "You shall bind them as a sign" – deals explicitly with religious ritual.

Many of the works in another exhibit, at the Heichal Shlomo synagogue, explore the meanings of key phrases in the Torah or abstract concepts like divine holiness.

"It was fun imagining in my head what the rabbis would look like," said Jessica Deutsch, 22, the youngest artist featured at the festival.

Deutsch is exhibiting a series of nine drawings depicting the first two chapters of the Jewish ethical tract Pirkei Avot.

"In my heart I just consider myself Jewish," she said. "Projects in my sketchbook will reflect what I'm learning."

The biennale's best claim to prestige in the contemporary art world comes from Tobi Kahn, a well-regarded New York-based artist who has been featured in a range of museums over a three-decade career. For the festival, he contributed "Urah VI," a Rothko-esque painting with solid-colour squares meant to evoke the gemstone breastplate of the ancient Israelite high priest.

Another exhibit features Kahn's "Saphyr," a wooden table with a compartmentalized tray holding 49 small sculptures — an innovative way to count the Omer, the 49-day period between Passover and Shavuot.

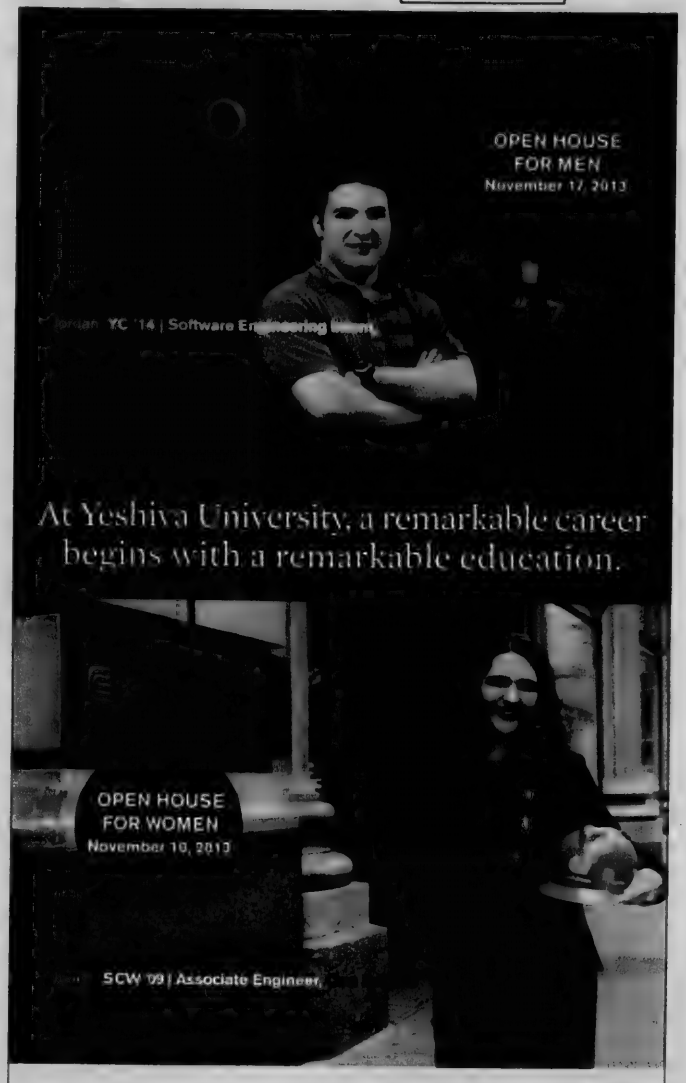
"The most interesting thing for me in Judaism is time," Kahn said. "I'm intrigued by what time means, the whole Jewish law of when Shabbat starts. I'm thrilled to be part of an exhibit that's opening its doors to many types of Jewish understanding."

While the exhibits feature a range of media and deal with a wide spectrum of Jewish topics, Ronit Steinberg, a professor of modern Jewish art at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, said the festival risks drawing an exclusively Jewish audience.

"It needs to be marketed so that it isn't provincial and closed," Steinberg said. "We know that there's a danger when you define an exhibit under a certain religion. We need to persuade people to come see this just as art."

While he understands that the festival will not soon attain the reputation of famous biennales like those in Venice and Berlin, Ozeri hopes over time it will at least become synonymous with the cutting edge of Jewish art.

"Jerusalem is trying to compete with New York and Berlin and Liverpool in Western art, and it can't really put up a fight," Ozeri said. "Jerusalem can become an art centre if it uses its comparative advantage."



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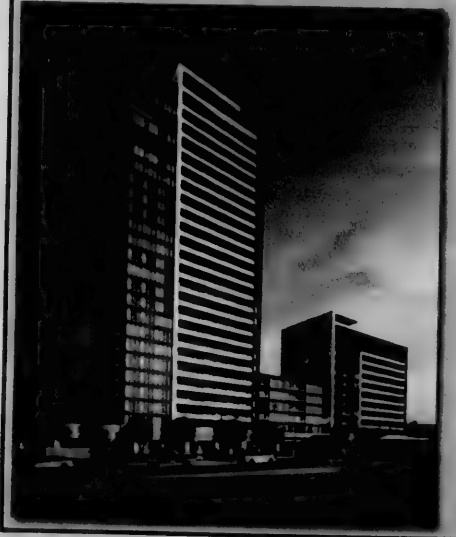

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Pillar of strength for the Toronto Blue Jays

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

Just over two years ago, Kevin Pillar was a college senior, playing Division II baseball in California. Today, he's the centre fielder for the Toronto Blue Jays.

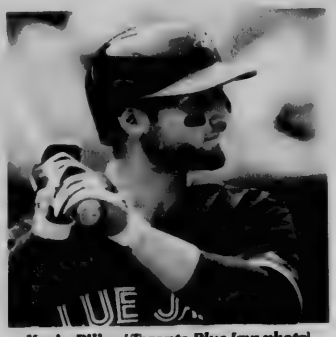
The Jewish outfielder, who was called up from Toronto's AAA affiliate in Buffalo on Aug. 14, has loved the Major League Baseball experience so far.

"It's everything I thought it would be and more," said Pillar, who grew up in West Hills, Calif., the son of a Jewish mother and Christian father. "You have this thought as to what it would be like, but it doesn't compare once you get here.

"You're playing in big league stadiums in front of 40,000 people in first-class accommodations. It's been everything I thought, plus a lot more."

Pillar was inserted into the lineup immediately upon arrival, but struggled at the plate, going hitless in his first five games.

"I wouldn't say it concerned [me], but it was definitely something I was thinking about, because it was something where I worked so hard to get to this position since I was a little kid," said Pillar, who stands six-



Kevin Pillar [*Toronto Blue Jays photo*]

feet tall and weighs 200 pounds.

"Just to get that first hit, it's something every player coming up wants to get out of the way so they can get back to playing."

In the second game of an Aug. 20 day-night double-header against the New York Yankees, and with his family in the stands, Pillar led off the third inning with a single up the middle off starter Phil Hughes.

"It took a little longer than I would have hoped, but getting it at Yankee Stadium and getting it with my parents there was pretty special," he said.

Pillar's parents came up from California, where the outfielder had been a three-sport star in high school.

Though Pillar said his household growing up was "never super religious either way," he did have a bar mitzvah.

"Growing up, we just celebrated pretty much all of the holidays," Pillar said. "Both of my parents aren't very religious, but my grandparents are, so we did it more out of respect for them."

As a youngster, Pillar became a big fan of Toronto's last Jewish outfielder.

"Shawn Green was one of my favourites when he played in Los Angeles," he said. "He was one of the guys I looked up to, not because he was Jewish, just because he was a good person, a good player, and he happened to play for the Dodgers."

Pillar went to nearby Cal State-Dominguez Hills to play NCAA baseball, where he made national headlines by setting a Division II record with a 54-game hitting streak.

Despite the streak, Pillar wasn't drafted by the Blue Jays until the 32nd round in 2011.

Toronto sent him to their rookie league affiliate in Bluefield, W.Va., where he played alongside Jewish ballplayer Ian Kadish.

"He's actually one of my good friends now," Pillar said of the right-handed pitcher.

Since that first pro season, Pillar has begun a quick ascension to the major leagues.

In 2012, he hit .322, finishing the year with the high-A Dunedin Blue Jays.

He began this season with the AA New Hampshire Fisher Cats, but was promoted to AAA in June after some strong play.

When Blue Jays centre-fielder Colby Rasmus was placed on the disabled list, Pillar was the one to get the call.

"I figured I would maybe get a chance to come up in September after my season in Buffalo," Pillar said.

"But being here and playing what I felt was pretty solid, I figured I wouldn't be [sent down to the minors] with [outfielder Jose] Bautista and Rasmus still out."

That will give Pillar the rest of the season to try and prove he's ready to be a major leaguer. In 68 at-bats in 25 games, he was hitting a modest .176.

Pillar is already looking towards next season. "I really want to show the organization, teammates and coaches that I belong here, and hopefully, I can make the opening day roster and be a part of this team," he said.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Lang, Morris Abraham	Sept. 2/13	
Kott, Bernard	Sept. 4/13	14 Medalist Rd
Sabbah, Ruth	Sept. 5/13	150 Ramblewood Ln.
Engel, Andrew	Sept. 5/13	
Birken, Dorothy	Sept. 5/13	718 Sheppard Ave W.
Rubinger, Dr. Morel	Sept. 5/13	330 Spadina Road
Reznik, Alisa	Sept. 6/13	Private
Stillman, Edith	Sept. 6/13	131 Torresdale Ave
Zaslavsky, Natan	Sept. 6/13	Private
Simon, Samuel	Sept. 7/13	Private
Rosenberger, David P.	Sept. 7/13	Private
Mandelbaum, Kaila	Sept. 10/13	29 Sultana Avenue
Weisbeker, Rosa	Sept. 11/13	128 Rosedale Heights Dr
Kendall, Beatrice	Sept. 13/13	Private
Swartz, Frederick A.	Sept. 13/13	407 Walmer Road
Cohen, Allan	Sept. 13/13	8 Coral Harbour Cres
Wolfman, Eve	Sept. 6/13	2121 Bathurst St
Veffer, Meyer Max	Sept. 13/13	

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

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Harry Goldstein	Sep 3/13	85 Skymark Drive
Margaret Dunn	Sep 4/13	10 Senlac Road
Verne Chelin	Sep 5/13	7 Pearwood Cres
Jean Edson	Sep 3/13	1101 Leslie Street
Esther Gartner	Sep 4/13	1420 Glengarry Ave
Jack Berkley	Sep 7/13	2245 Lawrence Ave. W.
Samuel Huberman	Sep 7/13	3560 Bathurst St
Claire Kates	Sep 8/13	640 Grace Street
Ruth Goldbloom	Sep 8/13	120 Promenade Cir.
Gerry Pearlson	Sep 8/13	147 Elder Street
Mel Wolff	Sep 10/13	83 Abbeywood Trail
Margaret Linzon	Sep 11/13	85 Skymark Drive
Lorne Bender	Sep 11/13	3138 Bayview Ave.
Anne Rogal	Sep 11/13	19 Lower Village Gate
Mary Applebaum	Sep 13/13	989 Eglinton Ave. W.
Octay Asadov	Sep 13/13	274 Golden Orchard Rd.
Malcah Sufrin	Sep 12/13	25 George Street
Helen Simpson	Sep 15/13	3560 Bathurst St.
Dr. Sydney Taylor	Sep 13/13	4 Sulgrave Cres

ב"ה

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Stacey Baer ז"ל

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Love, Mom, Dad and Jean

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Russian community partners in entrepreneur program

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

If you catch an episode of *Dragon's Den*, you'll see would-be entrepreneurs pitch an idea for a can't-miss product to a group of skeptical business investors.

It makes for good TV, but there are plenty of intermediate steps that have to be taken before most entrepreneurs are ready to succeed in business. Enter the York Entrepreneurship Development Institute (YEDInstitute), which recently kicked off its own version of *Dragon's Den*, in co-operation with several partners, but with an educational and mentoring component thrown in.

Marat Ressin

The new program is designed to provide would-be entrepreneurs with the business acumen necessary to make their ideas financially viable. It goes beyond the financing stage to include an educational one, designed to give the ideas-people the real-world skills necessary to make their concepts work. At the end of the day, there's still the opportunity to pitch the product to a panel of investors with money burning a hole in their pockets.

The YEDInstitute kicked off its first session recently at the Schulich Executive Education Centre at York University. On hand to mark the occasion were Marat Ressin, founder of the YEDInstitute, Anindya Mittra, senior manager of the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), Rabbi Mendel Zaltzman, head of program development at the Jewish Russian Community Centre of Ontario (JRCC), as well as MPs and local dignitaries.

The YEDInstitute is a collaboration of the Schulich Executive Education Centre, the JRCC, 3V Communications and the BDC.

"YEDInstitute hopes to graduate ventures, including non-profits, that will have a positive social impact for the Toronto and York Region communities, as well as the Canadian economy at large," said Dana Ayrapetyan, YEDInstitute's project director.

The program is conceived as a way to help budding entrepreneurs acquire the skills they need to make a success of their ideas, said Rabbi Zaltzman. Candidates go through an extensive interview process to determine whether they have the right stuff to warrant the kind of investment in them that is contemplated by the YEDInstitute. Candidates must not only have an innovative idea for a product, but they're also screened to determine if they possess the human capital to succeed in business, he said.

Once accepted into the program, participants undergo a three-month business education program delivered at the Schulich Executive Education Centre. The evening program will be accompanied by a mentorship program, and in the end, they'll pitch their product to potential investment angels.

Fifteen entrepreneurs – from the commercial and non-profit sectors – have been selected for the inaugural session, with about half coming from the Russian Jewish community. The JRCC advertised the program heavily and many candidates came forward, Rabbi Zaltzman said.

Ressin, the Russian-born founder of the YEDInstitute, said he approached the JRCC and "asked Rabbi Zaltzman to support this because it's a good way to make the world better."

A member and supporter of the JRCC, Ressin said that while living in Russia he had volunteered with PresenTense, a largely volunteer-run organization that attempts to foster social entrepreneurs with the goal of revitalizing Jewish communities. It operates in Russia, Israel and the United States.

With his expertise in turning around floundering small businesses, Ressin thought the YEDInstitute could combine the best of both worlds – fostering social responsibility in commercial entrepreneurs while educating social entrepreneurs in how to operate on a sound financial basis.

"The goal of the project is to create a new model for the startup accelerator," said Ayrapetyan.

The Toronto program will see business entrepreneurs rubbing shoulders with equally talented people whose ideas are geared to charitable non-profits. The influences should flow both ways, Rabbi Zaltzman suggested.

The variety of ideas presented by applicants was impressive, he continued. They spanned fields as diverse as health and wellness, energy and the environment, arts and culture, technology, leisure and tourism, electrical engineering and rehabilitation.

Rabbi Mendel Zaltzman

Rabbi Zaltzman said there were plenty of applicants from the Russian Jewish community. Today's young Russians are far different than the earlier waves of immigrants, who were "an intellectual community," but not necessarily ready to try their hands at business.

"Younger Russians have the potential that wasn't there before," he said.

Russian Jewish community leaders "want us to provide services that we haven't in the past," he continued. "That is, get people into business at a high level. In doing so, "We're creating the leaders of the next generation."

Organizers were pleasantly surprised when they received 125 applications for the 15 available spots, said Ressin.

"It was great for the first time."

At the end of the first three-month session, participants will make a pitch for up to $500,000 in funding.

Ultimately, it's hoped there will be two sessions a year accommodating 20 people at a time. There are also plans to expand to other Canadian schools, Ressin said.

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Reading a new Torah at the new year

Reviewed by
Norman Ravvin

The Five Books of Moses.
Robert Alter
Norton

The High Holidays synagogue services offer an annual re-encounter with two key texts from the Hebrew Bible – the story of Abraham's binding of Isaac on a mountain in Moriah, and the opening of Genesis depicting Creation. Each synagogue denomination prayer book presents its own version of these, in a variety of translations, but synagogue-goers, if they remain with a congregation for decades, will see the same rendering of the biblical Hebrew again and again. Some siddurim provide a form of scholarly context in footnotes, and there is always the possibility that a rabbi's sermon will approach these readings in surprising ways.

Robert Alter's *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* views these texts in a fresh light, by experimenting with a different rendering in English and via explanatory notes with unusual expansiveness. Alter, a professor of Hebrew and comparative literature at the University of California, Berkeley, has devoted a good portion of his scholarly energy to re-translating the Jewish biblical canon while treating it to his own idiosyncratic presentation of the Bible as literary art. Earlier projects include *The David Story* and *The Book of Psalms*, the latter being a provocative effort to reclaim Psalms from their familiar, one might say Christianized, context.

Alter's translation counters the effect of translations that downplay the original character of Hebrew poetry and cultural context. In the case of the Psalms, Alter would have us remember their use in the ritual life of the Jerusalem Temple, and the fact that they were once sung to music, though our knowledge of the instruments on which that music was played is scant.

Reading Alter on the Psalms is eye-opening and offers detailed consideration of the context and language in which the poems were written. But there is in Alter's translation enough odd, even willfully strange, language that readers may not be entirely convinced that his revision of the Psalms should offer the last word on how to read and become intimate with them today.

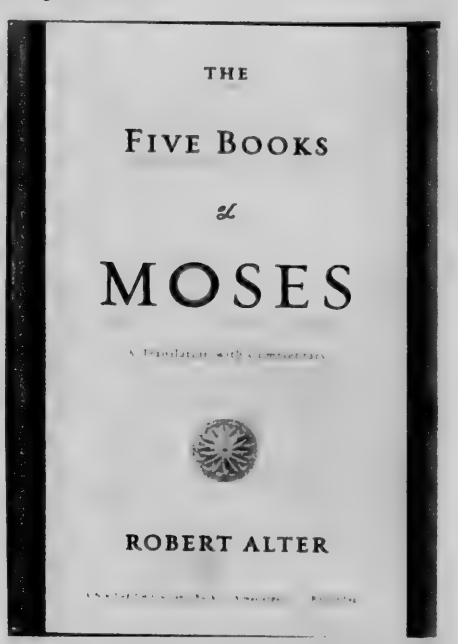
This is not the case with his *Five Books of Moses*, which utterly entertains, convinces and edifies. Once again, translation is key to Alter's goals, as he insists on attentiveness to the sound and structure of biblical Hebrew, to word choice, repetition, the use of dialogue and the presence in the text of contradictory and even unintelligible elements. Alter's rendering of the Torah may not seem as aggressively different as did his Psalms, but this may arise from the fact that more stridently Christianized rendering of Psalms have become dominant in our popular culture.

A glance at what Alter does with the beginning of the Creation story is revealing: "When God began to create heaven and earth, and the earth then was welter and waste and darkness over the deep and God's breath hovering over the waters, God said, 'Let there be light.'" Gone is the conventional notion of God's "spirit" reflected in the "face" of the water; the motif of "welter and waste" replaces the more common "unformed and void" and is closer to the unusual Hebrew words "*tohu wabohu*."

The middle section of this verse is reshaped as a long Whitmanian line calling for sustained breath to maintain the line's rhythm. These shifts change a great deal. Imagery, the idea of the divine and the way the words must be uttered are all addressed anew.

In the chapter presenting the would-be sacrifice of Isaac, translation is not so pointedly revisionary. But Alter's commentary on this difficult story opens both midrashic and original possibilities for understanding the motivation and outcome of Abraham's actions. In this, Alter teases out what might be understood to be divine motivation and human reaction.

In his introduction to Genesis, Alter highlights aspects of the text that we may not consider as we encounter it being read from a synagogue bimah. He argues that Genesis strives to "make clear that procreation, far from being an automatic biological process, is fraught with dangers, and is constantly under the threat of being deflected or cut off. Abraham must live long years with the seeming mockery of a divine promise of numberless offspring as he and his wife advance childless into hoary old age. Near the end of the book, Jacob's whole family fears it may perish in the great famine, and Joseph must assure his brothers that God has sent him ahead of them to Egypt in order to sustain life. Genesis begins with the making of heaven and earth and all life, and ends with the image of a mummy – Joseph's – in a coffin."



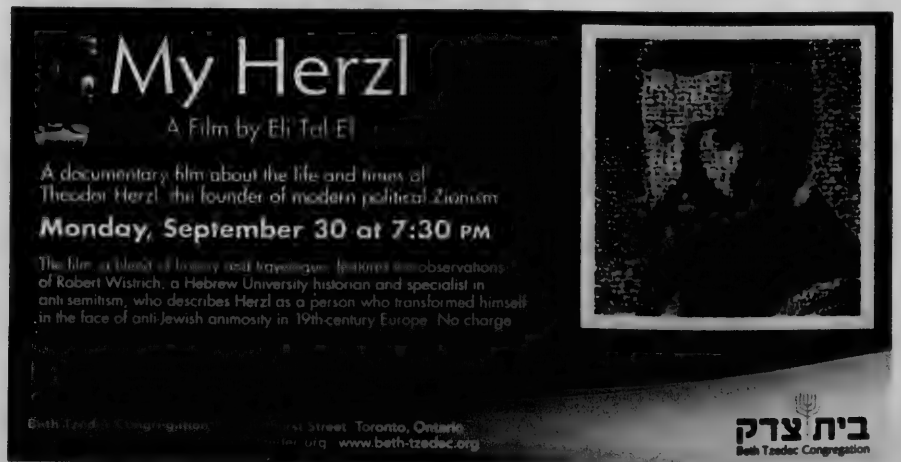
Alter wants us to recognize how a family history reflects "larger, universal history," as well as the way that the patriarchal stories connect with the "wider reach of known cultures." In these characteristics he sees great similarity between the Bible and such literary masterpieces as Shakespeare's plays and Greek tragic drama.

In his detailed commentary, Alter concentrates on how literary facets of the Bible further its goals. He points to the symmetry of the Joseph story; to the way that important figures' first utterances reveal their character and motive; to the way that key motifs recur, linking disparate parts of the text; and he highlights the way that action and dialogue dramatize and energize narrative.

Alter's approach tempts the reader to go back to theatre and film renderings of biblical stories to see how much was made of such serendipitous material by dramatists and screenwriters. Surely Alter's Esau, with his order to Jacob to serve him up "some of this red red stuff, for I am famished," would lead a casting director straight to a mid-career Gérard Depardieu.

Alter's translation renders the Bible new in uncanny ways, as it highlights how much of what is familiar in earlier translations demands revoicing and even a share of patient relearning. As Alter reconsiders "the Torah as literary expression," he insists on a return to Hebrew sources, a conservative approach whose outcome is a radical rethinking of how we read and take pleasure in the Torah.

Norman Ravvin's recent novel is The Joyful Child *(Gaspereau). His other fiction includes the novel* Lola by Night *and the story collection* Sex, Skyscrapers, and Standard Yiddish.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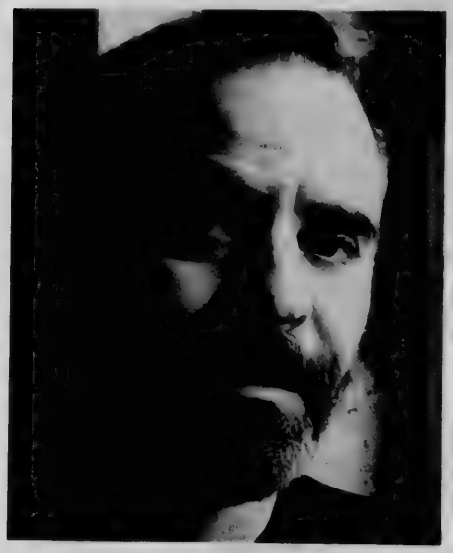
Literary success bittersweet after author's death

Barbara Silverstein
Special to the CJN

Love, Dishonor, Marry, Die, Cherish, Perish (Doubleday Canada), David Rakoff's first novel, has been garnering glowing reviews and the book has been on the New York Times bestseller list since mid-July.

But this literary triumph is bittersweet. Rakoff died of cancer in New York City last summer at the age of 47. The launch of his new book took place just weeks before his first yahrzeit in mid-August.

The Montreal-born Rakoff, an essayist, visual artist and actor, was known for his wit and humour.



David Rakoff

His three earlier books of essays, all published by Doubleday, *Half Empty* (2010), *Don't Get Too Comfortable* (2005) and *Fraud* (2001) were all best sellers. He was also a regular contributor to the radio show *This American Life.*

But the author chartered new literary territory with his final work: *Love*, which is entirely written in rhyming couplets.

This American epic spans much of the 20th century. The main characters face challenges that reflect the zeitgeist of their time. For instance, Helen a career girl in the '50s, endures a failed affair with her married boss.

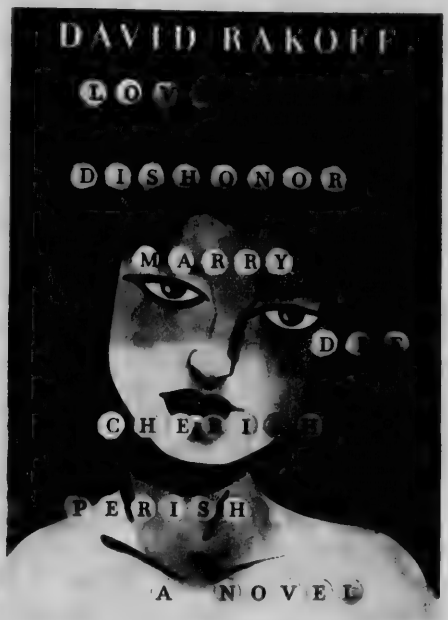
Her cousin Clifford hides his homosexuality when he comes of age in the '40s, but he experiences sexual freedom in San Francisco during the '60s and '70s.

Rakoff deftly covers the Great Depression, the post-war era, the '60s, the AIDS epidemic and the crass materialism of the last few decades.

Although his characters experience pain and disillusionment, *Love* is an entertaining read. The poignancy of narrative is laced with humour and wit.

Ruth Rakoff-Bellman says the novel is rooted in her brother's view of the world as a "harsh place," but she stresses that his modus operandi was "to combat the grim realities of life" through his art and acts of kindness. "He was generous to a fault."

She notes that pitching a novel written in rhyme was not an easy sell; the publisher was not sure how to market such a book. So her brother hatched a deal. He signed a two-book contract.



He agreed to do a book of essays after he completed his novel, but died before that project got underway.

He had also planned to do all the illustrations for *Love*, but he grew too sick, Rakoff-Bellman says. "He was so immensely talented. He could draw. He could write. He could act."

She describes her younger brother as a gifted child. "He was smart from the get-go. David was more that bright. He was on a different plane.

"He had an oral, visual and photographic memory. He would hear lines of dialogue and remember them. He had a stage presence, even as a young boy."

Rakoff, the youngest of three, grew up in Toronto. His South African-born parents, Gina and Vivian Rakoff are both physicians, though careers in the arts do run in his family. His older brother, Simon, is a comedian and Rakoff-Bellman is the author of *When My World was Very Small* (Random House 2010).

Rakoff went to Bialik Hebrew Day School and Forest Hill Collegiate Institute. After he graduated from Columbia University he remained in New York City.

With his U.S. residency came the challenges of health insurance and immigration, which is why Rakoff, despite his literary success, held on to his day jobs in publishing, Rakoff-Bellman explains.

"It took him many years before he had the courage to become a full-time writer."

Rakoff maintained close ties with his family. There were many trips back and forth between Toronto and New York, but the visits to her brother's adopted city during the last year were extremely painful, Rakoff-Bellman recalls.

His family was with him during the last two weeks of his life. They returned last October for a memorial and in July they came back for the launch of *Love*.

Rakoff-Bellman confesses that she was worried about the sales campaign for the book. "One of the realities of marketing is that an author goes on book tours.

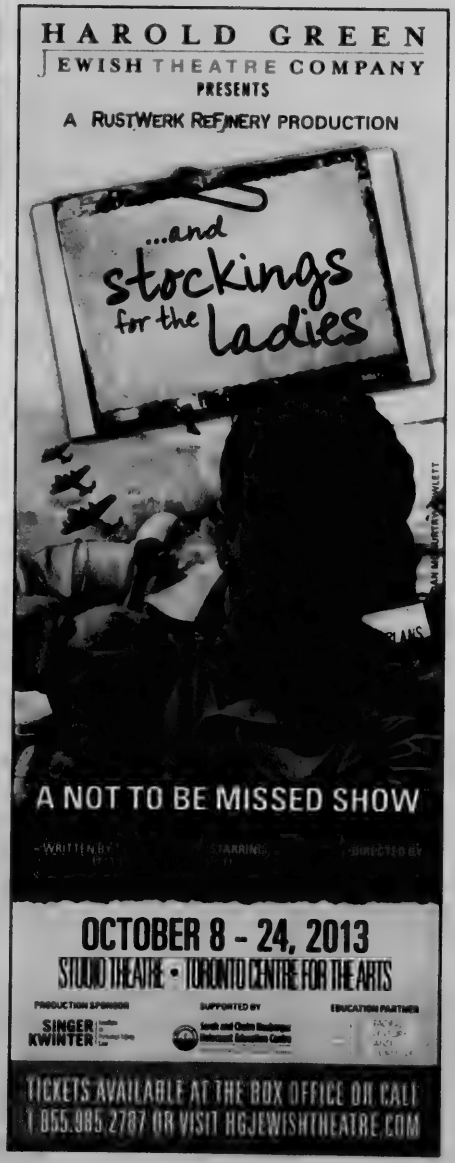
"As brilliant a writer as David was, he was equally as good as a reader and performer. The conundrum was, how to market a book not promoted by him."

She participated in the unusual launch of her brother's book last month. On July 17 a large group gathered in the upstairs room of the Barnes and Noble bookstore at Union Square, "Davey's old stomping ground."

Love was read out loud by 62 people, among them, Rakoff-Bellman, her father and her older brother.

"The room holds 400 people. Between the audience and the readers the place was packed. And there were another 200 people who were turned away.

"I was worried that it wouldn't come across well. But the whole thing was riveting. It was a special event and really a beautiful tribute. But celebrating this achievement without Davey there was bittersweet."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UJA SCREENS *MY HERZL* WITH DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

UJA at the Movies presents two exclusive screenings of *My Herzl*, an intimate and unexpected documentary film about the private life of **Theodor Herzl**. The film was a Canada-Israel co-production produced by Toronto lawyer **David Matlow** and directed by his Israeli brother-in-law, **Eli Tal-El**. Matlow is known for his extraordinary 2,500-item Herzl collection.

Tal-El will be on hand at both screenings for a Q&A. First screening is at Cineplex Cinemas Empress Walk, 5095 Yonge St., Oct. 7, 7 p.m. with Q&A in English. Second screening is at Joseph & Wolf Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St., Oct. 8, 7 p.m. with Q&A in Hebrew. Tickets $10. 416-631-5707 or GGomperts@ujafed.org

• • •

Poetry Launch: Toronto Workmen's Circle presents the launch of *Exile at Last: Selected Poems*, the recently published book of poetry by the late renowned Yiddish Canadian writer and Lodz Ghetto survivor **Chava Rosenfarb**. The program, presented by the author's daughter **Dr. Goldie Morgentaler**, includes readings in English and Yiddish by poet **Ken Sherman** and Yiddishist **Rivka Augenfeld**, and singing by composer **Henri Oppenheim**. Oct. 6, 2 p.m. at 471 Lawrence Ave. W., just east of Bathurst. Free admission, refreshments.

• • •

Theatre Notes

• The late **Jonathan Larson**, the playwright-composer behind the Broadway blockbuster *Rent*, also wrote an autobiographical stage musical behind his creation of *Rent. Tick, Tick . . . Boom!* tells the story of a young composer on the brink of turning 30 and falling into oblivion, but still trying to write the great American musical. Angelwalk Theatre Company's production of *Tick, Tick . . . Boom!* is in previews from Sept. 21 and runs Sept. 25 to Oct. 6 at Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre. www.angelwalk.ca, 1-855-985-2787.

• Alumnae Theatre Company presents *The Underpants*, a very sexy and bawdy play by **Steve Martin**, based on a 1910 German farce by **Carl Sternheim**. The premise is that a housewife becomes an instant celebrity after she accidentally loses her underpants in public. The director is **Ginette Mohr** and the cast includes **Michael Gordin Shore** as Benjamin Cohen. Continues at Alumnae Theatre, 70 Berkeley St. (SW corner at Adelaide) until Oct. 5. 416-364-4170, www.alumnaetheatre.com

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Canadian folk music artist **Jerry Gray** was a "red diaper baby" growing up in Toronto's left-wing Jewish community in the mid-20th century, and went on to co-found **The Travellers** and perform with **Pete Seeger, Theodore Bikel, Harry Belafonte, Gordon Lightfoot** and many others. Gray shares songs and stories from his many travels in a musical lecture for The Yiddish Vinkl. Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. Oct. 3, noon. $18 brunch. Please RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca

• Artist **Cathy McPherson** and writer **Paul Weinberg** present a talk and photo presentation on their recent travels to Berlin, Warsaw and Krakow. 918 Bathurst St., Oct. 6, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Bagels and coffee provided. Presented by United Jewish People's Order of Toronto. www.ujpo.org, 416-789-5502.

• Pianist-vocalist **Fern Lindzon** performs at the Courtyard Cafe, Windsor Arms Hotel, 18 St. Thomas St. on Oct. 13, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Adults $50, children $35. 416-971-9666. Lindzon and saxophonist **Chris Gale** perform a "jazz party" at the Home Smith Bar of the Old Mill Inn, 21 Old Mill Rd. Oct. 17, 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. $20 food/drink minimum. 416-236-2641. Lindzon and trio are at Chalkers Pub, 247 Marlee Ave., on Saturday Oct. 19, 6 to 9 p.m. $10 cover.

• • •

At the Galleries: The Toronto International Film Festival and the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MOCCA) present *David Cronenberg: Transformation*, a show curated by **Noah Cowan** and **David Liss**, both of MOCCA. The exhibit features works by six artists who display Cronenberg's preoccupation with the biological and the psychological. 952 Queen St. W, 416-395-0067. The exhibit is part of a larger Cronenberg Project that also includes *David Cronenberg: Through the Eyes*, featuring works by **Louise Bourgeois, Charles Burns, William S. Burroughs, Alex Colville, John Massey, Mark Prent** and **John Scott,** and curated by Cronenberg himself. Opens at MOCCA Nov. 2, on view until Dec. 29.

Gabi Epstein starts in theatre fundraiser

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company kicks off its seventh season with a fundraising production of *Funny Girl in Concert* starring Toronto-based actress and singer Gabi Epstein in the title role.

Directed by HGJTC's co-artistic director Avery Saltzman, with conductor Mark Camilleri as musical director, the one-night-only event will take place Sept. 30.

Epstein, who will portray the late comedian Fanny Brice (1891-1951), made famous by Barbra Streisand in the movie *Funny Girl*, will be reunited with actor Shawn Wright, who will take on the role of Brice's husband, Nicky Arnstein. The two performed in HGJTC's show *To Life*, for which Epstein was nominated for a Dora Award. Also performing at the *Funny Girl* fundraiser are Eddie Glen, Victor Young, Theresa Tova and Paula Wilson, to name a few.

"In this concert version, we are reading the whole script and singing the whole score, but instead of doing it with costumes and sets, there are going to be five microphones and music stands," Epstein explained. "We will be in character the whole time, but singing the songs and reading the lines just by standing at the microphones.

"These musical concerts aren't done for every single show, but generally they're done for the shows that are quite expensive to set up. Also, the show has to have enough meat in the music and the book to stand up to just being read without all the glitz and glam. A 25-piece orchestra will be our set."

Epstein said Brice was most famous for being the first to introduce people to Yiddish comedy and bring it to the vaudeville world, adding that she grew to become one of the most famous vaudevillians of her day. Ironically, Epstein's first professional acting job was in the one-woman show *Fanny Brice* for Smile Theatre, written by Lezlie Wade. So she's well versed on the life of this funny lady both on and off the stage.

"The story is really beautiful. In the play, they really highlight her real life, which wasn't nearly as glamorous as her life on the stage," Epstein said. "She went through some really trying times with her husband and what was going on in the world at that time. It has a tragic clown element to it. One of my favourite things about the show is that she is a consummate performer, so she will put away everything that is going on in her life and be that consummate performer on the stage, but nothing is really ever as it seems.

"This will be a fun night for the Jewish theatre, and they are like a second family to me. It will be really exciting, and I hope they get tons of people out and that they make a ton of money because I would love to continue working for them. I think they are great for this city."

Epstein has graced a number of stages since her first opportunity to portray Fanny Brice. Her work has taken her to New York, Orlando, Montreal, Ottawa and the Caribbean. She has also made her mark in the cabaret world, both in Canada and in the United States, including in New York City's Algonquin Hotel and at the cabaret hotspot Don't Tell Mama, for which the *Times Square Chronicles* named her the Top Cabaret Act of 2012.

Gabi Epstein

Epstein will also be performing in HGJTC's *There's No Business Like Irving Berlin* on Nov. 3, alongside Arlene Duncan, Sterling Jarvis, Sheila McCarthy and Camilla Scott, in a show directed once again by Saltzman.

For more information on Gabi Epstein, including her 2010 debut CD Show Off, *go to www.gabiepstein.com.*

Funny Girl in Concert – *Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m. at the George Weston Concert hall at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. For tickets, call 1-855-985-2787 or visit www.hgjewishtheatre.com.*

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HEEBONICS

Filmmaker gave up the lab to make movies

30–Love wins best Canadian short at Montreal film fest

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Emerging Canadian filmmaker Richard Stark's new comedy *30-Love* beat out 35 other Canadian films, winning best Canadian short film at the 2013 Montreal World Film Festival in early September. Stark wrote, directed and produced the project.

Considering that the award-winning filmmaker almost never even pursued his dreams of a film career, he's come quite a long way. Before attending the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts, he studied biology at the University of Toronto. After a year of conducting research in a lab, he realized his heart really lay in what he loved to do since he was a child: telling stories through films.

"I made my first movie when I was 11, and ever since then, I've been in love with making movies," said Stark, now 37. "I'm in love with storytelling."

Richard Stark accepts the best Canadian short film award at the 2013 Montreal World Film Festival.

Growing up in Toronto, Stark always heard stories about his grandparents' escape from Nazi-occupied eastern Europe. "Their stories really inspired me and gave me a natural love for storytelling."

Indeed, the premiere of his film at the Montreal World Film Festival was especially exciting for Stark's 87-year-old grandmother, who dreamed of seeing her grandson's name on the big screen, and it marked the first time in 37 years that she returned to Montreal, the city her family immigrated to after escaping Europe.

"I feel touched to have my family return to the city that took them in, a place that represented freedom and a new life," he said.

It isn't the first time that Stark's work has gotten recognition. His film *Afternoon Tea*, about a religious Indian man who disowned his daughter for marrying outside her culture and finally meets his grandson for the first time, played at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2011 and received a 2012 Leo Award nomination for best screenwriting in a short drama. Another one of his comedies, *An Innocent Family*, also won him best director at the 2011 Los Angeles Comedy Festival.

Whether he's making comedies or dramatic films, there's one thing that ties all of them together: his commitment to telling stories about real issues while portraying them in a natural way.

"I like realistic performances, stories about people and what makes them tick and what motivates them," Stark said. "I like telling human stories."

His latest film, *30-Love*, was based on his own experiences growing up in Toronto. The film tells the story of a man, Bruce, who drags his wife, Jodi, to join a fancy country club, even though they can't really afford it. To be eligible, they must impress two of the club's board members, an obnoxious, wealthy couple who have everything that Bruce thinks he wants.

The couples play a "friendly" tennis game, which quickly escalates into something much more serious than that, as Bruce realizes his marriage is crumbling and is more important than a tennis match or fancy country clubs.

"The ritzy tennis club in *30-Love* was inspired by similar clubs that I was occasionally invited to as a guest in Toronto. Tennis can be an ego-driven sport, but when you add status and money to the equation, you can get some very pretentious personalities that I wanted to capture in a comedy," said Stark.

"My goal was to have the actors truthfully and realistically capture this kind of snobbish behaviour."

Winning the award earlier this month was extremely exciting for Stark, and a validation of his hard work.

"It was so exciting, to be in front of hundreds of people and accept the award… to have that recognition that audiences love the movie and really enjoyed it," he said. "When I'm making a movie, I'm making it for the audience."

Stark is already at work on new projects. He's written a psychological drama about a South Asian girl who commits suicide, and her traditional parents blame their other daughter for what happened. It's currently being filmed in Vancouver.

He's also working on his first feature film directorial debut for his script *My Son's Big Bris*, which was a finalist at the 2011 Los Angeles Comedy Festival.

"I'm hoping that this prestigious award will bring attention to that feature script, which is similar in tone," Stark said.

After all, there's nothing he loves doing more than making movies.

"I've never looked back, I've always loved it. I hope I'll be doing it for the rest of my life."

Deadline reminder: Sept. 30 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 10. Oct. 7 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 17. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Wednesday, Sept. 25

NEW TO TWO

New to two, songs and games for babies and toddlers, meets at Shaar Shalom Synagogue, 10 a.m. Call 905-889-4975.

Friday, Sept. 27

ANTI-SEMITISM TODAY

Keith Landy, former president of Canadian Jewish Congress, discusses "Anti-Semitism in Europe Today," 9 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

Sunday, Sept. 29

TIKVAH TOTS

Tikvah Tots, singing and games for children ages one to three, resumes today, 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah. Call 416-221-3433

YARD SALE

City Shul holds a yard sale, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Christie Pits Park. Proceeds to City Shul's tikkun olam fund. www.cityshul.com.

SINGLES IN THE PARK

Singles in the Park (for single, divorced and widowed Jewish men and women over 50) is holding a walk around Unionville. Meet at Crosby Memorial Community Centre Car Park, 11 a.m. RSVP, **Deanna Samuels** 905-883-2963, or email debbygo@yahoo.com.

Monday, Sept. 30

MY HERZL

Beth Tzedec Congregation shows the film *My Herzl*, 7:30 p.m.

BREAST CANCER MONTH

Felicia Marie Knaul discusses her book *Beauty Without the Breast*, about her journey with breast cancer and the BRCA gene at Holy Blossom Temple, 7:30 p.m. For more information, call **Elana Fehler** 416-789-3291.

WORSHIP IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

Rabbi Eva Goldfinger discusses "Polytheism and Goddess Worship in Ancient Israel and Mesopotamia," 7 p.m., Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 18 Wynford Dr. $20. 416-385-3910.

SISTERHOOD TORAH STUDY

Shaar Shalom Synagogue's Sisterhood meets Mondays at 10 a.m. to study Torah with **Rabbi Ira Berman.**

Tuesday, Oct. 1

ESCAPE, EVASION & REVENGE

Marc Stevens discusses "Escape, Evasion and Revenge: The true story of a German Jewish RAF pilot," noon at Temple Har Zion.

WE ARE HERE

We Are Here, a film about the rebirth of Jewish life in Poland, will be shown at 6:30 p.m. at Bloor Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W. Two people featured in the film, Warsaw Ghetto survivor **Irena Likierman** and **Ania Ciszewska,** will be at the screening. Sponsored by the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada and the Consulate General of Poland. RSVP to toronto.rsvp@msz.gov.il.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Paul Saltzman discusses his relationship with a KKK Klansman at Beth Tikvah's Lunch and Learn series. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

LIVING MIDRASH

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner teaches "Living Midrash," 12:30 p.m., until June 24, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. www.mekorot.ca or 416-877-2050.

Wednesday, Oct. 2

FAMILY FEUDS IN THE BIBLE

Hana Werner discusses "Family Feuds in the Bible," dessert, 1 p.m., lecture at 1:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

FOUR NIGHTS AT THE OPERA

Joseph Gilbert discusses opera and Jewish involvement in opera in a 4-session program, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433.

JEWISH GENEALOGY

James F.S. Thomson discusses "Toronto's 20th Century History," with the Jewish Genealogical Society, 8 p.m., Temple Sinai. www.jgstoronto.ca.

Thursday, Oct. 3

MINDFULNESS AND STRESS

Janet Murchison discusses "Mindfulness as an Approach to Stress," 6:30 p.m., Community Day Centre for Seniors, (entrance #4), 3560 Bathurst St. RSVP to **Ella Segal**, 416-785-2500, ext. 2108 or esegal@baycrest.org. Respite care and transportation available.

Continued on page 37

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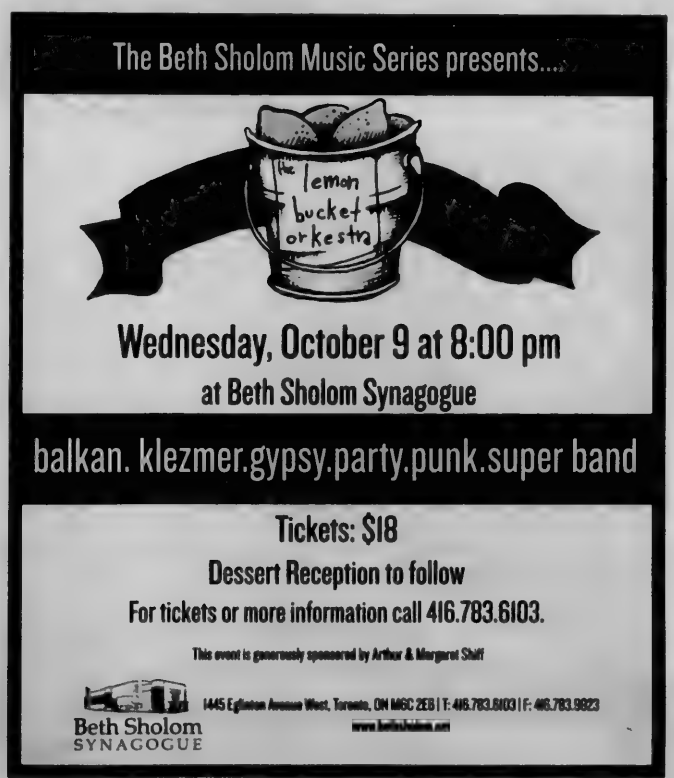
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Continued from page 36

JERRY GRAY

The Yiddish Vinkl presents **Jerry Gray**, accompanied by his banjo, discussing "From the Jewish Folk Choir to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir," noon at the Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 (including lunch). RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

EVA GRAYZEL

Storyteller **Eva Grayzel** discusses, "Rituals Rich With Reward – Family Education Workshop for Parents," 7:30 p.m., Leo Baeck Day School, 501 Arlington Ave. RSVP bgottlieb@leobaeck.ca.

NO PLACE ON EARTH

Beth Sholom Synagogue shows the movie *No Place on Earth*. Minyan at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., movie at 7:45 p.m. $10. RSVP **Rivy** 416-783-6103, ext. 228 or rivy@bethsholom.net.

Other News

HOLOCAUST SUPPORT

Baycrest's Holocaust Resource Program offers support groups for child survivors of the Holocaust and adult children of Holocaust survivors. Group meetings begin in September. Call **Shoshana Yaakobi** 416-785-2500, ext. 2271, or email syaakobi@baycrest.org.

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Are you 15 to 29 years old and looking for work? JVS Toronto can offer you financial support and employers' hiring incentives. Call 416-787-1151.

CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES

Sylvia Warsh teaches creative writing starting Oct. 4, at the Bernard Betel Centre. Call 416-225-2112.

CHAVA ROSENFARB

Goldie Morgentaler presents a new book of poetry by her mother, **Chava Rosenfarb,** Oct. 6, 2 p.m. Readings in English and Yiddish at Workmen's Circle Centre, 471 Lawrence Ave. W.

FOR ISRAEL'S SAKE

JSpace holds a conference on "Raising the Voice of Progressive Zionists in Canada," Oct. 6, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 569 Spadina Ave. (University of Toronto, Koffler Bldg.) Register at www.JSpaceCanada.ca. Email **Nan Weiner** at JSpaceCanada@gmail.com.

UPTOWN CHABAD GALA

Eva Schloss, stepsister of **Anne Frank,** is the keynote speaker at Uptown Chabad's Gala, Oct. 7. Tickets at www.ChabadGala.ca or 416-635-9696.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or www.jfandcs.com. All classes held at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children ages 2-10. Starts Oct. 2.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Oct. 16 at 35 Madison Ave., 2:30 p.m. or Oct. 17, Lipa Green, 7 p.m.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement Group: A 6-session group for those under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group. Offered with the Rabbinical Assembly-Ontario. Starts Oct. 22, Adath Israel Synagogue, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers 60+: A 6-session group for men and women over 60 who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts Oct. 23, 1 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

When You're About to Separate, What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups for bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer,** JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Baycrest Learning Academy for Older Adults is offering courses in partnership with the Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University. Classes start in October. Call **Laura Hogan** at 416-785-2500, ext. 5209 or www.Baycrest.org/LearningAcademy.

Lively Ladies, a new social group for single, widowed or divorced women over 60, is holding a membership luncheon Oct. 6, 12:30 p.m. at Viva Thornhill Woods Retirement Home, 9700 Bathurst St., Thornhill. RSVP **Raizie** 905-707-7377 or **Rosalyn** 905-889-0613.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333, or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors Club. Kosher food, card games. 416-256-1892.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). **Valerie,** 416-395-7881. Monday and Wednesday, mah-jong, Rummikub and dominoes, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Register now for courses, which start first week of October. Oct. 1, **Rachel Levin** discusses "All in the Family – Art lecture" 10 a.m. Oct. 2, **Shlomo Schwartzberg** discusses, "What Makes a Movie Great?" 7 p.m.

Beth Sholom Seniors Group, 416-783-6103, ext. 228. Book review of *My Russian Grandmother and her American Vacuum Cleaner*, Oct. 2, noon. Trip to see *Cirque de la Symphonie*, Oct. 16.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Oct. 6, 12:15 p.m., 60th-anniversary brunch with the **Jordan Klapman Trio.** Oct. 10, 1:30 p.m., **Dr. Kerry Bowman** discusses "Health care, home care, maintaining your quality of life and independence."

Active 55+ Miles Nadal JCC, Joshua Gelber discusses "Aging without aches and pains," Sept. 30, noon. Ongoing fitness classes, call **Colin Blayney** 416-924-6211, ext. 526, or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Now accepting registration for limited spaces for junior and senior kindergarten full-day program, with kosher lunch and snacks, and for nursery program. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4351.

Dr. Jonathan Breslin discusses "Ethics in Health Care: Current Challenges," Oct. 8, 22 and Nov. 5, 1 p.m. To register, call ext. 4235.

Amnon Zohar discusses social and political change in the Middle East, Tuesdays starting Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

Tickets available for *I Love Lucy*, Oct. 30, 2 p.m.

Mah-jong for experienced players, Mondays 1:30 p.m.; Casual Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 p.m.; Folk dancing, Wednesdays, 10 a.m.; Duplicate bridge, Thursdays 12:30 p.m.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Adult choir meets Tuesdays 1 p.m. No experience or sight reading needed. Email music@mnjcc.org.

The Ontario Jewish Archives at 40, photos from the Ontario Jewish Archives are on display at the gallery until Oct. 3.

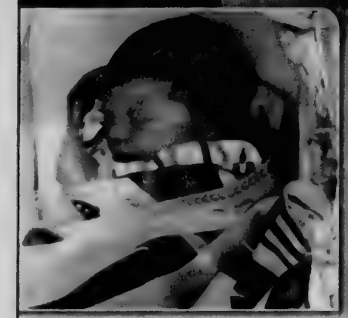
Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

IN THE SUKKAH: Students from Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School created decorations for Mount Sinai Hospital's sukkah. During the holiday, patients, staff and visitors can bring their lunch, enjoy a meal in the sukkah and see the children's art. From left are Sarah, Tyler and Becky.

FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב



Aviva Chaya Nobel-Stern born Sept. 5, 2013 in London, UK, to Robin and David Yehuda. Mazel tov!

Bailey & Kevin Grad are delighted to announce the arrival of Zachary Avery, Aug. 15. Grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins are thrilled.

Happy second birthday Annie Berlin from your CJN friends.

Mazel tov Justin Schwartz on his graduation from the University of Sherbrooke Faculty of Law from his parents, Jeffrey & Janice, and the entire family.

Mazel tov Eitan Aufgang, who celebrated his bar mitzvah at Camp Gesher Aug. 5. His family from Toronto, Montreal, Florida and Israel shared this milestone with him.

Charlie Julian, born May 10 to Dr. Susanna Gallor & Dr. Jennifer Weiner. Welcomed by brother Jake and proud grandparents Myrna & Seymour Weiner.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Always the victim

Dear Ella,

I've recently come to a painful realization. My mom, the person whom I've trusted my entire life – the friend, mentor and parent who taught me right from wrong – is flawed.

I know everyone has problems, but I always pictured my mom with a halo over her head. She consistently said and did the right things, but it seemed like time after time, life just served her a bowl of pits.

This epiphany came to me in one of my lectures, when my psych prof said something that turned on a light bulb in my head.

I finally realized my mom has been playing the victim her entire life and taking me along for the ride.

I don't think she's done this on purpose. She really believes that the entire world has done her wrong. Incident after incident is always someone else's fault.

She divorced my dad when I was young and made me feel like he was always trying to pull one over on her. I never went to camp with my friends because it was his fault. Every time there was an argument between them, it was always my dad's fault, because, as she used to say, "He thinks about himself, before you."

Then she would play the righteous card by saying something like, "It's not his fault, that's just the way his parents raised him." As a result, the relationship I have with my dad has always been strained.

Likewise, the relationship with my relatives on my mom's side became rocky, because one day mom was speaking to them and the next day she wasn't. Of course, it was never anything she did. It was always Auntie Becky's fault for not inviting her somewhere, or she heard through the grapevine that Uncle Arnie told some kind of lie about her.

I have been avoiding her calls and haven't seen her in weeks. I don't know how I'm going to get past this.

Mom has always been a rock for me. I tell her everything and trust her to have my best interests at heart. Now I've come to realize it's her best interests that come first.

Always the Victim

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Always the Victim

There's something called a "victim mentality." There are people who suffer from the belief that they're always morally right and are the victims of an injustice perpetrated against them, through no fault of their own.

People like this rarely see themselves as being responsible for their own choices and are always playing the "poor-me" card. Sometimes they come off as bullies, because they push back too hard.

Your mom has probably been doing this her entire life, possibly since childhood, so this is not going to be easy for her to change or even recognize.

If you have a good relationship, you may be able to communicate your concerns by using concrete examples, but you'd best be ready for an argument. The goal of this communication is not to "fix" her per se, but to plant the seed.

Chances are she'll dismiss your words as nonsense, but once you've put it out there, she can't ignore it.

After your discussion, make sure she understands how her actions have affected you. She needs to restore her self-worth and realize that if something doesn't go her way, it doesn't mean she's a failure, it means she's human.

People who are always victims have no idea how destructive their behaviour is to everyone they're connected to. Their inability to take responsibility for their actions means others have to pick up the pieces, and this can and does ruin relationships. It's a difficult cycle to break, but it's toxic to all if it continues.

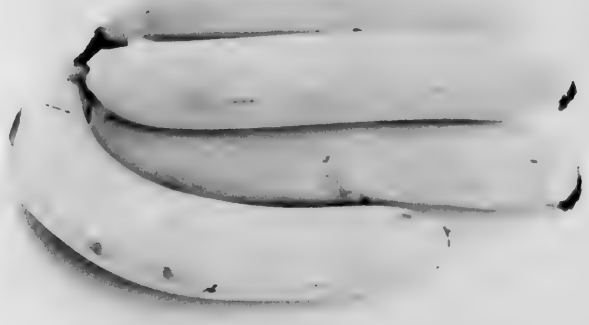
Once your mom has admitted to it, or even accepts the possibility that you may be on to something, she can stop blaming others and accept responsibility for the path her own life has taken.

In the meantime, you need to repair some of the damage this has caused to your relationships with other family members.

Start with your dad and work from there. Create your own bonds and take back some of what you've lost.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Have a banana and boost your energy



Sue Epstein
Special to The CJN

If you want a quick fix for flagging energy levels, there's no better snack than a banana. Containing three natural sugars – sucrose, fructose and glucose – as well as fibre, a banana gives an instant, sustained and substantial boost of energy.

Research has proven that just two bananas provide enough energy for a strenuous, 90-minute workout. No wonder the banana is the number 1 fruit among the world's leading athletes. But energy isn't the only way a banana can help us keep fit.

This is because bananas contain tryptophan, a type of protein that the body converts into serotonin, which is known to make you relax, improve your mood and generally make you feel happier.

GOLDEN BANANA CAKE

A good way to use up overripe bananas, this cake is delicious served warm with vanilla ice cream, although it probably won't last long enough to get cool. It's simple to make, moist and not too sweet. A plus for the busy mother, short on time but wanting to bake treats for the family.

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/8 tsp. baking powder
pinch of baking soda
1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 tbsp. olive oil
3/4 cup sugar
4 large eggs
1 extra-ripe medium banana, peeled and mashed
1 cup chopped pecans, optional

Preheat the oven to 325. Butter an 8-1/2x4-1/2x2-1/2-in. loaf pan. Dust the pan with flour, tapping out the excess.

Sift together the flour, baking powder and baking soda. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, mix together the butter, olive oil and sugar at low speed.

Increase the speed to medium and add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in the mashed banana. Add the flour mixture and mix just until combined. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan, smoothing the top with a spatula. Bake the cake for 55 to 60 minutes, until the top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean.

Cool the cake in the pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Unmould the cake and cool completely on the rack. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for 3 days, 1 week refrigerated or 2 months frozen. Makes 8 servings.

BANANA-STUFFED FRENCH TOAST WITH STREUSEL TOPPING

Wow! This recipe is rich and decadent, but definitely worth the extra trips to the gym. The banana stuffing portion of the recipe will become a staple in your kitchen. It's wonderful to sweeten oatmeal, for example. Great for a weeknight dinner. Delicious even without the streusel topping.

PEACOCK VEGETABLES

2-4 zucchini, cut into ½"strips
2 yellow squash, cut into ½" strips
2 purple onions, cut into 1/8's
2 red peppers, cut into ½" strips
2 yellow peppers, cut into ½" strips
2 green peppers, cut into ½" strips
8 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
4 tbsp. fresh parsley, minced
2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
2 Tbsp. olive oil • 2 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. salt • 1/2 tsp. pepper

Place onions, squash, zucchini, peppers and garlic in a bowl and toss well. Combine parsley, vinegar, oil, oregano, salt and pepper in a jar. Cover tightly and shake well. Pour over vegetables and toss. Spoon vegetable mixture into an ungreased roasting pan. Bake at 425° for 20 min., stirring every 5 min. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Source: "Our Customer's Favourites"

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2 tbsp. plus 1/4 cup unsalted butter
2 tbsp. plus 1/2 cup sugar
2 tbsp. water
2 large ripe bananas, peeled, cut into 1/2-in.-thick rounds
1 1-lb. unsliced loaf challah, ends trimmed, bread cut into 6 slices (each about 1-1/2 in. thick)
2 cups milk (do not use low-fat or nonfat)
6 large eggs
2 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups thinly sliced almonds, toasted
1/4 cup (packed) golden brown sugar
1/4 cup quick-cooking oats
2 tbsp. all purpose flour
maple syrup

Melt 2 tbsp. butter in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add 2 tbsp. sugar and 2 tbsp. water and stir until sugar dissolves. Continue stirring until mixture is foamy, about 2 minutes. Add bananas, cook until tender, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Transfer to small bowl; cool. (Can be prepared 4 hours ahead. Cover and chill.)

Preheat oven to 350. Using small sharp knife, cut 2-in. long slit in 1 side of each bread slice, cutting 3/4 of way through bread and creating pocket that leaves 3 sides of bread intact. Divide banana mixture equally among pockets in bread. Whisk milk, eggs, 1/2 tsp. cinnamon, vanilla and 1/2 cup sugar in large bowl to blend. Pour into large glass baking dish. Place bread in egg mixture and let soak 10 minutes, turning occasionally.

Place almonds in shallow bowl. Carefully remove bread from egg mixture and coat both sides with almonds. Place bread on heavy large baking sheet. Mix brown sugar, oats, flour and remaining 2 tsp. cinnamon in medium bowl. Add remaining 1/4 cup butter and rub in, using fingertips, until moist clumps form. Sprinkle topping over bread.

Bake french toast until topping is golden brown and filling is hot, about 25 minutes. Transfer toast to plates. Serve hot with maple syrup. Makes 6 servings.

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Vets recall trauma of Yom Kippur War

Mira Shefa was only 19 when she was tasked with admitting and comforting the hundreds of dying and injured soldiers who poured into Soroka Medical Center.

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

As the 40th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War approached, it occurred to me that I'd never heard the details of my parents' service as young IDF soldiers during one of the most infamous conflicts in Jewish history.

So when I sat down with them recently for an interview, I was surprised to learn that their experiences were more dramatic – and even traumatic – than I had ever imagined. I also learned that they harbour anger toward Israeli leaders who they say failed them four decades ago.

Special Feature

Mira and Hanan Shefa still struggle to grasp how the Jewish state was caught so off-guard by an Egyptian and Syrian attack, on Oct. 6, 1973, resulting in one of the costliest wars in its history.

The 19-day war began with a surprise attack by Egyptian forces that advanced virtually unopposed across the Bar-Lev Line, a barrier to prevent the Egyptian army from crossing the Suez Canal that was considered to be impenetrable.

As a majority of Israeli soldiers had been released to observe Yom Kippur, the barrier was left scarcely manned.

As a result, in the early hours of the war, Israel suffered hundreds of casualties, and – despite the fact that it won the war – the perception that Israel was invincible following the stunning 1967 Six Day War victory was at best shaken, and at worst, destroyed.

In the months that followed the war, which claimed nearly 2,700 Israeli lives, a commission of inquiry was formed to investigate how then-prime minister Golda Meir and her military intelligence had operated in the days leading up to the conflict.

Excerpts from that commission were released last month, confirming that intelligence failures, coupled with Meir's inexperience and timidity, contributed to the Arab armies' early success.

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Netanyahu tells Obama 'the truth' on Iran

The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was expected to meet with U.S. President Barack Obama on Monday to present an intelligence report stating that Iran has enough enriched uranium to produce a nuclear weapon, according to Britain's *Sunday Times*.

Netanyahu left Saturday night for a four-day visit to the United States, vowing to expose "the truth" in the wake of Iranian President Hasan Rouhani's recent overtures to the United States.

The dossier also states that Iran is developing a nuclear detonator at the Parchin site and conducting ongoing tests of the Shahab-3 ballistic missile, while producing plutonium at another site, Arak, the report said.

Continued on page 26

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara arrive in New York on Saturday. *(Kobi Gideon/GPO photo)*

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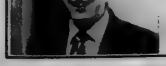

Canadian is White House liaison to U.S. Jews

Please see page 17

Canada cautious about Rouhani's charm offensive — see page 27

CANADA

Travel Record

TORONTO — Despite regional turmoil, Canadian tourism to Israel reached a record high in August 2013, with the arrival of 6,106 travellers, an eight per cent increase over the same period in 2012, the Israel Government Tourist Office said last week. Some 2.3 million travellers from around the world arrived in Israel between January and August 2013, matching last year's record, and a seven per cent increase over 2011.

$5M Health Donation

CALGARY — Edmonton businessman Irving Kipnes and his wife, psychologist Dianne Kipnes, last week donated $5 million to the University of Calagary and the Phoebe and Joan Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases for a new lymphatic imaging suite and to fund new research. The gift stemmed from Dianne's 2009 fight with lymphedema, a chronic infection that causes excessive swelling and is a side effect of some cancer treatments. The couple – who've given millions to health, arts, education and Jewish causes – made the donation after learning the condition affects 60 per cent of cancer patients but isn't well researched.

WORLD

Cda. Extradites Man

JERUSALEM — An Israeli man who fled to Canada in 2003 after being convicted of raping and sexually assaulting a 13-year-old girl was extradited to Israel last week, the Israeli Justice Ministry said. Haim Cohen, now 37, was indicted in Jerusalem in December 2002 and agreed to a plea bargain, but fled the country with his wife and three children before he was sentenced. Israeli police said Cohen, though originally secular, lived as a haredi Jew in Canada. He managed to evade authorities until he was located in 2011 via a tip and finally arrested last April.

Ex-Theatre Mogul Seeks Reinstatement

TORONTO — Laywers for fallen theatre mogul Garth Drabinsky were in Federal Court last week trying to get his Order of Canada membership back after he lost it while serving part of a five-year sentence for fraud.

Garth Drabinsky

Drabinsky, who is on day parole but wasn't in court, wants the decision of the Order's advisory council to be declared unlawful. His lawyers argued the governor general was "misadvised" that he was given equal opportunity to present his case to keep the award, which he received in 1995, Canadian Press reported.

He contends that because he was in jail, he didn't have access to the documents he needed to defend himself when the council wrote to him in the summer of 2012 advising him it was considering removing him from the Order and asked him for submissions.

Drabinsky and business partner Myron Gotlieb were convicted in 2009 for fraud in the accounting at Livent, the live-theatre company they co-founded that went bankrupt as a result of their scheme.

The council responded that it had no obligation to extend the 30 days it gave Drabinsky to respond, and that he submitted a 17-page letter in his defence, which, among other things, noted the award isn't given for good behaviour and that disgraced sprinter Ben Johnson is still a member of the Order.

Jail Time For Threats

PARIS — A man who made death threats against the Jewish school in Toulouse, France, where Mohammed Merah killed four people last year was ordered jailed for a year. Lucien Abdelrhafor, 20, also received an additional year's suspended jail term Sept. 23 for phoning in the threats Sept. 16 to the Ohr Hatorah school. He reportedly told a secretary, "I am Mohammed Merah's cousin and I'm coming over tonight to kill you." The claim was false, French Jewish officials said.

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News

University of Haifa to honour former PM

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Paul Martin has been out of politics for five years, but he still keeps a close watch on international affairs.

The situation in Syria concerns him, particularly whether there is sufficient Western resolve to make Syrian strongman Bashar Assad pay the price for violating "red lines" over his use of chemical weapons.

"Assad has got to see that he can't take these actions without very severe repercussions," the former prime minister stated.

Speaking before the United States and Russia began negotiating a deal to strip Syria of its chemical arsenal, Martin said, "I believe action should be taken and Canada should judge the quality of that action. If the United States and/or France take action, we should support them, diplomatically and politically."

"I don't think we should be standing back here."

Martin, who served as prime minister from 2003 to 2006 as well as nine years as finance minister, was best known for his domestic achievements – taming the deficit, negotiating to address aboriginal issues, passing same sex marriage legislation and pledging billions in federal funds for health care.

Since his retirement, he's also been involved in international issues. He chairs the Congo Basin Forest Fund, which addresses poverty issues in 10 African nations, and he's served as an adviser to the International Monetary Fund.

Later this month, the University of Haifa will confer on Martin the degree of doctor of philosophy (honoris causa) at an event at the Fairmont Hotel. Proceeds from the dinner, to be held Sunday Oct. 20, will establish the Paul Martin Scholarship Fund "for bright, disadvantaged students" at the university.

The dinner is expected to attract 600 people and will mark the kickoff of the campaign to raise funds for the scholarship fund.

"I'm a huge admirer of the university and I have been for a long time," Martin said in a telephone interview from Montreal. "I think in so many ways Haifa [University] represents the principles we all share."

The admiration is mutual. In an email interview from Israel, Amos Shapira, president of the university, said Martin's "values coincide with the values of the University of Haifa... in the advancement of educational excellence, tolerance and entrepreneurship skills."

Martin was chosen for the honour because of his accomplishments in government, particularly in spearheading "the largest increases in Canadian history in the federal government's support for

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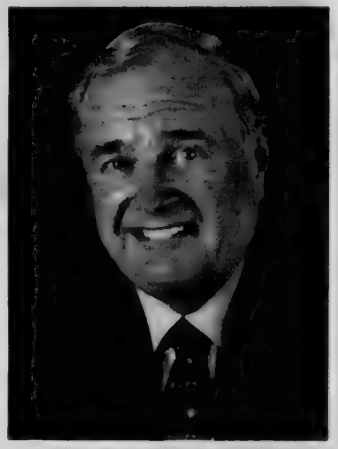

Former Canadian PM Paul Martin

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Rouhani PR blitz masks lies

As Iranian President Hassan Rouhani prepared last week for his appearance before the United Nations, speculation was rampant about whether the dovish signals he had been sending represented a genuine shift in Iranian government attitudes, foremost toward its nuclear program. Or was his new, moderate tone a clever tactic to lure the West into easing the economic sanctions that have been hurting his country?

Rouhani has been involved in what everyone agreed was a "charm offensive" including an extensive interview with NBC's Ann Curry and an opinion piece in the *Washington Post* – just two elements in a well-thought-out campaign to demonstrate to the international community that the corrosive, combative bombast of the previous president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is a thing of the past.

According to Reports
By PAUL MICHAELS

For many, Rouhani's rhetoric has indeed charmed and left them viewing Israel as "hardline" by insisting that Rouhani and Iran are not to be trusted.

In the Sept. 22 *Times of Israel*, columnist Raphael Ahren explained this annoyance: "Iran has never sought – and will never seek – a nuclear weapon, Rouhani promised last week on an American television network, nor does it 'seek war with any country.' These words are music to American ears. If Netanyahu considers them to be utterly disingenuous, and he plainly does, simply saying 'I don't believe him,' or words to that effect, isn't sufficient anymore. Sweet-talking, reasonable-sounding, bereobed Rouhani is a lot tougher to discredit than the Holocaust-denying, gay-bashing, unkempt Ahmadinejad."

Speaking of Holocaust-denial, Curry asked Rouhani directly if he agreed with or repudiated Ahmadinejad's position. Here was the perfect opportunity for Rouhani, who had just sent Rosh Hashanah greetings to "all Jews" to show that he really meant it. Instead he sidestepped the question, saying meekly "I'm not a historian, I'm a politician," as if that excused his refusal to acknowledge one of the world's most-documented facts.

It was perhaps Rouhani's reference to "all Jews" that led Jeffrey Simpson to assume, in his Sept. 23 *Globe and Mail* column, that Rouhani had "sent greetings to Israel." That's taking Rouhani's gesture several steps too far. Rouhani did not make what would have amounted to a hugely important political breakthrough. Like all Iranian leaders, he refuses to recognize Israel, calling it, in the Curry interview, "an occupier and usurper government." (In the Iranian government view, there are Jews who just happen to live in an area of the Middle East that is illegally occupied by Zionists on what is properly Islamic land.)

There are other parts of that interview that merit careful attention when evaluating his truthfulness and sincerity.

Curry repeatedly asked about Iran's military involvement in Syria. Rouhani kept insisting that Iran is only providing "humanitarian" assistance.

Curry was persistent: "It is widely perceived by some governments in the world that Iran is providing more than humanitarian aid in Syria. Can you categorically deny now that Iran is providing military aid to Syria?"

Rouhani (appearing frustrated): "I may again answer the question. But don't you think that you are repeating this question for the third time?"

The evidence is indisputable that Iran's Revolutionary Guard Quds force is deeply involved in Syrian President Bashar Assad's carnage, abetted also by Iran's proxy force, Hezbollah.

At most, Rouhani objects to the use of chemical weapons. Yet, as highly respected Iran analyst Ray Takeyh wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*: "It is not enough for Rouhani to condemn the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Is he prepared to withdraw the Revolutionary Guard contingents that have done much to buttress Assad's brutality?"

The question here is that if, in his charm offensive, Rouhani refuses to repudiate Holocaust denial and lies about the nature of Iran's involvement in Syria, what else – including Iran's nuclear ambitions – is he dissembling about?

Still, a great many people, including many Americans, are war-weary and skeptical about unsuccessful foreign military adventures. They're deeply concerned about their massive domestic budget deficits and high unemployment and, whatever the justified concerns, they want to give diplomacy with Iran a chance.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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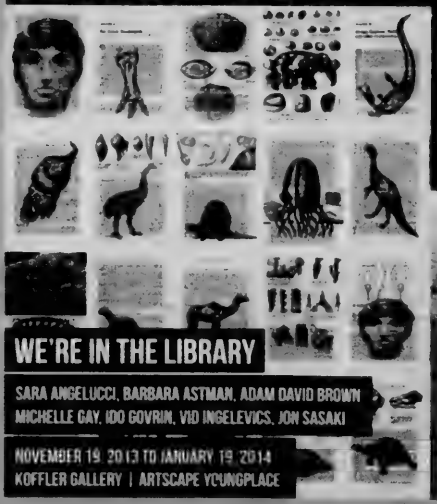

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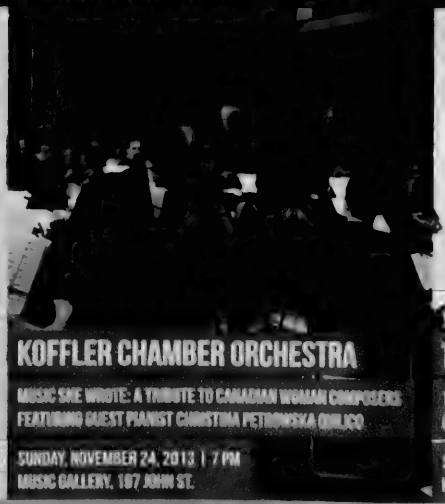

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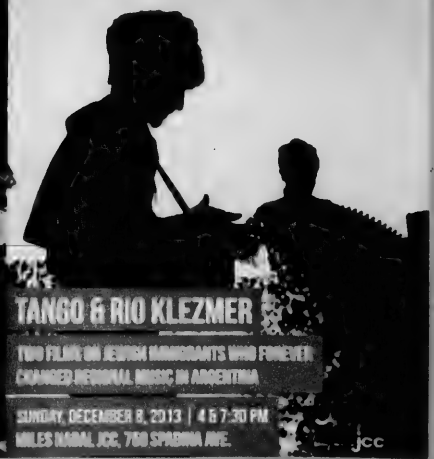

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We can't have it both ways

Jewish life in Canada is thriving. Support for Israel within the political sector frequently prompts descriptions of Canada as "Israel's best friend in the world." Despite the financial challenges, Jewish education across the country is a foundational community priority, with thousands of children enrolled. Philanthropic activity, although changing, is at an all-time high, and interest in our spiritual tradition is experiencing a true renaissance.

Indeed, there's much for which to be grateful. But not all is right. Advocacy challenges take many forms, testing the community's ability and will to confront them. They range from the ongoing initiative in Quebec to assert a zealously secular program to attempts to skew public discourse on, and understanding of, the Arab-Israeli conflict through the promotion of anti-Israel advertisements in the transit system, chronic "Israeli Apartheid Week" and boycott, divestment and sanctions efforts on campuses, attacks on Israel at Pride parades, and a slew of other issues. All of them – individually and collectively – generate frustration, tension, anxiety and, often times, an angry reaction that demands a response. As well they should.

The real question is what kind of response and what set of considerations should inform that response? This is where the Jewish community must make a choice, a serious choice with far-reaching implications. Effective advocacy demands that there can be no half measures, no hybrid approaches that draw from disparate strategic anchors. The binary option is this: undertaking a response that provides immediate, if unsustained emotional satisfaction, or embracing a strategic plan that seeks the long-term, meaningful advancement of the community's interests. There is no middle ground.

This isn't about "turning the other cheek" when Israel's legitimacy is challenged, even when that challenge contains misleading or deceitful vitriol. Rather, it's about understanding who the real targets of our advocacy efforts are and the effective strategies needed to secure their support. It isn't about feeling good or preaching to the converted. It's about exercising influence where it counts and when it counts.

While no one can doubt the sincerity or good intentions of those willing to man the ramparts at anti-Israel rallies, or those who try to out-shout or out-spend those bent on delegitimizing the Jewish state, there's every reason to question the efficacy of that approach. All of our experience suggests that, at best, such efforts only achieve an ephemeral sense of emotional satisfaction. Simply put, these tactics don't work. They don't change opinions, nor discredit our adversaries.

True advocacy is about extending influence and winning support among those not already committed. Effective advocacy is about successful outreach to new sources of support, not providing emotional reassurance to those already persuaded of the righteousness of our cause.

The Canadian Jewish community has something more to celebrate. It has developed an advocacy approach that's evidence-based and empirically tested, whose efficacy has not only been recognized by communities around the world – including Israeli institutions – but has been adopted by them as the foundation of their pro-Jewish, pro-Israel advocacy efforts as well. In facing our current inventory of challenges, we must decide what approach will drive our actions. If we can resist the instinctive temptation to lash out and hit back in favour of a tested, smart and effective strategic plan, we will achieve a great deal. And unlike feeble emotional reactions, that satisfaction will be enduring. *Shimon Fogel*

Dry Bones OP-ED WAR

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Values charter breaks the law

The Parti Québécois' proposed charter of Quebec values, which would forbid state employees from wearing what it calls "ostentatious" head gear, contravenes the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and discriminates against non-Christians ("Jewish groups denounce Quebec values charter," *The CJN*, Sept. 18).

On its website, the Quebec government says the wearing of these "ostentatious" head coverings has an aspect of passive proselytism, which is incompatible with the neutrality of the state. That's gobbledygook. Proselytism by definition means the active attempt to persuade someone to change religions. Has anyone ever heard of someone converting just because they looked at someone else's head gear?

Of course, the crucifix in the National Assembly will remain, as it's not considered a religious symbol, but part of Quebec's Roman Catholic heritage. For that matter, so is the archbishop of Quebec's skullcap.

All this reminds me of the famous quote from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

Something's definitely not kosher in the province of Quebec.

Mordechai Bulun
Montreal

• • •

Charter prevents bias

The article "Jewish groups denounce Quebec values charter" (*The CJN*, Sept. 18) gives a strong impression that just about all the Jewish groups are strongly against the proposed Quebec values charter. Being a Jew by birth, I must belong to one of these groups, but I was never polled about my opinion on this subject.

Despite being an Ashkenazi Jew and even a Holocaust survivor, I disagree with the majority of opinions in this article. If I were dealing with a public service employee and needed a service or decision rendered, if the person belonged to a hostile group – this might include a devout Catholic, Muslim, or even a prominently religious Jew (because I don't wear a kippah) – and was wearing prominently their religious garb (which would tell me they are devoted to it), I would suspect them of having strong negative biases against me.

Employment in a position of influence is not a right, but a privilege. With very few exceptions, there is no universal entitlement to it – especially in Quebec.

Shalom Peres
Verdun, Que.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Keep your eye on arts

Is Bill Gladstone feeling confined by his "Eye On Arts" reporting? He devoted more than half his Sept. 18 column to a "Political Corner," slamming the respected Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East as "propagandistic," insulting its members as "ridiculously simplistic [with a] myopic view" of the region. Then he repeats his Aug. 1 column's serious omission that "relocat[ing] some Palestinians and Bedouins" actually includes forced relocation of tens of thousands of Israeli citizens without their consent.

Pity he misuses his space, presumably with the interim editor's consent, omitting many important events – from the last chance to see outstanding performances of *Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Merchant of Venice* at Stratford, to Itzhak Perlman's upcoming concerts with the Toronto Symphony and a Beth Tikvah lecture series on "Jews and Opera."

Bernard Katz
Toronto

• • •

Arafat wrecked Oslo

Any objective observer would say the Oslo peace accords were wrecked in 2000 by then-Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat ("Twenty years later, debate on Oslo accords rages," *The CJN*, Sept. 18).

At the Camp David talks between then-U.S. president Bill Clinton, then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Arafat, the Palestinians were to get all of Gaza, 97 per cent of the West Bank (with an equivalent swap of Israeli land) and their capital in a shared Jerusalem. It was everything anyone could have dreamed of. But Arafat refused to sign, and he wouldn't make a counter-proposal. The problem was an "end-of-conflict" statement, which would not have left it open for future generations to finally "drive the Jews into the sea."

So, when he should have been building his new state, Arafat started the second intifadah, unleashing suicide bombers on innocent Israeli civilians in hotels, restaurants, universities and buses.

Now, as the two sides are again starting talks, we will soon see who is honourable and who is not. Hopefully, both sides will prove equal to the task.

Len Bennett
Montreal

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Will Norway's government stem anti-Semitism's tide?

Jeffrey F. Barken
JNS.org

Earlier this month, conservative candidates in Norway won landslide elections, deposing the Labour party majority that had ruled for nearly a decade. Many are hopeful the new government will address social intolerance in Norway, including the rampant anti-Semitism affecting a population of nearly 2,000 Jews.

But Manfred Gerstenfeld, an Israeli author who has written extensively on the prejudices facing Norway's Jewish community, is skeptical that Norwegians will be able to forget their prejudices. He uses the phrase "part-time anti-Semitism" to describe common attitudes and to highlight the general public's susceptibility to bias.

"In its origins, Lutheranism promoted Jew hatred," Gerstenfeld told JNS.org, recalling Norway's long history of intolerance. "Norway was the last country in Europe to admit Jews in the mid-19th century."

At the heart of the new conservative coalition stands Erna Solberg, nicknamed "Iron Erna." Elected Sept. 9, she will succeed Jens Stoltenberg and will be Norway's second female prime minister.

Gerstenfeld argues that many discriminatory instincts and old-world anti-Semitic beliefs about Jews still influence perspectives on the modern Jewish community. He cites a study commissioned by the Oslo municipality in 2011 that found one-third of the Jewish children there are harassed physically or verbally at least two or three times a month, and that 38 per cent of Norwegians believe that Israel is a Nazi state.

"I have never heard of such figures before in western Europe," Gerstenfeld said.

Anders Behring Breivik's infamous 2011 terrorist attack confirmed the worst regarding intolerance in Norwegian society. Following the mass shooting at a Worker's Youth League camp that left 69 people dead, the facility was discovered to house vicious anti-Semitic and anti-Israel propaganda. Teenagers participating in the program prior to the attack were routinely subjected to an indoctrinating hate campaign.

Outgoing Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg
[Wikimedia Commons photo]

Biased reporting on Israel has created a poisoned atmosphere in which outrageous political cartoons depicting Jews as Nazis circulate, and boycotts of Israel are common.

"It is widely known that the Norwegian media has been heavily subsidized by the Labour government," Norwegian author Hanne Nabintu Herland told JNS.org.

Herland also confirms the failure of the ousted Labour government to confront the problem of the anti-Semitic indoctrination of youths. "Nothing has been done to de-radicalize the Labour party's youth groups in the aftermath of Breivik," she says.

"Here in Norway, no one has reacted much to that. As far as I know, only one Norwegian, a prominent, internationally acclaimed ship owner and billionaire, Dan Odfjell, wrote an article where he spoke about the problem, but he was heavily attacked for 'slandering our youth groups with horrible words.'"

Thirty survivors who had been indoctrinated with hatred at the camp Breivik attacked became Labour candidates in the recent election.

The current influx of Muslim immigrants to Norway fuels additional anti-Israel sentiment.

"Jews suffer in two ways," Gerstenfeld said. "Some Muslims commit extreme anti-Semitic acts, and there are actions in society against circumcision. The Center Party, a smaller party in the defeated government, is in favor of prohibiting circumcision. The circumcision issue was only raised because of the Muslim presence."

Despite the culture clash, the indoctrination of Norway's youth and deep-seated misconceptions that have made life uncomfortable for Norwegian Jews, many believe the election results spell progress.

"Talk of the town is that the left has taken a tremendous blow," Rabbi Shaul Wilhelm, director of the Chabad-Lubavitch center in Oslo, told JNS.org. "We are cautiously optimistic. The hope is that the new government will take into account a broader picture of the Middle East and will provide educational opportunities that combat anti-Semitism."

According to Rabbi Wilhelm, Norway's anti-Semitism stems from ignorance.

"The majority of Norway's Jews are assimilated into the mainstream culture, and the population is extremely small. Most Norwegians, therefore, have never met a Jew," he said.

"Exposure to Jews is what you see in the media, and whatever is the tone of that media becomes the chorus."

Rabbi Wilhelm often advises his pupils and colleagues, "Tolerance is not a speech. It needs to be practised."

His message to the newly elected government calls for Norway's leaders to understand the sensitivities and intricacies of the Jewish People.

"We need them to accept responsibility for what is happening under their noses," Rabbi Wilhelm said. "Above all, we need to foster a dialogue."

The conservative agenda is ambitious. "The new government has promised to revise the heavily bureaucratic state administration, modernize the system, look at our failing school system, the hospitals, infrastructure and other areas that have been heavily neglected by Labour," Herland said. "They have also indicated that the relationship towards Israel will definitely change and that the funding of the left wing's many newspapers will be revised."

Herland said there has been "surprisingly wide support for Solberg's election among the [Norwegian] people."

"Erna Solberg is Norway's Angela Merkel: calm, kind, diplomatic and very tough," she said.

The view 31 minutes after a car bomb explosion in Oslo on July 22, 2011, one of Anders Behring Breivik's two terrorist attacks in Norway that day. Following Breivik's other attack, the mass shooting at a Worker's Youth League camp that left 69 people dead, the facility was discovered to house vicious anti-Semitic and anti-Israel propaganda.
[Wikimedia Commons photo]

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Modesty and peaceful coexistence

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

The revolution is here, and its name is Lycra.

Swimming in a kibbutz pool in the upper Galilee in the fading days of summer, I noticed a wonderful array of women's bathing suits. Scattered among the itsy-bitsy models and the more sedate one-piece maillots were an impressive array of what has been termed modesty bathing suits.

I swam among a variety of languages and styles: women speaking Hebrew, Arabic, French or English and wearing bikinis and one-piece suits – what you'd find at any summer resort. But there were others: Hebrew-speaking women wearing skirts that covered knees and tops that covered elbows, with matching head-snoods, and Arab-speaking women wearing leggings and long-sleeved tunics with attached hoods – all made of lightweight and quick-drying swimwear fabric. They were splashing about with their children, their husbands and their friends, zipping down the water slide, diving off the pool's edge.

This isn't so much a fashion report as a meditation on social phenomena and the marketplace (although I admit to being fascinated by the fashion aspect, as well). You have a range of subcultures that place a value on female modesty, defined in a way that precludes women wearing conventional bathing suits any place where men might see them. At the same time, you have a country characterized by a warm climate, where people want to swim and engage in outdoor activities that may include hiking through waterfalls and streams. To borrow from a tawdry-titled popular song, girls just wanna have fun. Enter modesty bathing suits.

I spoke later to some Israeli young women who owned tzniut (or modesty) swimwear. Some only swam in women-only spaces. Others said that when they wore these bathing suits, they felt comfortable taking their children to swim even in pools and at beaches that aren't segregated by gender. They showed me their bathing wardrobes – which included Lycra skirts above, at or below knee-length, worn with Lycra shirts (sleeves to or past the elbow) and shorts; or tunics worn over capris. The swimsuits, they explained, were versatile – good for hiking, the gym or bicycling. Before the availability of these Lycra outfits, the women would hike in loose T-shirts and long cotton skirts over shorts, and take cooling plunges into natural pools or rivers fully clothed. Their clothes, they insisted, would dry reasonably quickly in the arid heat. But still, the wet clothes would drag and chafe, they recollected. Hiking was a far less comfortable experience for them than for men. But their modest swimsuits served well for both hiking and dipping, they explained.

O brave new world. Where there is a need, a market develops. There are myriad online sites selling modesty swimsuits, based in Israel and elsewhere. Most target a specific market – frum Jewish women, Muslim women or Christian women.

The Christian-oriented websites often explain the need for modest bathing wear. The suits shield women's bodies from "a bunch of men's eyes suffocating your every move," creating "respect." They "glorify God with my body," which must be saved for the "future husband." They avoid "stimulat[ing] a man in a way that we wouldn't wish."

The range of styles and of body parts covered vary most widely on these sites. They include loose maillots with higher necklines or thicker straps, as well as suits with short or medium-length sleeves and mid-thigh to knee-length skirts. Modesty, several sites explain, is a concept, not a set of rigid specifications. As one website puts it, the "Bible doesn't give exact guidelines."

By contrast, Jewish and Muslim-oriented sites rarely explain the need for these specially designed suits. Presumably, those who gravitate to them already understand. They also exemplify more codified ideas about what constitutes modesty. The Muslim-geared websites featured tunics over ankle-length pants – some fitted like leggings, others looser like sweatpants. With matching hoods, they left visible hands, feet and face. Some swim outfits were all black, others brightly coloured. The Jewish-geared websites had greater variety of style and exposure, appealing to different modesty benchmarks in the religious community.

It pleased me, that day that we were all in the pool together. Everyone wore the bathing suit they felt most appropriate. But we swam in the same water. There's a metaphor in that.

Sermons: a case for the defence

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

U.S. President Barack Obama seems to have more faith in synagogue sermons than most Jews I know. This year, in anticipation of the High Holidays, he once again held a teleconference with some 1,000 American rabbis across the denominational divide asking them to stress themes close to his political agenda such as health care, resumed talks between Israelis and Palestinians, and, of course, Syria.

But he didn't stay for the sermon when he visited the synagogue in Stockholm on Erev Rosh Hashanah on his way to the G20 Summit in St. Petersburg.

Though I've preached countless sermons, a few even in Stockholm, I was never sure that what I had to say mattered to those who heard them. Only a handful of people would react. One of the most common "compliments" would be, "I didn't fall asleep *this time*," perhaps alluding to the biting definition of a rabbi as "invisible six days of the week and incomprehensible on the seventh."

Having agonized for weeks before the High Holidays about what to say and how to say it in the hope of providing a year's supply of Judaism for those who aren't likely to be in synagogue on other occasions, I didn't particularly like to be told, albeit in jest, that the best I accomplished was keeping people awake. It made me feel like the author of the infamous marginal note in a sermon manuscript: "Shout – argument weak!"

Though I've happily forgotten most of the comments I received over the years, a few have stayed with me. One of the first sermons I ever preached as a rabbinic student was in a congregation in London, England, dominated by one of the scions of Anglo Jewry. For him, form was apparently more important than content. Acknowledging that English wasn't my first language, he complimented me on my address: "No split infinitives, no prepositions at the end."

After preaching in a congregation in South Africa, its rabbi emeritus praised me, tongue-in-cheek I assume, for putting in a good word for God.

In another congregation there, I was approached after the service by a man who said he was one of its founders. Therefore, he felt entitled to tell me that mine was the finest sermon ever preached in that synagogue. He then asked me for a copy of it, because, "I'm very deaf – didn't hear a word."

Yet I refuse to give up on preaching and have always paid great attention to what I wanted to say to the congregation. I tried my best to be topical, relevant and, I hope, articulate. Historically, the Reform synagogue brought back the sermon to Jewish life and used it as a way of educating Jews about their heritage and how it relates to the realities of their lives. I saw myself as one of its exponents.

The sermon in this scheme of things was to be a bridge between the traditional texts and the day-to-day experiences of worshippers. Scholars of 19th-century *Wissenschaft* (Jewish science) who sought to anchor non-Orthodox Judaism in Jewish sources made a case for the traditional roots of the modern sermon. The emphasis on "the ministry of the word" in the Protestant Church was no doubt also an influence.

In 1989, soon after the appearance of my book of sermons, *Walking Toward Elijah*, I published an article with the same title as the headline for this column, in which I also cited Franz Rosenzweig, the most influential thinker in modern Judaism. He found his way back to Judaism partly thanks to the sermons by Rabbi Nehemiah Noble of Frankfurt. I argued that even if congregants appear to be less enthusiastic than was Rosenzweig, they may be at least subliminally affected by what rabbis tell them from the pulpit.

It's clear, however, that sermons matter less nowadays, both in the church and in the synagogue, even in Reform congregations. Perhaps not only worshippers but also preachers have given up. Thus in many places, especially in Israel, little is being said from the pulpit beyond the liturgy. Elsewhere, sermons have often become perfunctory addresses peppered with strings of quotations from obscure sources gleaned from Google and similar authorities.

Dare one hope that the 1,000 rabbis who were on that conference call with Obama moved their congregations to pay attention to their sermons by making them sufficiently informative and inspiring beyond the president's narrow agenda?

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Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Thousands cheered as astronaut Chris Hadfield launched into his message of freedom of choice at the fourth annual Freedom Day celebrations in Toronto.

Hadfield, who returned home in May after five months as commander of the International Space Station, talked about his experience growing up in Sarnia, Ont., wanting to be an astronaut, even at a time when no Canadians had that job. He said the fact that he was able to accomplish his goal when there was no clear path toward it is proof of the freedom enjoyed by Canadians.

Chris Hadfield and a student choir perform *Is Somebody Singing?*, the song he co-wrote with Ed Robertson and sang in space. [Cara Stern photo]

"I've had the chance in my life to do so many incredible things," he told *The CJN*. "It's really imperative to come back and talk to people about it, to share the experience with others, and let people know, especially young people, what opportunities exist."

More than 3,500 students flocked to Toronto's Dundas Square for the Sept. 25 event, with the farthest groups coming from schools in Belleville, Ont. Freedom Day is held annually on or around Sept. 20, the anniversary of Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal's death in 2005.

Wiesenthal was a Holocaust survivor who was nominated for a Nobel peace prize in 1985.

This year's event was bigger than ever, said Avi Benlolo, CEO of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, which organized the day. He said each year has ended with great reviews from students, who not only get to experience the program on the day itself, but also look at various aspects of freedom with their teachers in advance, using a curriculum supplied by the centre.

Following the event, many of the students write journals and complete projects to gain a deeper understanding of the values and what they can do to stand up for them.

"We must continue to preserve the values of democracy and freedom," Benlolo said, urging students to use the Internet, and social media sites in particular. "You can help change the world."

The presentation was filled with music and dance, as well as both sad and inspirational speeches. Students took turns reading testimony and speeches from famous freedom activists like Martin Luther King Jr. and Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani teen who was shot in the head by the Taliban last year in an attempt to silence her activism.

Chris Alexander, minister of citizenship and immigration, cut the ribbon with Hadfield to officially open the high-tech Tour for Humanity bus, which has been described as a "mobile tolerance education centre." The bus will visit a number of towns and enable students, educators and law enforcement representatives to learn about topics like genocide, bullying and leadership.

Alexander underlined that freedom is at the core of Canadian values, and explained he was there on behalf of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who was in New York City on a trip that included a meeting with Yousafzai at the United Nations.

"Freedom is one of the fundamental values that underpins everything we do," Alexander told *The CJN*. "I believe in the cause of freedom, including remembering the catastrophe of the Holocaust and preventing that scale of disaster anywhere in the world anytime in the future."

Holocaust survivor Max Eisen also addressed the students, sharing his own story of being in Auschwitz. He described the feeling of living without freedom and not knowing if he would ever experience it again.

"There is no freedom without responsibility," he said, leaving the students with that one message. "Let every day be the day you stand up to be a hero."

Nevertheless, Hadfield said in his keynote speech, despite the damage people have done to the world, both to the environment and to its people, when you look at the grand picture – or at the earth itself from the space station – "the beauty of the world outshines the ugliness."

One just has to look up and see the space station pass by to remember some of the good that can come when countries and people from different backgrounds learn about each other – perhaps by learning about each other's languages and beliefs – and work towards something good, he said.

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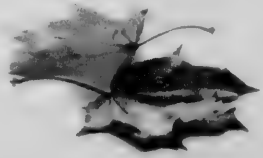

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Reena marks 40 years with fundraiser

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Forty years ago, five families who had children with developmental disabilities got together to try to find a place for their kids to live in the Jewish community.

The alternative for families in their situation was often to hand over the children and have them become wards of the state.

That small group – with the crucial guidance of co-founder Rabbi Joseph Kelman, spiritual leader of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, who had previously set up a number of programs for children with developmental disabilities – became Reena, a non-profit social service agency dedicated to integrating individuals with developmental disabilities into the mainstream of society.

The agency now has about 500 clients living in its homes and some 1,200 others involved with the organization, which offers about 15 outreach programs.

Steven Justein, a longtime board member, whose sister, Shari, 53, is a Reena client, said that although his family was not in the initial group, they have been involved with Reena for almost 40 years.

"When Shari was young, my parents constantly worried about what would happen to her. Then they were introduced to Reena, and life changed."

Pictured, from left, Gary Sim, Ann Szabo, Steven Justein

He said his sister lives in her own apartment with some assistance, takes the bus to Baycrest, where she volunteers, and cooks herself meals.

"Most important, however, Reena taught her to have dignity, self-worth and confidence. That's why I volunteer. I can never give back enough for what Reena has done for my sister."

Ann Szabo, Reena's resource manager, for day, outreach respite and residential, said the Reena Foundation's first annual Exceptional Abilities Series, featuring former U.S. presidential adviser David Axelrod, which takes place Oct. 8 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, is raising funds for Reena's outreach programs.

A former senior adviser to U.S. President Barack Obama, Axelrod has a child with developmental disabilities who lives in a home similar to a Reena home in Chicago.

"We get no government funding, so we need to raise $400,000 in order to run these programs, which are lifelines for many families," Szabo said.

Reena's dream, she said, is to have a $9-million endowment so the programs – which include an after-school club, a summer and March break camp, a Sunday Friends Club, a swim club, an athletic club, a cooking club and residential and children's respite – are never at risk.

Also in its 40th anniversary year, Reena is set to launch a $2-million campaign to create a Reena Behavioural Home in Richmond Hill behind Mackenzie Regional Hospital. The specially designed home will house people with significant behavioural issues associated with their developmental disability.

Reena Foundation president Gary Sim said the home is a new model for the agency.

Szabo said Reena has purchased the land and is now visiting other agencies before meeting with architects.

"This is a home – both permanent and respite – for people with the most challenging of needs."

It will be built with the necessary safety and damage-resistant materials, and there will be design elements that allow residents to both co-reside and be separated, as their behaviour dictates.

Sim said people with developmental disabilities are living much longer than they did decades ago, and to accommodate these seniors, Reena built one of the first elder homes on the continent for people with developmental disabilities.

"We have also partnered with Baycrest, Cummer Lodge and Maple Health Centre to support seniors in long-term care," he added. "It breaks my heart when I think about what these seniors, [who didn't have Reena's services when they were young] missed along the way."

For more event information and tickets to Axelrod's talk, visit reenafoundation.org, e-mail events@reenafoundation.org, or call 905-764-1081 ext. 31.

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Josephus presented in a legal framework—as defense lawyer, attorney general and expert eyewitness.
4:00 to 6:00 PM at the University of Toronto
Jackman Humanities Building, Room 100, 170 St. George Street

2. Tuesday, October 8
The Arab Spring and the Israeli Spring
An account of how recent dramatic changes in the Middle East strike Israelis and the Arab World.
7:30 PM at Beth Tzedec Congregation

3. Wednesday, October 9
Is There a Clash Between Eastern and Western Jews?
A discussion on the tension between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews in Israel.
7:30 PM at Beth Tzedec Congregation

Prof. Margalit is highly regarded for his profound observations on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the broader struggle between Islam and the West. He is the recipient of the 2011 Israel Prize in Philosophy for his work as "one of the most important philosophers in the State of Israel and one of the most valued in the world today."

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Steps taken to ensure full severance for staff

Canadian Centre for Diversity to close doors

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

After 63 years as a going concern, the Canadian Centre for Diversity (CCD) is ceasing day to day operations.

The organization, which began life as the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews (CCCJ), will wind up operations in the next 60 to 90 days, lay off 10 employees and seek out other charitable organizations to take on its primary leadership education function, said Janice O'Born, chair of the board of directors.

Four hundred Toronto students who have signed up for the organization's leadership training program will be told the program has been cancelled, she added.

O'Born said the steps had to be taken now so that there would be enough funds on hand to ensure current staff receive a full severance package. The reason for the closure is purely financial, she said. In recent years, private sector donations have dried up and government grants have not been forthcoming. The organization faces a $1-million shortfall in its 2013 budget.

O'Born attributed much of the problem to "donor fatigue," as more and more high-profile charitable projects draw away available community resources. She also said previous management mishandled the change that led to the end of the CCCJ and the creation of the Canadian Centre for Diversity.

Long-standing supporters were not consulted about the change, she said. Many were angry at being handed a fait accompli and decided not to support the new organization.

The change, however, was necessary, she said. "The school system did not allow us in as Christians and Jews. They said we were not being inclusive."

The name change was not accompanied by a proper media and marketing campaign, she added.

Victor Goldbloom, who headed the CCCJ from 1979 to 1987, said he was saddened by the organization's demise. Prior to World War II, "Canada was a country where anti-Semitism was widespread. There was no formal dialogue. There was all kinds of exclusion from clubs and the boards of major corporations."

Following the Shoah, "there was a need for dialogue... to reflect on the Shoah and the kind of society Canada was before the war," he said.

Even during his tenure as CEO of the CCCJ, there was a perception in some circles that the need for the organization was lessening. Jews were no longer being excluded from larger companies and corporate funding began to decrease, he said.

The CCD's decision to cease operations "is the culmination of that evolution, where people really came together to make Canada a much more equitable and open society."

Though the CCCJ earlier ended as an organization, interfaith dialogue continued in other forums: there are Christian-Jewish dialogue groups in Toronto and Montreal, while the Canadian Interfaith Conversation attracts other faith groups, he said.

For her part, O'Born believes there is a still a crying need for the CCD to foster inclusiveness and oppose discrimination. She's hoping another charity will take on its programming. "I really don't see a difference... I feel we really haven't come very far," she said.

Janice O'Born

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Nosanchuk helped expand U.S. hate crimes law

Windsor man is new White House Jewish liaison

Ron Stang
Special to The CJN

WINDSOR, Ont. — Windsor-born Matt Nosanchuk is the new Jewish liaison for the Obama Administration in Washington D.C.

Working out of the White House, Nosanchuk is the point man for communications between America's myriad Jewish organizations and the federal government. He was appointed in July.

Nosanchuk is the son of retired Windsor Provincial Court Judge Saul Nosanchuk. When his parents divorced, he moved to Detroit, where he attended elementary and high schools, then obtained his undergraduate and law degrees at Stanford University.

Nosanchuk, 48, has a strong civil rights background, a prime reason he was chosen for the post.

He held a senior position in the U.S. Department of Justice prior to the appointment. His portfolio consisted of working on the administration's response to the Defence of Marriage Act, which successfully voided the act resulting in benefits being extended to same-sex couples.

He also was pivotal in expanding hate crime law under the Matthew Shepard Act of 2009 to include crimes related to gender and disability.

Nosanchuk attributed his interest in civil rights partly to his own background as well as his Jewish heritage.

"I think I identified with the outsider," he said.

He grew up in downtown Detroit in an integrated neighbourhood, but attended a private school in elite Grosse Pointe, where "I was Jewish and everybody else in my school wasn't." He also was a "child of divorced parents at a time when that wasn't very prevalent."

He said the "values of his parents" also played a role.

His father, Saul, is well known in Windsor for his humane treatment of offenders. A young offender rehabilitation and halfway house is named after him.

The values "imparted to me as a Jew" also determined Nosanchuk's desire to practice human rights law and "help others to ensure that injustices were addressed and rectified."

Accepting the White House appointment now means Nosanchuk can work directly for President Barack Obama, of whom he's long been a "strong supporter" and can "contribute to the success of his presidency in whatever way I can."

Said his father Saul: "I think he's had a remarkable career. I'm very proud and moved that he would be interested in public service. That has been his focus throughout his whole career."

Nosanchuk is still getting acquainted with the new role, but already has met with numerous Jewish organizations on a range of issues, including Syria, the restarted Middle East peace process, the Affordable Health Care act and comprehensive immigration reform.

"In issue after issue, things that are of significance to the administration also are a priority to the Jewish community," he said.

Nosanchuk said he's both a sounding board for various Jewish interests, as well as someone through whom to communicate White House policy.

He recently organized a Washington briefing for 70 Jewish federation leaders. He's also attended high-level meetings between Jewish leaders and top administration officials, such as National Security Adviser Susan Rice and Secretary of State John Kerry.

He said Middle East issues are obvious priorities, but so is a matter like immigration reform, which seemingly might not affect Jews.

But, he said, this is relevant to Jews' "historic experience." He said the Jewish community wants to ensure "that we don't pull up the ladder behind us" and deny opportunity to new immigrants.

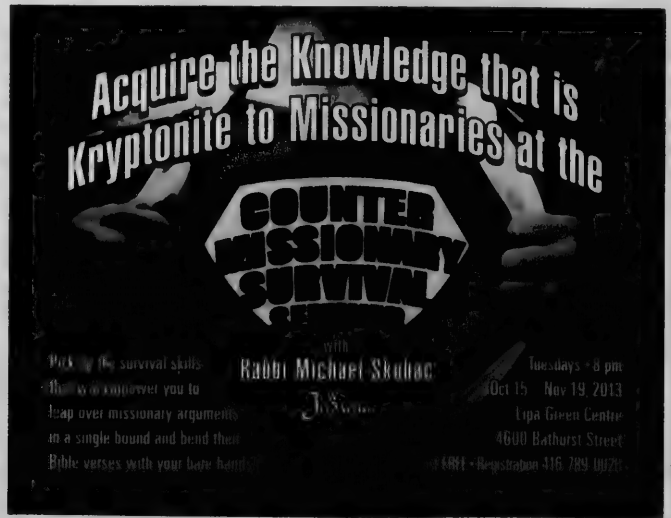
"And so it very much ties into our own experience in this country and to our values as Jews in helping others," he said.

He said U.S. and Canadian Jews "have close ties and shared values and priorities."

He said many American Jews, "like me, have Canadian relatives, or were born in Canada."

As well, a number of Jewish organizations and religious denominations have an "institutional presence in both countries... in fact, I [recently] spoke at a salon here organized by two Washingtonians, both of whom grew up in Montreal."

Matt Nosanchuk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Organ donation project to be a focus of meeting

NCJWC to hold triennial convention in Winnipeg

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — For the first time in more than 10 years, the Winnipeg branch of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada (NCJWC) is hosting the organization's triennial convention.

"It will primarily consist of business meetings," said Sharon Allentuck, NCJWC vice-president and co-chair of the convention (along with immediate past president Dianne Glass), which takes place Oct. 4 to 6 at the Hotel Fort Garry. Both Glass and Allentuck are from Winnipeg.

One of the focuses of the convention will be on a new project that the Toronto section has introduced to promote organ donation. Toronto representatives will be filling in their sisters from the other Canadian sections on the new Gift of Life (organ and tissue transplant) program.

Organ donation within the context of Halachah will also be the subject of Rabbi Alan Green's presentation at the convention Shabbat supper. Rabbi Green is the longtime spiritual leader of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Winnipeg's largest synagogue.

Another order of business will be the installation of two new national vice-presidents, Paula Frisch from Toronto and Ronee Alter from London, Ont. The current president is Marni Besser from Calgary, who assumed the presidency two years ago and has agreed to serve for three more years.

Allentuck said membership stands at about 3,000 nationally, with about 250 in Winnipeg.

"We will also be looking at ways to recruit younger members," she said. "We will be redoing our webpage and logo and we're considering opening a Facebook page."

She notes that in Winnipeg, a couple of Argentine immigrants have recently joined NCJWC and are trying to restart a second chapter here.

Allentuck said that on the Saturday afternoon, the convention attendees will be given a guided tour of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, which will not be open to the public for another year and is located just a couple of blocks from the Fort Garry Hotel.

She noted that 35 national members are expected to attend the convention.

Immediate past president and convention co-chair, Dianne Glass of Winnipeg, left, and NCJWC president, Marni Besser of Calgary

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Martin has always been a supporter of Israel

Continued from page 3

education and research and development" while at the same time cutting taxes and taming the deficit, said Shapira.

Pointing to the Kelowna Accord, negotiated by Martin's government to aid aboriginal groups, Shapira said the scholarship in his name "is meant to help bright underprivileged students."

Many students hail from Israel's "periphery. As in many other countries, periphery goes together with poverty, or less opportunities. This is true in Israel for the different parts of the population: Jews, Arab, Druze," Shapira stated.

The university plays a key role in strengthening Israel's north through education, research and by developing future community leaders, Shapira added.

Martin said the school shares the same values as Canada, including respect for diversity.

He has always been a supporter of Israel, the former prime minister continued. Martin recalled that his father served as foreign minister and "at the dinner table, it was clear that support for Israel was a foundation of our policy."

The Liberal Party, he said, has "always supported Israel from the very beginning."

Reflecting on his time as prime minister, Martin said he modified Canadian policy at the United Nations to be more favourable to Israel. Prior to his administration, Canada often supported resolutions critical of the Jewish state. "I stepped in and stopped that support," he said.

"I think our support for Israel comes from the fact [we] share a common set of values," he added.

Martin said he supported the legitimacy of the Jewish state of Israel and "I spoke for recognition for Jewish refugees from Arab lands. I felt very strongly about that."

As to the current situation in the region, Martin believes "a nuclear-armed Iran would be a major threat. In my opinion, that is one of the greatest threats to peace."

Martin invoked the "responsibility to protect" doctrine regarding Syria, and he credited one of its major proponents, former justice minister Irwin Cotler, as an influence on him.

"There are those who do not believe that it's the occasion for the responsibility to protect. I am not one of those."

"Responsibility to protect was put in place to recognize that a country must protect its citizens and [has the] duty not to oppress its citizens." If it does, it's the responsibility of other governments to step in.

"If using weapons of mass destruction is not oppression, then I don't know what is. It shows you what we're dealing with, with the Assad regime."

"What kind of signal does it send to Iran and North Korea if red lines are drawn in the sand and if NATO, the United States and others of us are not willing to stand behind what we've said about those red lines?" he asked.

Soccer match unites Jews, Sikhs

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL— A Hampstead synagogue and members of the Sikh community are showing goodwill in the midst of the acrimonious debate over values in Quebec by teaming up for a series of joint activities.

Congregation Dorshei Emet, better known as the Reconstructionist Synagogue, and Sikh community leaders Manjit Singh and Harjeet Singh Bhabra got things going with a friendly soccer match on Sept. 29 between young people from each community, held at Mackenzie King Park.

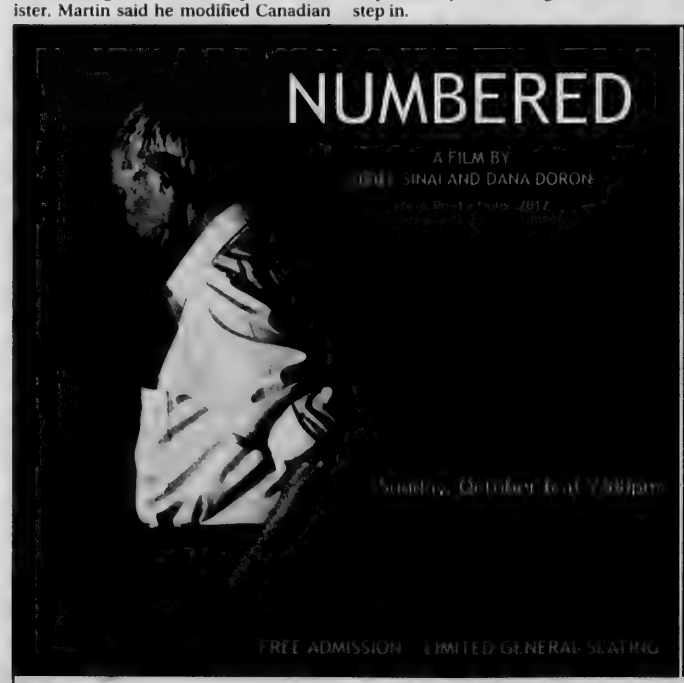
Most of the Sikh participants are from the Gurdwara Sahib Greater Montreal Temple in Dollard des Ormeaux.

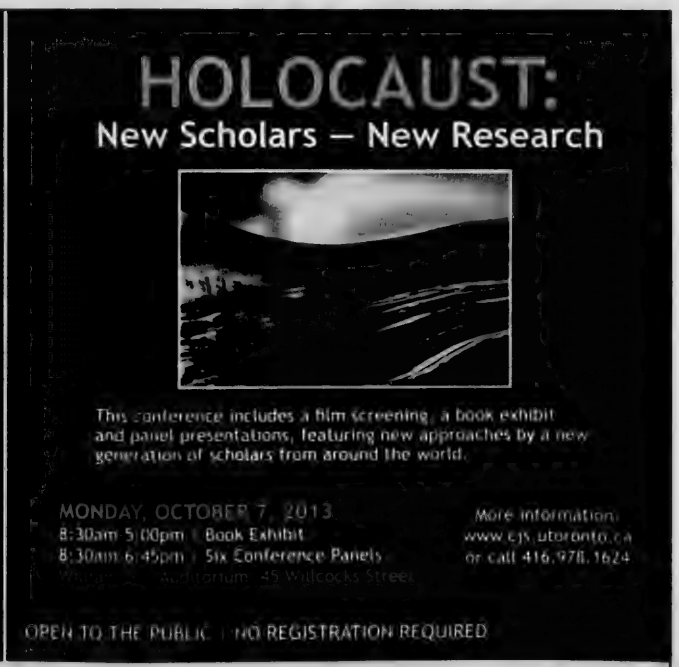
Young men and women aged 16 to 22 took part in the program, dubbed the "Turbans vs. Kippot Face-off."

The two communities have found common ground as two "Peoples of the Book," whose traditional headgear as religious minorities is the target of the proposed Quebec charter of values.

The choice of soccer as the inaugural event is a reminder that this past spring, the Quebec Soccer Federation sought to ban the wearing of the Sikh turban on the pitch, which provoked a widespread outcry. The federation reversed the directive after FIFA, the international soccer body, confirmed that turbans were permitted.

Dorshei Emet executive director Robyn Bennett said, "Rather than following an increasingly worrisome trend of polarization and fear of the other, members of the two communities have chosen to get to know each other, their similarities and their differences."

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Anne Frank's stepsister to speak in Toronto

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — In 1947, when Otto Frank carefully unwrapped the small package in his hands and showed Eva Schloss his late daughter's diary, she had no inkling she was taking the world's first glimpse at what would become one of the greatest publishing sagas in history.

The Diary of Anne Frank, first published later the same year in Dutch, has sold millions of copies and been translated into 70 languages, its poignant memoir of a Jewish family in hiding during the Holocaust and of Anne's adolescent yearning resonating universally.

"Of course, I had no idea," Schloss, 84, said in a telephone interview from London, England. "Nobody thought it would become such a success."

Six years later, Otto Frank, his entire family wiped out by the Nazis, married Schloss's mother, Elfriede Geiringer, whose husband and son had also perished in the Holocaust. In so doing, Frank became Schloss's stepfather, and Schloss became Anne Frank's stepsister posthumously.

It's a story Schloss will tell and elaborate on in Montreal at the annual Chaya Mushka Chabad Seminary Gala, Oct. 10, 7 p.m. at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, as well as in Toronto and Guelph, Ont.

It will also be the first visit to Canada by Schloss, who has spent years recounting her life story and conveying a message of tolerance and humanity.

She and Anne Frank were born only one month apart and played together after school as childhood friends in Amsterdam between the ages of nine and 11. Their respective families also hid separately during the same period before each was discovered by the Nazis.

Eva Schloss

Schloss remembered Anne as precocious and, in a way, a more worldly girl than she was.

"She had two personalities really," said Schloss, who became a professional photographer in England after she married her husband, Zvi, in 1952 and moved there.

"The first was the one she showed to the outside world, a little lady thinking about her hair style and boys."

But inside, "she wanted to be a better person. She was more insecure than she let out to be."

Schloss described her late stepfather, Otto, as a sweet and loving man whose discovery of the diary allowed him to emerge from the Holocaust and find a new purpose in life.

"He was so proud of it," Schloss said.

Despite Anne Frank and Schloss knowing each other mostly as playmates, Schloss never would have predicted that Otto Frank would one day marry her mother.

He met Elfriede Geiringer for the first time when the survivors of both families returned to Amsterdam after the war and Otto showed up with the diary.

"I remember it very clearly," Schloss said in a second interview. "It was for him, really, a lifeline to life again, because before that, he was in a desperate state, [but it would now] be his task to publish it and promote her story."

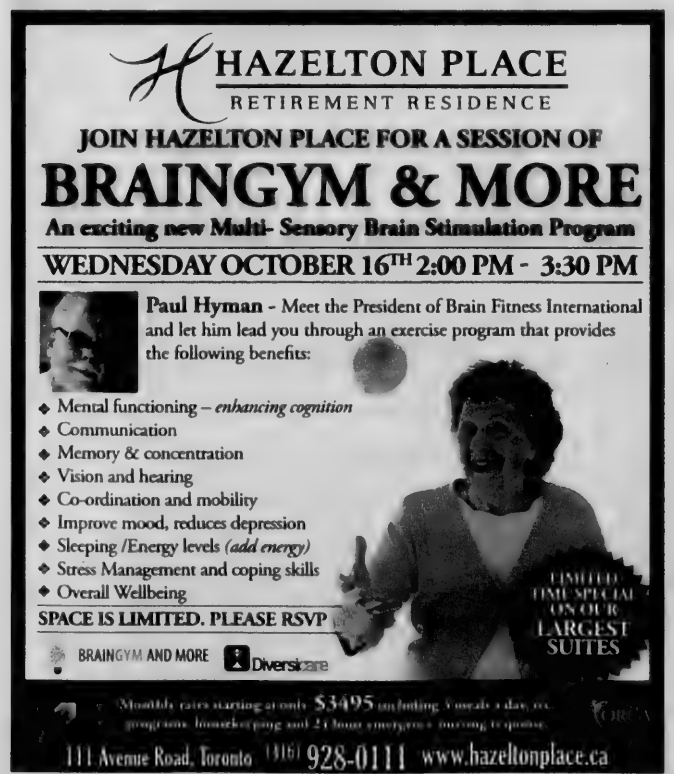
Otto helped Schloss and her mother, gradually became close to her, and eventually married her in 1953, a year after Schloss herself was wed.

In 1988, Schloss published a book about her own life – *Eva's Story* – and in 1995, she co-operated in the creation of playwright James Still's educational play, *And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank*.

Schloss is also a co-founder of the Anne Frank Trust UK, whose mission is to "challenge prejudice and reduce hate by drawing on the power of Anne Frank's life and diary."

Schloss is the guest speaker in Toronto on Oct. 7 at the Uptown Chabad Gala at the Ontario Science Centre in an evening honouring Alan and Sheila Mostyn. Israeli musician Gad Elbaz and Cantor Aaron Bensoussan also perform. For tickets, call 416-635-9696 or visit www.ChabadGala.ca.

She will also speak Oct. 6 at 7 p.m. in Guelph, Ont., at Beth Isaiah Synagogue, 47 Surrey St. W.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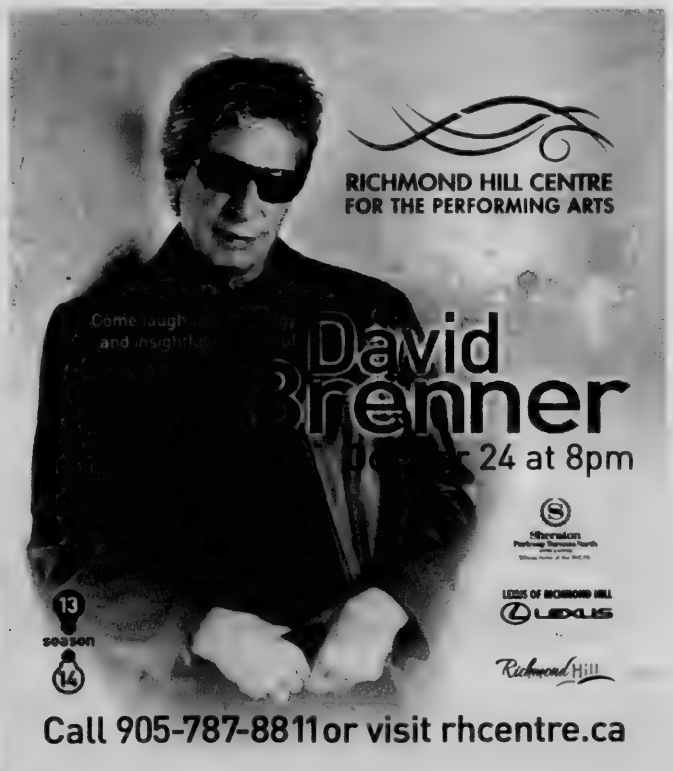

A special monthly message for the Baycrest community

Community Matters

Art meets Baycrest-powered science in *My Virtual Dream*

By Garry Foster, Interim President, Baycrest Foundation & Dr. William E. Reichman, Baycrest President and Chief Executive Officer

Baycrest Health Sciences is unique across the globe for the way it combines clinical care, research on brain health and aging, education and arts and culture into a holistic model of care for older adults. Nowhere else does medicine, science and art intersect in a way that is helping transform the way people think about—and experience—the process of aging.

Those who have visited our Bathurst Street campus know the importance of art and culture for our clients. Our hallways look more like an art gallery than a conventional healthcare facility, replete with original paintings and sculptures donated to Baycrest over the years. For our residents, art is used as therapy, as recreation, as a means of navigation, and to celebrate the rich cultural heritage that has shaped our organization and our community over the years.

On October 5, Baycrest will be hosting *My Virtual Dream*, a spectacular multimedia event that brings together innovative technology with a stunning visual and musical backdrop generated through the brain waves of participants at Toronto's Scotiabank Nuit Blanche.

Scotiabank Nuit Blanche is a free all-night contemporary art event that features interactive installations throughout the city. This year, Baycrest has partnered with the University of Toronto to erect a 60-foot dome at the corner of College Street and University Avenue that will provide a truly unique venue for *My Virtual Dream*.

Special Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) headsets will read participants' brain activity and relay it to the Virtual Brain—a cutting-edge piece of software that provides a computerized replica of the human brain. The Virtual Brain will interpret and translate the brain activity into stunning animations and sounds that will be projected onto the dome in real time.

Spectators will be able to witness the incredible dream sequences from 6:52 p.m. on October 5 until 6:52 a.m. on October 6.

While anyone who visits *My Virtual Dream* during Scotiabank Nuit Blanche will be treated to a spectacular experience , the installation will also have a long-lasting impact by advancing neuroscience research. Every 30 minutes, a new group of participants will use the BCI headsets to play a video game that doubles as a science experiment. Since winning the game depends on the group of dreamers coordinating their brain waves, the game studies how people can connect using only shared audio and visual cues. After Scotiabank Nuit Blanche, results from the game could lay the groundwork for future research and therapeutic applications to enable people to communicate in the absence of language.

Imagine someone who has suffered a stroke and has no way to speak or effectively use a computer being able to communicate with just their brain waves—the implications for providing better patient-centred care are enormous, and are exactly the sort of thing our scientists at Baycrest are working to make a reality every day.

We hope you will take the time to visit *My Virtual Dream* at this year's Scotiabank Nuit Blanche. More information about the event, our installation and Baycrest's Virtual Brain is available at www.myvirtualdream.ca.

Experience *My Virtual Dream* for yourself

Saturday, October 5, 2013, beginning at 6:52 p.m.
College Street and University Avenue (Northwest corner)

Discover how Baycrest is using brain waves to communicate with our innovative Virtual Brain, the world's first integrated computer model of a human brain. Watch as participants co-create stunning visual and soundscapes using just the power of their brains.

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Cantor 'was an iconic figure in the community'

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Joseph Freiman, cantor at Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ont., for almost 40 years, died recently at age 94.

A native of Romania, he came to London in 1968 from Uruguay, where he fled after World War II. During the war, he had been interned in a number of concentration camps, including Auschwitz.

William Klein, a London dentist and a past president of the congregation, said that although Freiman, known to everyone as Yossi, was unable to attend services for about six years, "he was an iconic figure in the community and enjoyed a well-deserved reputation for his exceptional skills in music, chazzanut, teaching b'nai/b'not mitzvah students, and in interacting with people of all ages."

Freiman was also a leather goods designer and manufacturer, Klein said.

"He learned the trade in Romania while he was studying at the yeshiva. It was impressed upon him at an early age that it is imperative to be self-sufficient, and he and his wife, Eva, to whom he was married 60 years, operated a leather goods store for many years. The wallets he made never wore out, they were so well made."

Klein said Freiman taught his approximately 600 bar/bar mitzvah students "much more than a Maftir and a Haftorah. He was a role model who lived the life of a sincere, pious Jew. He walked the walk and talked the talk. He was always haunted by the Holocaust, and he attributed his survival to his deep faith in God."

Freiman led all the synagogue services on Shabbat and holidays, and also read the Torah, Klein said. "He filled the role that usually takes at least two people in larger centres such as Toronto or Montreal."

He and his wife were the 1997 honorees at Jewish National Fund's annual Negev dinner in London.

"At age 79, he only began to slow down a bit, and shared the leadership role with several congregants," Klein said.

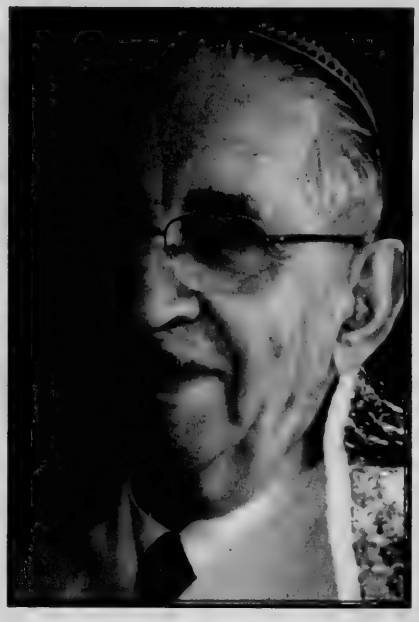
He said that throughout Freiman's four decades at Or Shalom, "he was a people-person, always seeking out new faces and acknowledging familiar ones.

"He had a knack for connecting with people. No one who met him ever walked away untouched. He was well-known for his sincerity and generosity. He was very well versed in Torah, Talmud, etc. and constantly peppered his conversations with relevant quotations.

"[He and his wife] hosted regular gatherings of congregants after Shabbat. In this way, they were pivotal in the pastoral work that helped build the congregation and solidify its membership."

Klein said that although Freiman was a resident in a nursing home for the last number of months, "and his memory was ravaged, he was able to sing *Kol Nidre* during a visit by congregants just weeks before he passed away. [He sang it from memory] in a voice that was still clear and resonant."

A funeral service for Freiman was held Sept. 9 at the synagogue. He is survived by his wife Eva, children Liliane (Emil) Freiman-Cohen and Gabriel (Yetta); grandchildren Rebecca and Noah Freiman; his brother Emil (Magda) Freiman of Toronto, and his sister Clari Bohm of Argentina; his sister-in-law Carla Taub of London, as well as many nieces and nephews.



Joseph Freiman

Correction

In the story "Reform congregation creates quilts for Israel" about Temple Israel's baby quilts, Jane and Martin Gordon were incorrectly identified. The Gordons are among the many volunteers who deliver quilts to various centres in Israel.

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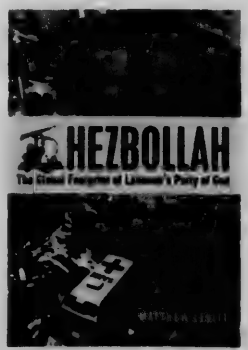

To Register please contact Liana Shlien at 416.864.9735 ext. 33 or lshlien@fswc.ca

FRIENDS OF SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES

Women's Brain Health Initiative raises over $200,000

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Huffington Post founder Arianna Huffington and Indigo Books & Music CEO Heather Reisman became the first two women to receive the limited edition Hope-Knot icon of the Women's Brain Health Initiative (WBHI).

The award was presented to them Sept. 10 at Reisman's home by WBHI chair and head of Twitter Canada, Kirstine Stewart, at an exclusive fundraising event that raised more than $200,000 for research into women's brain ailments, bringing the WBHI's fundraising total so far to more than $700,000 since its founding in 2012.

The unique piece was designed by renowned Canadian jeweller Mark Lash.

"The Hope-Knot symbolizes both the human brain and the invaluable intelligence and insight women provide every single day, whether it is to family, business, academia, the arts, or to society in general," said Stewart.

"Arianna and Heather are true champions of our effort to ensure that the looming crisis in women's brain health becomes a top research priority here in Canada and around the world. We are thrilled to induct them as the first two members of the Hope-Knot 100 Club of the world's most influential women who have risen to the top of their fields thanks to their own wonderful brains – which represent exactly what the WBHI is determined to protect," said WBHI founder and president Lynn Posluns.

From left, Lynn Posluns, founding president of Women's Brain Health Initiative; Heather Reisman, founder and chief executive, Indigo Books and Music; Kirstine Stewart, head of Twitter Canada and Arianna Huffington, chair, president and editor-in-chief of the Huffington Post Media Group. *(Brian Summers photo)*

The WBHI is a Canadian charity that helps fight women's brain aging disorders through investment in focused, innovative research at leading institutions around the world.

"It was frightening to learn that 70 per cent of all new Alzheimer sufferers will be women, and that women suffer from stroke, depression and dementia twice as much as men, and that a women's healthy life expectancy is 25 per cent worse than a man's," Posluns said.

"Research today still focuses on men. In fact, at the grassroots level of research, it's the male rat that is studied because the hormones in the female make it too complex."

Some 85 guests attended the Sept. 10 fundraiser, and all received a sterling silver Hope-Knot pin.

Pauline Maki, a professor of psychiatry and psychology, and director of women's mental heath research at the University of Illinois, told *The CJN* that "there are fundamental differences in the way that women's brains age compared to the ways men's brains age. It starts early in life. It starts with differences that women and men have in terms of their memory abilities. That, in part, is due to the fact that women have more estrogen than men do.

"In terms of predicting who will develop dementia we have come a long way and probably the fundamental shift in our understanding is what we can do to help ourselves. Keeping your heart health very strong is the best thing we can do at mid-life" she added.

"Keeping our brains active in novel ways such as learning a new language or a new skill. You need to exercise as well as keep your stress levels low. All of these things are associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease later in life."

For more information, visit www.womensbrainhealth.org. To buy a Hope-Knot pin, pendant or cufflinks, visit hopeknot.myshopify.com.

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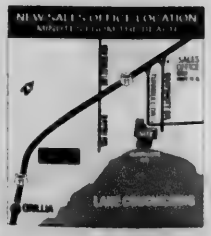

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Holocaust poster contest focuses on remembrance

CJN Staff

The winner of a Holocaust remembrance poster contest said she feels honoured that her work can speak powerfully to members of a generation used to receiving news visually, helping them remember a difficult past.

"It's really important that we talk about our shared history, even the parts that are really difficult," said Caitlin McGinn, a student at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver. "It's the only way to ensure that history doesn't repeat itself."

McGinn was the first-place winner of the international competition, which was a joint effort between Yad Vashem and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which is currently being chaired by Canadian officials, led by former Davenport Liberal MP Mario Silva, until next March.

The theme was "Keeping the Memory Alive – Journeys through the Holocaust."

McGinn created a poster that featured concentration camp documents superimposed to give glimpses into the lives of those who can't share their own stories.

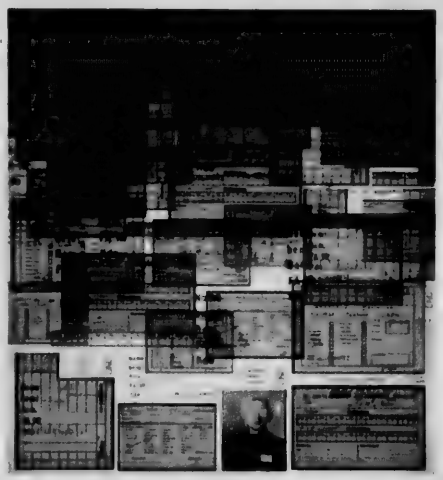
Like McGinn, the runner-up was a Canadian student at Emily Carr. Carling Hind's poster had at the top, "I should like someone to remember there once lived a person named," and then the poster displays the names of a number of people murdered in the Holocaust.

Hind said her inspiration came from the art of names and the unique history they hold.

In total, about 500 students entered the contest. Posters from seven Canadian students made the final round.

The top 16, which included two more Canadians – Derek Michael Wasylyshen from the University of Manitoba, and Joakim Sundal, from Emily Carr – will be displayed in prominent locations around the world starting Jan. 27, coinciding with International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Some of the locations include the United Nations headquarters in New York, as well as UN offices in Geneva and Vienna, and the European Commission in Brussels.

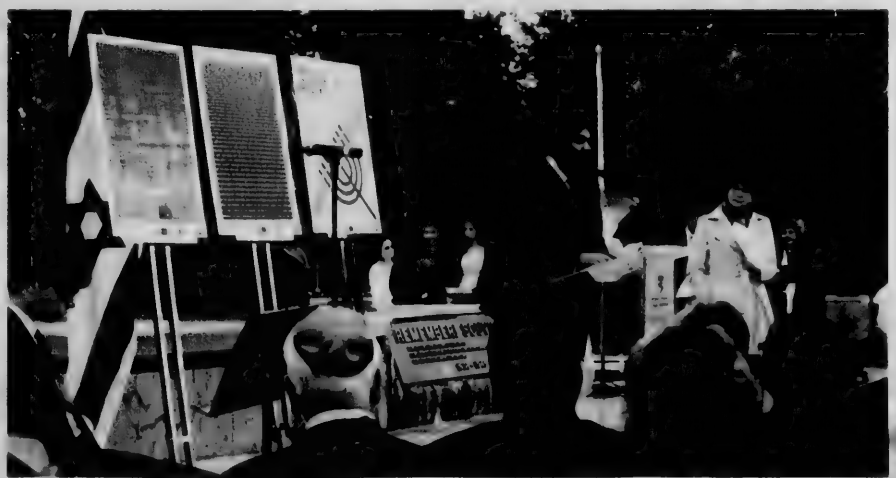


Caitlin McGinn's winning poster in the "Keeping the Memory Alive – Journeys Through the Holocaust" poster competition

"Our government is committed to Holocaust education and remembrance as well as to ensuring that Canadians, especially youth and future generations, examine actions of the past to help inform their decisions in the future," said Tim Uppal, federal minister of state (multiculturalism), who announced the winner on behalf of Jason Kenney, minister for multiculturalism.

"Canadians can take pride in the achievements of these young and talented students and of our country's strong showing in this important international competition."

Uppal made the announcement at the annual Holocaust commemorative ceremony at Earl Bales Park in Toronto on Sept. 22.



At the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem's Yizkor Ceremony on Sept. 22, at Earl Bales Park, federal minister Tim Uppal, gives an address to the crowd of about 350 dignitaries, Holocaust survivors, and members of the community as Fran Sonshine, national chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, looks on.

Justice should be our passion, empathy our instrument

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

"Man is like a breath, his days are like a passing shadow"

These saintly words are taken from the prayer for loved ones during the Jewish memorial service called *Yizkor*. When a spouse comes to me in pain I often think about these words. Spouses in high conflict cases when fighting each other lose their perspective and often forget where we are all headed anyway. But how are painful "high conflict" disputes viewed by the opinion makers, the columnists, the editorialists or just "Joe Public?" Just how healthy is our collective perspective? Take the following true facts in contrasting scenarios, repeated mercilessly across this blessed land.

In an Ontario Court of Appeal decision titled *C.S. v. M.S.*, a 2007 decision made by the Superior Court to grant the mother custody of the couple's youngest child was upheld. The original decision also awarded the mother costs of over $320,000, a restraining order against the father for both the mother and child, as well as barring the other three children from their marriage from having access to the youngest child. These decisions were also upheld.

According to the Ontario Court of Appeal decision, there was substantial evidence that the three other children (who are now adults) were alienated from their mother and the youngest child had not yet been alienated but would eventually become a victim of Parental Alienation Syndrome ("PAS").

The ravages of Parental Alienation Syndrome

PAS is essentially the "brainwashing" of a child against one parent by the other parent, and can have long-term detrimental effects on the well-being of the child and his or her relationships with the parents.

The court found that "the father has taken aggressive and persistent steps to alienate his other children from their mother. The likelihood of this continuing with [the youngest child] if the father had access to her was virtually certain". (I thank Mr. Julius Ormware, an Ontario lawyer, for this summary at http://bit.ly/18mnySb).

I have seen cases of emotionally and physically abused mothers, where children are alienated, mothers are attacked in silence, large sums of support arrears ignored by the Ontario support enforcement agency and children kidnapped to foreign jurisdictions. I have witnessed countless mothers face financial ruin after running out of money to pay their lawyers, or often having to beg the Crown to withdraw assault charges against their violent husbands just to survive. I have seen parents sell or mortgage their homes just to pay their daughter's legal fees. I have seen women unable to pay for experts or lawyers to prove how much their self-employed husbands truly earn, and the children of these women suffer. I have seen mothers who earn too much for Legal Aid but not enough to hire a qualified family law lawyer. I have witnessed such pain not only in my own practice but in the thousands of cases my students and I have summarized over the past two decades in my *Syrtash Family Law Netletter.* (The *SFLN* is an online weekly digest of family case law for the legal profession published by *LexisNexis.*)

And what of that other pain? This is the pain of "George", or the many other "Georges" I have represented or have reviewed in my family law digest. Many men deserve to be charged with criminal assault and deserve to be punished or exposed for this crime once convicted. It's not only the physical pain that hurts: it's the fundamental betrayal of trust that intimacy expects. Just imagine: that tender man becomes your predator. And you have to hide the violence from your children, if you can. And if your children witness it their scars may never heal.

But then there are the other Georges, the innocent men with partners who have the police lay a completely fictitious criminal charge of assault and/or sexual assault for purely strategic or tactical reasons. The police then arrest such men under Ontario's "zero" tolerance policy concerning family violence. A bail ("recognizance") order automatically excludes them from their home and their children. Some lose their job or career over the publicity surrounding the arrest. They are then deemed to be guilty by society and the family court until proven innocent. Most cannot afford a highly qualified criminal lawyer so they pay what they can. *Some* of these lawyers would rather negotiate a "Peace Bond" than go to trial to prove their client's innocence since it's so much easier and less costly for everyone than a lengthy full-blown trial, often broken up over several months rather than completed over a few days. Conversely, other innocent men are advised to go to trial but would rather sign a Peace Bond which implies their guilt because they simply can't afford a trial, no matter how innocent they may be.

Even when "George" wins, he loses

Criminal lawyers who ply their trade will often get an acquittal through preparation and thorough cross-examination for the clients who are patient and can afford a trial. However, by the time George gets his acquittal, the "status quo" has given the mother the "edge" in the family court because it has usually taken six months to a year or more for the accused to prove his innocence. And after a year of living under a cloud of suspicion, his contacts, his boss, and society have long forgotten that he might have been innocent. After such a lengthy time, George has long since been deemed to be a violent abuser and/or rapist no matter what the Court rules.

Meanwhile, the family court will have great sympathy for him after an acquittal, but its only duty pertains to the children's "best interests." Even if their mother committed perjury, it may not matter if she has had the "status quo" or "de facto" custody for the year or more until George's innocence was proven. Indeed, the children may no longer wish to move. They may well have become used to living with Mom. They may well have been convinced subsequent to the arrest that their Dad is a horrible person who doesn't love them. False allegations have made access in many cases very problematic where perceptions, no matter how wrong, become reality. I have seen countless birthday and Christmas/Chanukah gifts returned, unopened.

Whose side are you on — men, women, or humanity?

So where should this leave the public, on the side of women or on the side of men?

Do I really have to ask how absurd this question is?

Surely, the opinion makers would not take sides and everyone would realize that this problem is not about choosing between Venus or Mars, or whether one sex is more predatory or conflicted than the other? Yet we have certain theorists, lawyers and columnists who champion "men's rights" in family and criminal law, such as Barbara Kay in the *National Post.* Kay advocates against a gender-biased family law system in Canada that disproportionately punishes men, particularly in spousal support and custody battles. For example, in her April 2013 article she complains of how fathers often "find the deck stacked against them in court" and how the law should presume equal parenting for children when parties separate.

Conversely, we have feminists who write exclusively about how men abuse and dominate women and how our system and even our language must be changed because the Justice system intrinsically reflects male domination, as suggested by authors such as Professor Martha Fineman and Catherine A. MacKinnon.

These authors are not "wrong" because they make useful points about the legal system, many of which have led to important changes in family law, such as recognizing the status of the homemaker and, in the recent past, fostering a more sensitive attitude among many Judges towards father's rights.

However, the tension between opposing camps in respect of family law can lead to an overall impression that the victim is gender-based. Well, surprise: women sometimes physically/financially abuse men and alienate their children from their male partners and other times it's the men.

So, my fair reader, are we really going to quantify how many times and how many members of each sex hurt the other more? The grave takes us all and makes us frighteningly equal. Yet certain professionals actually advertise themselves as "men's rights" oriented while others specialize in women's abuse, to the exclusion of men, whether it's in the field of law or counselling.

Justice should be our passion and empathy should be our instrument.

Choosing the gender of the victim or taking gender sides is a phony ideological battle and a zero sum game.

In custody and support litigation, many men's rights advocates feel that the Justice system is firmly weighted against them with a deep-seated prejudice against their sex, especially when it comes to parenting and support rulings. By contrast, many women feel that their spouse has a superior financial advantage to fight the court battles, particularly when attempting to collect arrears on support through Ontario's *Family Responsibility Office* or when attempting to calculate their husband's income from self-employment without the benefit of experts these women simply can't afford.

Justice served only by gender-blind solutions

There may be many creative solutions to solving high conflict cases, as tried in other jurisdictions. One possible solution may be providing taxpayer money to need-based middle class spouses, not just to poorer Legal Aid candidates. Mandatory mediation for those not intimidated by the other party's presence may be another. However, for this to work the State must make available and appoint trained professional therapists to deal with difficult parenting issues and neutral experienced Court-appointed forensic accountants/business valuators paid to evaluate incomes and assets in order to help facilitate settlement.

Building up walls between us and soliciting for gender wars is definitely not a solution.

On Yom Kippur there is another prayer. It invokes the need for repentance in the coming year to nullify God's pre-determined decree as to who will live and who will die. But the same prayer offers repentance to counter the predetermined decree as to "who will be harried" and "who will live in tranquility."

May such creative solutions be found to help *all* victims of abuse and to give them such tranquility, and may these solutions be gender-blind.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzlegal.com*** *Visit www.freemychild.com, www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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'I saw men on stretchers with their guts falling out'

Continued from page 1

"We were shocked that [Egyptian forces] were already on the other side of the canal in just a few hours and that no one stopped them," said Mira, who was 19 when the war broke out, and just days away from finishing her compulsory service.

Before the war, Mira was stationed in Baluza, the main Israeli base in northwest Sinai, about a half-hour drive from Bar-Lev and the Suez Canal.

Her job was to provide entertainment and recreation for soldiers stationed in the bunkers built along Bar-Lev.

About three months before the end of her service, Mira had made arrangements to serve at the Soroka Medical Center in Be'er Sheva, where she held an administrative position admitting injured soldiers, keeping track of their treatment and keeping them comfortable.

"When the war broke out, I was supposed to go home for Yom Kippur. I was packed and everything," she said, switching from Hebrew to English.

"Before we got the news that the war broke, we got all the injured soldiers from Sinai. It was so chaotic and no one knew anything," she said adding that she and her colleagues worked for about 48 hours straight, taking hour-long catnaps as the injured soldiers continued to pour into the hospital.

About 600 Israeli soldiers were killed and hundreds more were wounded during the first 30 hours of the war – the heaviest casualties ever suffered by Israel in such a short time frame.

"I saw men on the stretchers with their guts falling out," she said, bursting into tears, covering her mouth with a quivering hand.

"It was terrible. They came without names, without anything," she said, speaking through her tears. "Without arms, without legs. I fainted one time... And then I had to let the parents know."

One of the most difficult tasks Mira faced was trying to find out the identity of a soldier who was declared dead upon arrival.

"We didn't know his name. He came naked. No papers, no clothing," she said, explaining that the medics had ripped off his clothes to try to revive him, even stripping him of his dog tags, which are used to identify soldiers.

Knowing that he was hit in the Sinai near Baluza, where she had served for a year and a half, she called the intelligence officers at the base, pleading for information that might help her identify him.

Tears forming anew, lifting her hands to her head, she recalled the urgency in the officer's voice.

"He said, 'What do you want from my life? Everyone is being killed! I can't talk to you! They're burying us!' And most of those people died. I was there for a year and a half, and I knew those people."

Hanan Shefa still struggles with some of the decisions Israeli leaders made during the war, which cost nearly 2,700 Israeli lives.

Surprised at herself for breaking down emotionally during the interview, Mira recalled how strong she was, still just a teenager, in performing her grim tasks.

"I remember one father, when I was talking to him about his son, I was explaining that I had to discharge him and he didn't like that. He slapped me in the face. People didn't know how to react. It was so hard," she said.

"But I was automatic. Like a robot."

While Mira continued to struggle with the hundreds of dead and wounded soldiers that flooded the hospital, 21-year-old Hanan was working as a flight technician on French Super Perlon helicopters in the 114th Squadron based at the Tel Nof airbase.

In addition to maintaining helicopters, Hanan also accompanied the pilots to solve any mechanical problems during flights.

Although the war broke out on Oct. 6, Hanan, who had gone home to Kibbutz Mishmar Hanegev on Erev Yom Kippur, began to suspect that something serious was unfolding the evening before.

"We knew something was going on because some of my friends on the kibbutz – one was in one of the elite units – were already being called in.

"The next day, our air force sent airplanes to do air manoeuvres. That was a sign for us to go back to our bases."

By the time Hanan made it back to his airbase, he saw Phantom fighter jets sitting on the tarmac.

"We heard our troops asking for support, and they wouldn't let us take off," he said.

He doesn't know why they were grounded, but according to the Jewish Virtual Library, the Israeli Air Force failed to destroy the Arabs' anti-aircraft systems in the early hours of the war, which prevented Israel from providing aerial support to its ground forces.

"I remember that we were so upset and we were asking our commanders what the hell was going on. They said, 'Don't ask questions now. Now, you do what we tell you.' I felt for years that some soldiers were sacrificed, and that hurt me so much," he said, gripping his chest.

It wasn't until the following day that Hanan was sent on his first mission.

He and his crew were sent on a 24-hour mission – landing only to refuel – to fly with radar-disrupting electronics to allow fighter jets to fly out.

"During the flight, there were bombs exploding all around us. I was a new flight technician and I didn't have this experience at all. I asked them to close the curtains over the windows so I wouldn't see the bombs because I felt nauseated. I was afraid," he recalled.

"I flew with some guys who were in the 1967 war and they said, 'Don't worry, you'll get used to it.' But I didn't."

Hanan was also sent on rescue missions to pick up pilots who had ejected from their planes.

He recalled one rescue in particular, during which his instincts and adrenaline took over.

"To cover him, I was shooting in an area where I thought there might be enemy soldiers. But he was injured, and he couldn't run to the helicopter, so I jumped down and ran to him and dragged him on. Our medic grabbed the gun from me when I jumped down, to cover me. It wasn't my job to do this. Actually, I disobeyed orders, but my instincts took over and instead of the medic jumping out, I did."

Both Mira and Hanan agreed that despite the heavy casualties suffered in the first two days of the war, there was never a doubt that Israel would come out victorious.

"When you're young, you feel invincible. We didn't even think of it as a possibility. That's why soldiers are 18 years old. They think nothing can happen to them," Hanan said.

But looking back, they both still have so many questions and so much anger.

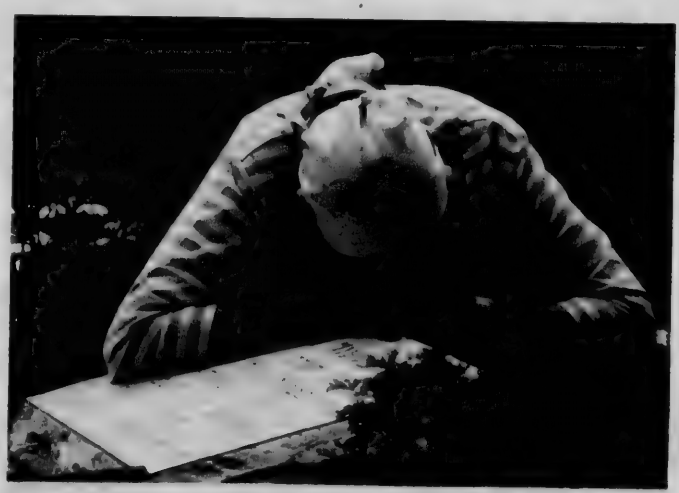
"I can't explain why they left so few soldiers on the Bar-Lev line" Hanan said. "We were caught with our pants down."

In Meir's recently released testimony, she conceded that "it's possible, maybe even certain," that if they had mounted a pre-emptive strike, "boys who are no longer would still be alive."

Mira believes it was an intelligence failure that cost the young country so many soldiers.

"Israel should have known that her neighbours were going to attack," she said, her voice rising in anger.

"But they didn't believe that it was going to happen."



A woman mourns the loss of a loved one who died in the war. [Flash 90 photo]

Group's inaugural conference Oct. 6 at U of T

JSpace aims to give home to left-wing Zionists

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

JSpace Canada came along at a particularly interesting – one might even say polarized – time in Canadian Jewish history.

Many Jews in this country have been smitten with Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper's vocal, unmistakable and refreshing support for Israel. They believe that on his watch, Canada has shifted from colourless "honest broker" to becoming Israel's best friend on the international stage.

At the same time, labour unions, academics, churches, peace activists and others on the traditional left have been tarring Israel as never before, accusing the Jewish state of apartheid-era practices, and urging, with some success, participation in boycotts of and sanctions against Israel. The language has often veered toward the anti-Semitic.

They were joined by organizations and individuals that identified themselves as Jewish, but were dismissed by the community's mainstream as fringe.

Founded in 2010, JSpace, as its website explains, provides Canadians with an alternative "to both the rigidly pro-Israel right and the anti-Israel left." The group supports a two-state solution to the Mideast conflict, "ardently" opposes Israel's Jewish settlements on the West Bank, and is strongly against all boycott, sanctions and divestment (BDS) efforts.

It is a "Jewish, progressive, pro-Israel, pro-peace voice" in Canada, not to be confused with JRAN, the Jewish Refugee Action Network, which advocates for immigration reform, or with JStreet, a U.S. group with a similar slant.

JSpace's inaugural national conference is slated to run all day Oct. 6 at the University of Toronto, and its roster of speakers includes Canadians and Israelis, Jews, Muslims and Christians, representing a wide political spectrum.

Though it self-describes as progressive – a term often derided as code for left/liberal – it sees itself as "a public voice of fairness (and) balance." It also claims that it's legitimate to criticize some of the policies of the Israeli government "while at the same time affirming Israel's basic rights as a sovereign state."

With about 100 people registered, the goal of the conference is to take JSpaceCanada "to the next stage in its development by widening the tent of vocal supporters of Israel who feel that constructive criticism of some of Israel's policies and practices is in the best interest of achieving her safety and security through a just and lasting peace," said the meeting's co-chair Karen Mock, a well-known human rights activist.

Ultimately, the task is "to generate concrete, practical recommendations for raising the voices of progressive Zionists in Canada and to engage people who may feel there is no place for them in the conversation at the Jewish community table," Mock said.

Scheduled speakers include Prof. Janice Stein of the University of Toronto and Prof. Mira Sucharov from Carleton University; columnist Shira Herzog; Raja Khouri of the Canadian Arab Institute, and Lois Wilson, former moderator of the United Church of Canada. Greetings and opening remarks are to come from D.J. Schneeweiss, Israel's consul general.

Topics to be explored are campus and union issues, Canada's foreign policy, interfaith relations and advocacy.

"We did attempt to create a roster of speakers who would provide a range of opinions, not necessarily those of JSpace Canada, to increase engagement, especially of the younger generation," said Mock.

JSpace was founded by members of downtown Toronto's First Narayever Congregation and spearheaded by Nora Gold, a former professor of social work at McMaster University who lived in Israel for six years.

She felt the need for a new moderate organization "because I was very concerned about anti-Israelism on the left," Gold said. "I don't consider myself on the left now, because I find the left anti-Israel."

"For people like me, the left has become a dirty word," Gold continued. "My politics are progressive and I'm very committed to anti-oppression work, human and civil rights. But there are many places on the left where I don't feel comfortable. And I would say that's true for many people involved in JSpace."

Gold concedes that people like her and those in JSpace "obviously are in a different place politically than many people in the mainstream community. We were looking for a place that would provide an alternative for Jews and for allied friends who aren't Jewish.

"The situation has become so polarized. Not only in Canada but around the world, anybody who said anything other than unconditional support for everything that the Israeli government does is labeled anti-Israel. It's ridiculous. It's paralyzing and it's dishonest. I know quite a number of people in the mainstream Jewish community who behind closed doors say they see things very much the way I do."

But is JSpace swimming against the current, given the shift by many Jewish voters to the Conservatives?

"It depends what river you swim in," Gold replies. "We're against various currents. We're certainly against the anti-Israel current. Do we disagree with the mainstream community on its perspective about the occupation and settlements? Absolutely we do."

But Gold believes that JSpace's views are shared by "many, many, many Canadian Jews, even if some of them, for their own reasons, won't come out and say so… I love Israel. We (in JSpace) all love Israel.

"The focus is to change the landscape for Canadian Jews and to change the conversation. We wanted to make space for this voice, and make the voice louder."

She suggests that perhaps the left feels it has not had any major successes since the end of apartheid in South Africa, "and in that sense (it) feels it has been a failure. The whole idea of boycotts and sanctions just came from a very ignorant and unsophisticated analysis of the Middle East."

On the other hand, "it's obvious that Israel's military might, for which we are profoundly grateful, is ultimately not going to be able to solve this. The only real security is going to come from diplomacy and agreements. Israel cannot be secure using military force and expansion as its main tools."

Gold stresses that "I don't think you'll find anybody at JSpace saying, 'Dismantle the settlements and it'll all be fine.' I wish something that simple were true."

For details on the Oct. 6 conference, go to jspacecanada.ca.

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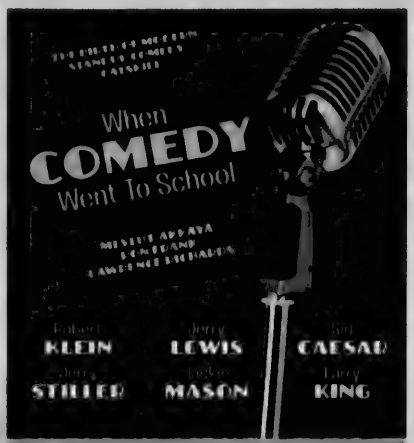

TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS
CHAI TEA & A MOVIE:
WHEN COMEDY WENT TO SCHOOL
The hit documentary makes its Canadian Premiere!
Why are there so many great Jewish comedians? When Comedy Went to School answers this question with an entertaining portrait of America's generation of comics who got their start in the Catskill mountains (often dubbed "The Borscht Belt"), where Jewish immigrants transformed lush farmland into the 20th century's largest resort complex. Featuring appearances by Jerry Lewis, Sid Caesar, Jackie Mason, Mort Sahl, and Jerry Stiller —as well as a host of others—as they share terrific stories and jokes. Plus there are plenty of clips from your favourite comedy films and sketches. Not to be missed!
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4:00pm Chai Tea, 5:00pm Film
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Banish your writer's block

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

So you want to be a Jewish writer?

If the Great Jewish Novel is lurking inside you, but you can't get it out (or get it published), there are people who want to help. Now is the time to end the procrastination and excuses – and banish your Jewish writer's block.

The first and best stop is Erika Dreifus' website. Dreifus is both a published author – *Quiet Americans: Stories* (2011) – and a self-proclaimed "resource maven." Her lists are great (and up to date):

- Jewish writing conferences and courses
- Where to read (and publish) writing on Jewish themes,
- Jewish organizations to know about, and
- "Six Ways to Publicize Your Jewish Book" (and more). **[http://bit.ly/jwrite1]** You can follow her very active Twitter feed **@erikadreifus**.

Geared primarily toward women, the Jewish Writing Institute aims to "foster self discovery and intensify one's Jewish and spiritual identity." There are articles on a variety of topics, including "Jumpstarting your Writing," "Publishing in Jewish Newspapers and Magazines," and three views on using a pen name **[http://bit.ly/jwrite2]**, as well as a companion blog. **[http://bit.ly/jwrite3]**

Speaking of blogs, if you love to write and are looking for a community that shares your passion, check out The Jewish Writing Project. This blog welcomes "stories, poems, memoirs, interviews–even random thoughts – as long as you keep the focus on being Jewish and on what being Jewish means to you." **[http://bit.ly/jwrite4]**

And what are Jewish writers writing about? Anne Rolphe is seeing a huge shift since the days of Bellow, Roth and Malamud, whose stories had "the voice of the American Jew moving into the mainstream [with] Yiddish jokes, sad stories, pressuring mothers, self-sacrificing mothers, beautiful blondes, pain of the soul, Jewish references everywhere, smart Jewish boys who always know the answers, and anti-Semitism."

According to Rolphe, the younger generation of writers such as Nathan Englander and Leon Wieseltier "was raised within the Jewish tradition, and although it has serious objections to how it was informed, it does not mumble out of a Jewish vacuum… Religion and tradition may be challenged or attacked, but only the way the son or daughter in a family will and the way a writer must – not vaguely, but precisely." Read more in From Jewish Writing to Writing Jewish. **[http://bit.ly/jwrite5]**

National Jewish Book Award winner Dara Horn argues that Jewish writers have a responsibility to go beyond bagels and other stereotypes, and incorporate genuine Jewish themes into their writing. "Writing that draws on such a legacy has the potential not only to inform but to enrich, to enliven, to nourish, to revive the dead." **[http://bit.ly/jwrite6]**

Of course, good writing is its own reward. But an adoring public doesn't hurt. Nor does acclaim and cash. Dreifus has compiled a very helpful list of more than 20 awards and prizes geared toward "published and unpublished fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction on Jewish themes." **[http://bit.ly/jwrite7]**

There's a huge range here: from MomentMag.com's Daniel Pearl Investigative Journalism Initiative "designed to encourage young journalists to write in-depth stories about a modern manifestation of anti-Semitism or another deeply ingrained prejudice" to Lilith Magazine's Charlotte A. Newberger Poetry Prize **[http://bit.ly/jwrite8]** to the venerable National Jewish Book Awards. **[http://bit.ly/jwrite9]**

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Mitzvot mean more in Israel

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Rabbi Shlomo Amar, former Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel, once related that when he and his family made aliyah from Morocco, his father, Eliyahu, fell to the ground and kissed it fervently. Rabbi Amar, 14 years old at the time, worried that his father had fainted and stepped forward to help him to his feet.

He heard his father say: "Master of the world! I thank You for the great kindness You've shown in bringing us here… I beg You for more time, until I merit reciting *Kiddush* this Friday night, and then You can take me to You. I just want to make *Kiddush* in the Holy Land."

In my recent trip to Israel, the words of Eliyhau Amar really hit home.

I felt connected to the land in a unique way from the time my feet hit the ground. The sense of holiness, joy, faith and peace were always on my mind.

This feeling got me thinking about the uniqueness of the Holy Land.

The Torah in Deuteronomy says "the eyes of HaShem, your God, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to year's end."

A special Divine Providence graces Israel to the exclusion of all other lands.

Certainly, God reigns the world over. From our point of view, however, there's a great difference in our ability to receive the Divine content. Our sages teach us that God has placed angelic forces to rule over all other lands. Only in the Land of Israel is God's Providence direct, without any intermediary angels. Only in Israel is the worship of God pure without any barriers or impurities.

This is how the Ramban explains the Talmud's startling declaration that "All who live in Israel resemble someone who has a God, and all who live outside the land of Israel resemble someone who has no God." In the Diaspora, the worship of God only reaches the level of the celestial angels, whereas in Israel, Divine service is direct to God Himself, with no interference whatsoever.

This unique, life connection between HaShem and the Jewish People in Israel has very real quantitative and qualitative advantages. For instance, Israel is the land where the divine presence appears and where prophecy is transmitted to the Jewish people.

Israel is the only place on earth where the Torah can be observed in all its fullness. The commandments themselves were only given to be performed in Israel.

Our sages teach that the commandments we perform in the Diaspora are only reminders until we can return to Israel to observe them properly. The true value of the mitzvot comes only in Israel. Outside the land, the precepts have an educational value, but the Torah repeatedly tells us that Israel is the place for their performance. Accordingly, our rabbis have told us that dwelling in Israel is equal in weight to all of the commandments of the Torah.

In the Land of Israel, we're a living people. In the Diaspora, we're like bodies lacking spirit – the physical shell of a people without inner life.

Lessons in Jewish affiliation

Class Act
Daniel Held

In my last column, I described the rise of Hungarian anti-Semitism and the negative impact of the poisonous political climate on Jewish affiliation.

I lamented that "Of the estimated 100,000 Hungarian Jews, only 12,871 identified themselves as Jewish in the 2001 census, only 7,849 allocated taxes to the Jewish community in 2011, and only 6,000 attend High Holiday services."

Though startling, the numbers belie the evolving story of Jewish affiliation in Budapest.

During our last week in Budapest, the annual Jewish Summer Festival began. A mix of contemporary and classic Jewish music, theatre, movie screenings and food tastings, the festival attracts thousands of participants. Notably, this year the festival held an Israeli food fair in the main Budapest market.

Q6Q7, shorthand for the Jewish sixth and seventh quarters, hosts festivals for Chanukah and Passover. In addition to walking tours, wine tastings, poetry slams and plays, the festivals include Chanukah candle lighting and Passover seders. Events are held in public spaces: in cafés, bars, parks and on the streets of the Jewish quarter. Q6Q7 aims "to protect the special immovable heritage of the quarter, to reinvent functions, and prevent demolishment, and to regenerate Jewish life, and enhance civic activism."

Mózes-ház opened in January 2008. One of 59 Moishe Houses around the world, Mózes-ház residents organize Jewish holiday parties, movie nights, social action events, and a weekly Kabalat Shabbat followed by a potluck dinner which draws scores of participants.

The Jewish Summer Festival, Q6Q7 and Mózes-ház represent a new wave of affiliation, sharing three key characteristics.

They seamlessly integrate culture, socialization, religion and civic action. Q6Q7 includes concerts and potlucks, seders and community beautification projects, ritual events and gallery openings. These have long been present in Jewish programs, but the avant-garde nature of the events distinguishes them.

They are grass roots, driven by peers without traditional hierarchical structures. At Mózes-ház, residents initiate programming to which they invite their friends. Through network weaving, the chain of engagement grows outwards.

They are open to both Jews and non-Jews. Speaking to a generation reticent to separate itself from the broader community, and especially in Budapest where Jewishness is blurred by historical anti-Semitism, Communism and intermarriage, these programs attract young Jews, their peers, and a growing number of Judeophiles.

As traditional venues of Jewish engagement redefine their relationship with a new generation, new types of programs are springing up across North America. Notwithstanding the current challenges facing Hungarian Jewry, there are lessons to be learned from Budapest's creative and grass-roots forms of affiliation.

But there are also challenging questions: What does it mean to be actively involved in Jewish life? What metrics can we use to measure the impact of these programs on Jewish identity? Do these events represent sustained forms of Jewish engagement, or once-off episodes?

Most profoundly, we need to find new ways of measuring and maintaining Jewish affiliation. Checking off boxes on a census, making contributions to legacy agencies and attending synagogue services remain important forms of affiliation, but it is clear that they are not the only ways to demonstrate one's commitment to Judaism and the Jewish community.

Shuls need more spirituality

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

Tablet magazine's article, "High Holiday Services are Boring. Here's How We Can Fix Them," got a lot of play the week before Rosh Hashanah.

By contrast, this Yom Kippur marked the 100th anniversary of Franz Rosenzweig's dramatic return to Judaism. Rosenzweig was a man of words, but he never wrote nor spoke directly about what transpired in that synagogue in Berlin on Yom Kippur 1913. We can only piece the story together from hints he gave in letters to friends and later teachings about the power of Yom Kippur.

In *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, Nahum Glatzer distinguishes Rosenzweig's intentions for conversion from so many other German Jews of his time: "[H]e wished to enter Christianity as did its founders – as a Jew, not as a pagan. Rosenzweig attended the synagogue services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in preparation for the church."

He left his mother and hometown of Cassel to attend services in a small Orthodox shul in Berlin. What he experienced was a pivotal point in his life. He intended it to be his last ritual performed as a Jew. But 12 days later, he wrote to his friend Rudolf Ehrenberg, himself baptized as a child: "I must tell you something that will grieve you and may at first appear incomprehensible to you: after prolonged, and I believe thorough self-examination, I have reversed my decision. It no longer seems necessary to me, and therefore, being what I am, no longer possible. I will remain a Jew."

Glatzer considers that "no longer necessary" might imply an intellectual decision, but "no longer possible" hints at a radical personal experience.

Rosenzweig wasn't a mystic. He was a great and discriminating mind. Yet there was something about the experience in the synagogue that made him abandon his plans to leave Judaism behind. There was something on that Yom Kippur that sent him running in the direction of home again.

Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman of Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion is developing his next "big idea." He uses hard data and sharp intuition to understand Jewish trends synagogues can respond.

Two years ago, he and Prof. Steven Cohen developed a survey of Jewish spirituality. They found that Jewish respondents scored significantly lower than Christians on all scales of spirituality. This isn't surprising, but what may be is a fascinating differential between generational responses. On all five scales of spiritual inclination – spiritual mentorship, religion, prayer, and spiritual experience – younger Jews scored higher than their elders.

Rabbi Hoffman argues that synagogues must "give serious thought to transforming themselves beyond the ethnic era into institutions that provide transcendent purpose that justifies Jewish identity." What must synagogues provide that people can't find anywhere else? What must they become expert in? Less programs, more relationships. Less *talking about* Judaism, and more *experiencing* Judaism.

Does the next generation of Jews resemble that of 1913? It could be they're less interested in the ethnic ties of their parents and grandparents and more in search of the intellectual and religious rigour of Rosenzweig.

Rabbi Hoffman is always onto something. All synagogues should consider his challenge to put matters of the spirit back at the centre.

Iranian leader refuses to comment on its scope

Rouhani acknowledges 'crime' of Holocaust

JTA

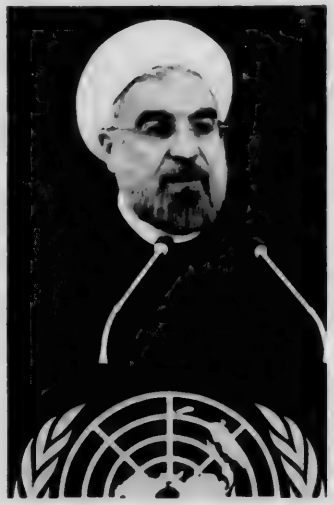
WASHINGTON — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani acknowledged the Holocaust as a crime against the Jews but refused to comment on its scope.

"I have said before that I am not a historian, and that when it comes to speaking of the dimensions of the Holocaust, it is the historians that should reflect on it," Rouhani told *CNN* in comments published Sept. 23 on its website.

"But in general, I can tell you that any crime that happens in history against humanity, including the crime the Nazis committed toward the Jews, as well as non-Jewish people, was reprehensible and condemnable as far as we are concerned," he said.

Rouhani also appeared to compare the Holocaust to Israel's treatment of the Palestinians.

"This does not mean that, on the other hand, you can say Nazis committed crimes against a group, now, therefore, they must usurp the land of another group and occupy it," he said. "This, too, is an act that should be condemned. There should be an evenhanded discussion."



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani addresses the UN General Assembly in New York, on Sept. 24. (*UN photo*)

Rouhani in an interview earlier this week with NBC declined to answer a question about the Holocaust, prompting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to say that Rouhani differed little from his predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who denied the Holocaust.

Netanyahu, in a statement posted on his Facebook page, said Rouhani's alleged Holocaust denial was one reason he ordered the Israeli delegation to the United Nations not to be present when the Iranian leader spoke last week at the General Assembly.

"The Israeli delegation absented itself from Rouhani's speech in order not to grant legitimacy to a regime that does not recognize the existence of the Holocaust and which publicly declares its desire to wipe the State of Israel off the map," Netanyahu said.

U.S. President Barack Obama said at the General Assembly that he was ready to engage with Rouhani to bring about a diplomatic solution to tensions over Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program. Netanyahu has said he believes Rouhani's claims to moderation are a ruse.

Montreal lawyer and businessman, Michael Kastner, has donated **One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00)** in honor of his courageous brother, Richard, to support OXFAM through the auspices of the Jewish Community Foundation. The monies shall be used to fund the distribution of lifesaving vaccines and/or other treatments to combat illnesses such as, but not limited to, tuberculosis and diarrhea, for vulnerable children living in developing countries, often where there is conflict as well as poverty.

Netanyahu final speaker at UN

Continued from page 1

Israeli media reports over the weekend quoted sources in the Israeli government as saying that Iran was only a few months away from possessing enough enriched uranium for a bomb, with one report going so far as to state that Tehran had already produced at least one such weapon.

Israel is concerned over the thaw in western-Iranian ties that has been developing at breathtaking pace in the last few days and culminated last Friday with a phone call between the American and Iranian presidents.

"I am going there to represent the interests of the people of Israel, our readiness to defend ourselves and our hope for peace," Netanyahu told reporters on the plane before taking off for the United States. "I will say the truth. In the face of the sweet talk and the smiles, one needs to tell the truth. Only the truth, today, is vital to the security of the world, and, of course, essential to the security of our country."

Netanyahu was scheduled to meet Obama at the White House on Monday. On Tuesday he was to be the final world leader to address this year's UN General Assembly in New York.

During his address to the General Assembly in 2012, Netanyahu famously produced a cartoon diagram of a bomb and went on to elucidate his "red line" for Iran's nuclear program: 90 per cent of the amount of enriched uranium required to produce an atomic weapon.

While beseeching Obama to present a "credible" military deterrent of his own, Netanyahu has threatened to order a strike on Iran's nuclear facilities if Tehran threatened to cross that "red line."

Netanyahu has said he regards Iran's recent outreach as a "smokescreen" designed to "fool" the West while the regime advances toward a nuclear weapons capability. He has set out conditions that he wants the international community to maintain before any reduction in economic sanctions.

Netanyahu's meeting with Obama would mark the first time the two leaders have sat together since the American president's March visit to Israel, and since the historic phone call between Obama and Rouhani – the latest in a series of developments last week that signalled a warming of ties between Iran and the United States. The last time a sitting U.S. president spoke to a sitting Iranian president was before the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

Netanyahu issued no direct comment on the Obama-Rouhani conversation, and he instructed his ministers to remain mum. He intended to discuss Israel's position on the Iranian president's charm offensive – which included more benevolent rhetoric on ties with the United States and the West, a stated willingness to compromise on transparency of the Iranian nuclear program and an acknowledgement that the Holocaust occurred – during his meetings with senior U.S. officials. He was also to make a public plea against easing the sanctions on the regime during his speech Tuesday to the General Assembly.

"Netanyahu understands that there is a lot of euphoria," according to an unnamed senior Israeli official quoted by the *New York Times*. "Netanyahu knows that people in the international community will want to believe. I think you'll see in his remarks a lot of facts, a lot of facts that no one denies."

The CJN *went to press Monday morning. For updated information, please visit our website, cjnews.com.*

TimesofIsrael.com

Canada skeptical about Iran's charm offensive

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Despite the phone call between U.S. President Barack Obama and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that marks the first time since the 1979 revolution that the two countries' leaders spoke, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird called on foreign leaders to maintain sanctions against Iran.

"Now is the time for the global community to maintain tough sanctions against Iran in order that it takes a different path on its nuclear program," Baird said in his Sept. 30 address at the UN General Assembly.

Obama extended an olive branch to Iran during his speech at the General Assembly last week, promising that his administration would focus on improving tensions between Iran and the West over its nuclear program.

Rouhani pledged to "remove mutual uncertainties with full transparency," but only if Iran could continue uranium enrichment for what he said were peaceful purposes.

Both Baird and Prime Minister Stephen Harper remain cautious about putting too much stock into Rouhani's charm offensive.

Following Obama's UN address last week, Harper said he "would not fault President Obama and our allies for trying, but my sincere advice would be, when it comes to the government of Iran, that we should carefully monitor deeds far more than words."

Baird said Canada would like to see Iran put words into practice when it comes to its nuclear program, its support of terrorism and its human rights record.

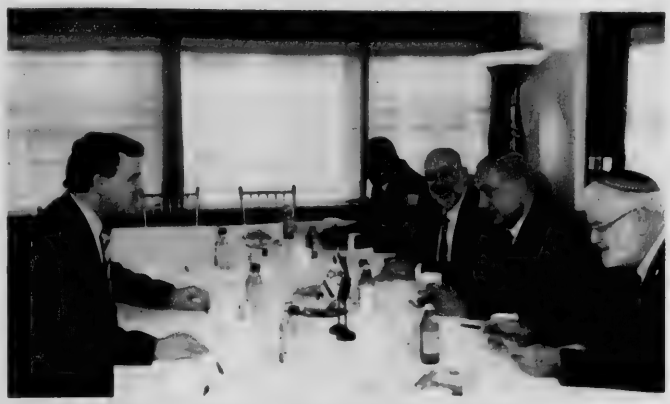
"Sound bites do not remove threats to global security. Kind words, a smile and a charm offensive are not a substitute for real action," he said.

Canada's relationship with Iran remains strained since Canada severed diplomatic ties with the regime last year, calling it a state sponsor of terrorism.

"We ended that diplomatic presence because of our increased uncertainty about the safety of our personnel in Iran and we will not return until we think those kinds of questions can be adequately addressed," Harper said.

In November, Canada is planning to present the United Nations with a resolution condemning Iran's human rights record.

Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs CEO Shimon Fogel, said he is "very satisfied with the Canadian response."



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meets with Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, left, during the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly at the UN headquarters. ***[Flash90 photo]***

He referred to Baird's speech at the UN, where he spoke about "our collective responsibility to ensure that rhetoric is matched by more meaningful demonstration in actions."

In Rouhani's former position as a lead negotiator, he publicly boasted about "a strategy of delay, denial and deception... where they would engage in discussions while, at the same time, they were accelerating the process of trying to secure enriched uranium," Fogel said.

"Given his own record, we have to be very suspicious of these efforts to reach out to the international community as nothing more than a ploy to disguise their efforts to continue with the program."

Iran approves joint probe of AMIA bombing

JTA

BUENOS AIRES — Iran approved the memorandum signed nine months ago with Argentina to jointly probe the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish centre in Buenos Aires.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Saturday at UN headquarters in New York that the blateral agreement was approved by "competent authorities" in his country, according to the *Buenos Aires Herald* newspaper.

Zarif and his Argentine counterpart, Hector Timerman, jointly announced the approval by the Iranians at the United Nations.

In her address last week before the UN General Assembly, Argentine President Cristina Fernandez called on Iran to provide an update on the status of the memorandum.

"We are hoping they will tell us that the agreement has been approved [in Iran] and to set a date when a judge will be able to fly to Tehran," she told the assembly.

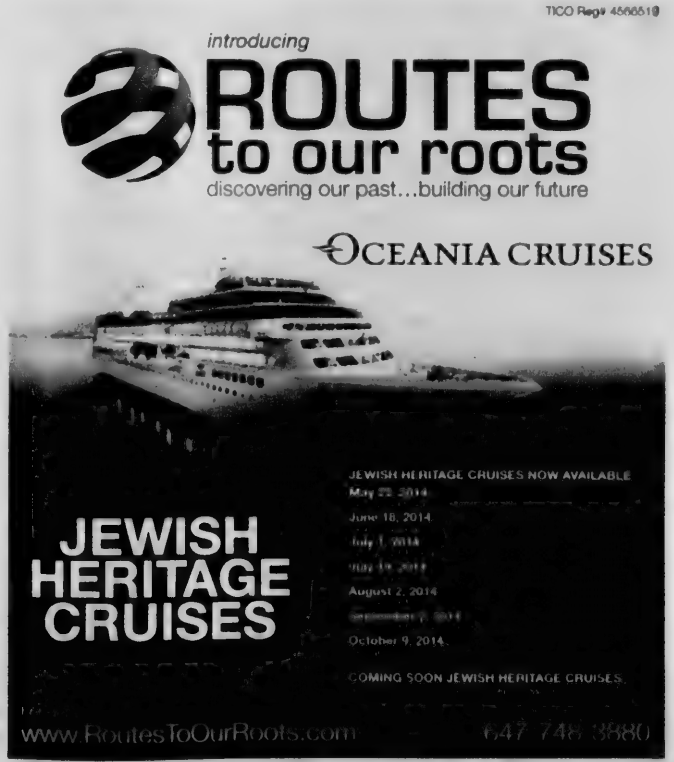
There has been no agreement on a date for Argentine investigators to travel to Iran to interview suspects. The next step will be the exchange of documents officially announcing that the governments have approved the memorandum of understanding.

The next bilateral meeting will be held in early November in Geneva. Both governments then must agree on the details and procedures of the Truth Commission made up of independent legal experts, from neither Argentina and Iran, who will be analyzing the evidence gathered on the AMIA attack and issue a report.

The bilateral accord to jointly investigate the July 1994 AMIA bombing came in January. The attack in Argentina's capital city killed 85 and injured hundreds.

Argentina's Jewish community, international Jewish groups, Israel and the United States have protested the agreement.

To read an analysis of U.S. President Barack Obama's speech at the UN and up-to-date coverage of Israeli Prime Minister's speech at the General Assembly, please go to cjnews.com



Israel warned Kenya of terror attack risk

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel was among the countries that warned Kenya's government about the high risk of a terrorist attack in the months before the recent attack on a Nairobi mall.

"Israel had warned of attacks on their business interests, but apart from just being tossed from one office to another, nothing was taken out of the intelligence reports," an anonymous official told the French news agency *AFP* in a report released Sunday.

A report in the Kenyan daily the *Nation*, citing a leaked intelligence report, said the treasury, interior, foreign affairs and defence ministers, as well as the army chief, had been told of the high risk of a terror attack, according to *AFP*.

AFP cited security sources as saying that "Israeli services are playing a lead role in the ongoing investigation into the attack."

Israeli defence officials last week confirmed that a security team arrived in Nairobi within hours of the hostage crisis at the Westgate Mall. The officials said the team advised Kenya authorities on the terrorist standoff at the upscale mall and did not include combat units.

At least 68 people were killed in the four-day siege, in which non-Muslims were singled out for death. Some 175 people were injured in the attack.

One Israeli was injured and three others escaped harm, according to Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two Canadians were killed and two others were injured.

The five-storey shopping centre features several Israeli-owned outlets, according to wire services. Among them is the ArtCaffe – the attack by eight gunmen took place near the coffee shop and bakery.

Members of Al Shabab, a Somalia-based terror group linked to Al Qaeda, claimed responsibility for the attack. Al Shabab said the attack was revenge for Kenya's military operations in Somalia that began nearly two years ago.

The Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, site of the terror attack

[Wikimedia Commons photo]

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Circumcision ban introduced in Sweden

JTA

STOCKHOLM — A motion to ban the non-medical circumcision of males younger than 18 has been presented to the Swedish parliament.

Two lawmakers from the rightist Sweden Democrats party, noting that female genital mutilation is illegal in Sweden, submitted the motion to the Riksdag on Sept. 24. A vote on it has not been set.

Bjorn Soder and Per Ramhorn wrote in the measure that "boys should have the same right to avoid both complications of reduced sensitivity in the genitals, painful erections, increased risk of kidney damage and psychological distress by permanent removal, and the tremendous violation of privacy that circumcision actually means."

The motion proposes to scrap legislation from 2001 that says circumcision of newborns is permissible if it is performed by a "licensed professional."

Jewish ritual circumcisers, or mohelim, in Sweden receive their licenses from the country's health board, but a nurse or doctor must still be present when they perform the procedure.

The anti-immigration Sweden Democrats party was established in 1988 but only made it into parliament following unprecedented gains in the 2010 elections, when it garnered 5.7 per cent of the votes, or 20 seats out of 349 in Sweden's parliament. The opposition party is the sixth-largest faction in the Riksdag.

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the European Conference of Rabbis, said the proposal "betrays a dangerous ignorance of what is involved in the practice of milah as compared with the abhorrent practice of female genital mutilation."

The motion's authors "seem to have overlooked the fact that if circumcision were to be banned, that would itself represent the most serious violation of human rights in recent memory," he added in a statement.

Ritual circumcision of underage boys increasingly has come under attack in Scandinavia, both by left-wing secularists as well as right-wingers who fear the influence of immigration from Muslim countries.

The opposition follows a ruling last year by a German court in Cologne that ritual circumcision amounted to a criminal act. The ruling was overturned but triggered temporary bans in Austria and Switzerland.

Sweden has about 20,000 Jews and 500,000 Muslims, according to a U.S. State Department report from 2011.

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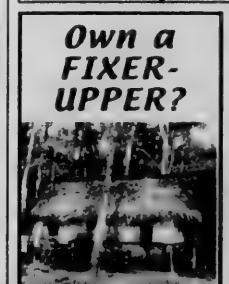

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Dr. Sydney Taylor	Sep 13/13	4 Sulgrave Cres
Gertrude Gross	Sep 16/13	33 Wilmington Ave
Max Rubenstein	Sep 16/13	8 Kirkton Rd
Arlene Stone	Sep 17/13	1068 Avenue Rd
Merle Seligman	Sep 19/13	616 Avenue Rd
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Firm offers Israeli security in Canada

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There's big money in the security software business. Just a month or two ago, the Israeli-based company, Trusteer, which makes security software to protect data from malware attacks, was acquired by tech giant IBM in a deal rumoured to be worth between $800 million and $1 billion (US).

It's no surprise that Israeli firms are at the forefront of the security industry – whether it's at the airport, around infrastructure installations or in the cyber sphere.

Consider the neighbourhood Israel lives in. Israeli firms have long been recognized as pioneers in security arrangements to go along with the country's reputation as a high-tech innovator. Combining the two has long been an Israeli specialty and recently, Pillar Canada Corporation announced it has been named the Canadian representative of Foresight Prudence, an Israeli company at the forefront of protecting businesses and infrastructure sites from terrorist attacks. The Israeli company employs state-of-the-art systems run on proprietary software programs to protect potential high value targets from terrorist attack, said Arie Raif, president and CEO of Pillar.

"Foresight Prudence fights what is known in our industry as 'the age of terror.' We live in an age of terrorism and we fight it on four fronts."

The company, Raif continued, has particular expertise in suppressing global terrorism, in risk management – coping with "mega-disasters" that result from terrorism or "mega-crimes" – preventing cyber-attacks, and responding to natural disasters.

The protection component presented by the company is capable of assessing dangers, prioritizing responses, mitigating damages and managing incidents.

"In other words, it's homeland security solutions," Raif said.

A glance at Foresight Prudence's Petach Tikvah-based management team quickly demonstrates the company's security and intelligence expertise was hard earned.

The company's CEO, Shlomo Mofaz, retired from the Israeli Defence Forces as a colonel after more than 30 years in the intelligence and counterterrorism field. Before founding Foresight Prudence, Mofaz established and managed Insightin LTD, a company specializing in intelligence, command and control, and risk assessment solutions.

Shmuel Sasson, the company's executive vice-president, served for more than 23 years in the Israel Security Agency – also known as Shin Bet, the country's internal security force. Among the management positions he held were director of the operations department in the Israeli Dignitary and Official Delegations Protection Unit and regional security director for western Europe, with responsibility for national security abroad. He later served as head of security for El-Al Airlines.

With that sort of pedigree, coupled with the company's unique software solutions Raif is confident Pillar can appeal to Canadian clients.

"Israeli experience of years of success in fighting terrorism comes into what we are offering," he said.

"Israel does it best. Experience matters, track record matters, success matters."

In addition to the expertise offered by Foresight Prudence's top management, Oren Ben-Tovim "is the brains behind many of the systems developed by Foresight," Raif stated.

A lieutenant-colonel in the IDF reserves, Ben-Tovim served as the IDF's chief knowledge officer and head of information and knowledge management.

"He is the brains behind many of the systems developed by Foresight... They're joined by scientists who have developed protection and risk management systems," said Raif.

DJ Schneeweiss, Israel's consul general in Toronto, said the country "has a proven track record with the skills and capacities that are recognized around the world."

Arie Raif

Although he wouldn't comment on any specific company, he said Israeli experiences are "relevant to every advanced country."

That goes beyond security considerations to other aspects of its high-tech economy.

"The success of any one company, in its dealings with Canada is good for all. It creates awareness of what Israel has to offer," he said.

Foresight Prudence has had many high profile clients, but perhaps its biggest project was designing the protection system for the Athens Olympic Games, Raif said.

Raif believes the Canadian market offers numerous potential clients for Pillar. They range from government facilities; the energy sphere; power plants; the aviation sector; the trucking and rail business; critical infrastructure, such as water filtration plants; mining operations; and telecommunications.

And that list is far from exhaustive, said Raif. "Anything that's an inviting target for terror," would come under the company's purview, he said.

"In Canada, Pillar is going to offer the services of Foresight Prudence to make sure that incidents like [the planned Via Rail attack] don't happen," he said.

"Those who thought that terrorism is gone, or who believe they have the solution to global terrorism, cyber-terrorism, or mega-crimes, live in a world of illusion. We do not live in some kind of a dream. This is real," he added.

Billionaire funds Technion project

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — The richest man in Asia is giving $130 million (all figures U.S.) to the Technion to build a research centre in China. Li Ka Shing, estimated to be worth some $31 billion – and, according to *Forbes*, the world's eighth-richest man – is funding the joint project between the Technion and Shantou University, located in Guangdong Province.

The new centre, to be called the Technion Guangdong Institute of Technology (TGIT), will be located on its own 330,000-square-metre campus to be built by the local government, while the Li Ka Shing Foundation (LKSF) will fund projects and programs at the new centre. LKSF is the main funding arm for Shantou, providing nearly all of the school's HK$6 billion endowment. The $130 million gift for the joint Technion-Shantou project, meanwhile, constitutes the largest gift ever to the Technion, and one of the largest to any Israeli school.

TGIT will begin offering undergraduate programs in civil and environmental engineering and computer sciences in the academic year beginning in November. Next year, the new joint project will conduct life sciences research to tackle medical and social issues, including improvements in clinical diagnosis procedures. By 2020, the institute will offer courses in other engineering-related fields, from mechanical to aerospace engineering.

The roots of the partnership go back to 2011, when LKSF officials visited the Technion, followed by a reciprocal visit to China by Technion President Dr. Peretz Lavie.

As a result of that 2011 trip, Li Ka Shing became interested in Israeli hi-tech and decided to invest in several Israeli start-ups, including Waze. Part of the money being used to fund the new project is coming out of the profit that Li earned when Google bought Waze earlier this year for some $900 million, LKSF said.

For China, said Professor Gu Peihua, provost of Shantou, the Technion is a role model for China to follow. Within a few decades, Gu said, he expected TGIT to become one of the best technological schools in Asia, if not the world.

Timesof Israel.com

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Canada's Jewish community explored

Martin Lockshin
Special to The CJN

Fewer than three per cent of the world's Jews live in Canada, yet our community is the fourth-largest in the world. If current intermarriage, immigration and emigration patterns continue, the Canadian Jewish community could take over third place from France in the next 10 or 20 years.

Thus Canada figures in a new series of books being published by Academic Studies Press in the United States, *Jews in Space and Time*. For the Canadian volume, they chose one of the acknowledged leaders in the field of Canadian Jewish studies, Prof. Ira Robinson of Concordia University, as the editor. Robinson gathered an impressive team of scholars to contribute chapters and titled the volume *Canada's Jews in Time, Space and Spirit*.

This ambitious book attempts to cover Canada both geographically and temporally. The book refers to events from the 18th century up to and including the current decade. It contains chapters on "Atlantic Canada," "Vancouver" and most places in between. Two valuable overview chapters are contributed by two of my York University colleagues. David Koffman writes on the state of the field of scholarly Canadian Jewish studies, and Randall Schnoor analyzes demographic data about Canada's Jews.

Jews who live in Toronto and others interested in this thriving community (probably the city with the 15th-largest number of Jews in the world) will find particular interest in the essay of another of my York University colleagues, Michael Brown, "Steps Forward and Steps Backward: Toronto Jewry in the Beginning of the Second Decade of the Twenty-First Century." Brown doesn't shy away from some of the more controversial aspects of Toronto's recent Jewish history, such as the abrupt closing of the Board of Jewish Education and the abolishment of Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canada-Israel Committee, the University Outreach Committee, and National Jewish Campus Life, the latter four all folded into one larger organization, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. Brown describes all these moves with the objectivity of the fine historian that he is, but the careful reader will be able to tell what he thinks.

The book has some unexpected imbalances. For example, of the four chapters in a row on Orthodox, chassidic, Reform and Conservative Judaism in Canada, the first, on Orthodoxy, is 3-1/2 pages long. Each of the other three chapters is at least three times as long. The disparity is not only one of length. While the other three chapters deal with significant issues confronting Canada's chassidic, Reform and Conservative communities, the chapter on Orthodoxy mentions no issues, concerns or problems.

In fact, Canada's Orthodox community faces many interesting tensions, some of them virtually unique to Canada.

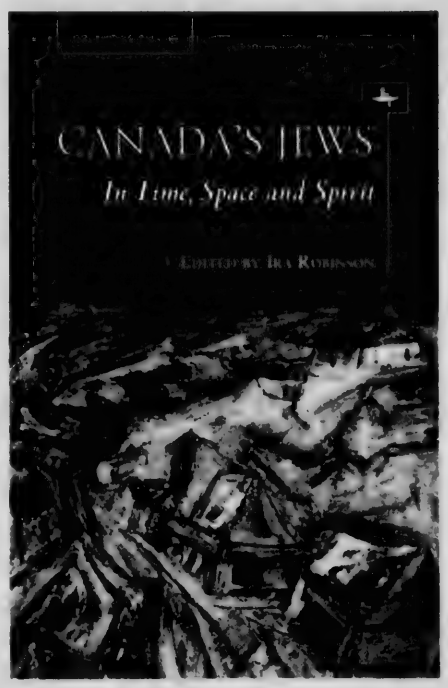
Due to lobbying efforts by Canadian Jews, Canada has some of the best state legislation in the world to protect women from estranged husbands who withhold a *get*, a Jewish divorce. Nevertheless, in some (but not all) Canadian cities, rabbinical courts are reluctant to use the force of the secular courts to deal with the problem of these stranded women. In this area, as in others (such as conversion standards), serious conflict exists between modern and less modern elements of Canada's Orthodox rabbinate. I was disappointed that none of this appeared in the book, but whenever a book consists of essays from different authors, it's hard to achieve true balance.

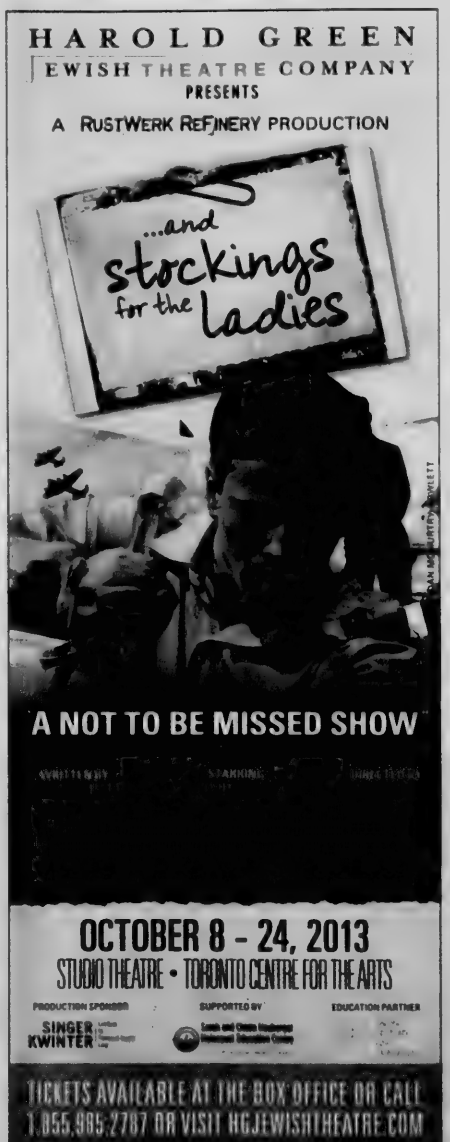
One theme that runs through many essays is anti-Semitism in Canada. Jack Lipinsky's essay traces how concerns about anti-Semitism led to the creation of various Jewish community organizations in the first half of the 20th century. These concerns were certainly real. Lipinsky describes how in 1910, a speaker at a Catholic Youth conference in Quebec dredged up "a host of medieval calumnies against Jews: they were thieves, deceitful in business, corrupters of women and spreaders of disease." He "repeated the age-old canard of the blood libel and urged the Canadian government to revoke the Jews' citizenship rights."

Other essays make it clear that these problems weren't limited to Quebec. In 1924, the *Toronto Telegram* (the newspaper that, a few years later, my parents would read every day) proclaimed that, "An influx of Jews puts a worm next to the kernel of every fair city where they get a hold. These people have no national tradition... They engage in the wars of no country, but flit from one to another under passports changed with chameleon swiftness, following up the wind the smell of lucre." Other quotations from 20th-century Canadian anti-Semites manage to accuse Jews of being both Communists and greedy capitalists.

Brown's chapter on Toronto, mentioned above, finishes with a lengthy micro-study of recent events at York University that have led some to argue that anti-Semitism is alive and well there. He quotes Jason Kenney, then Canada's minister of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism, who implausibly claimed a few years ago that at York we have seen "what is reminiscent of the ancient pogroms." Not to be outdone, one hot-headed Toronto rabbi is quoted accusing a senior York administrator of "again show[ing] his amazing tolerance for anti-Semitism and lack of vigilance regarding the feeling of safety for Jewish students on campus."

I encourage everyone to read Brown's insider analysis of the situation at York. But I will share my own assessment: judicious readers of this book will find an inverse relationship over the years between the intensity of the problem of Canadian anti-Semitism and the intensity of the reaction to it.





A tale of two Chabads in Tokyo, Japan

Emma Csillag and Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

TOKYO — Japan, with no more than 1,000 Jews at any time, reminds one of the joke about a Jewish man stranded on a desert island, and who builds two synagogues. One he uses, and the other, "I wouldn't set foot in."

Tokyo, a sprawling metropolis of 13 million residents and 10 million daily commuters, has not one but two Chabad centres – and they are not on speaking terms.

Rabbi David Kunin, spiritual leader of Tokyo's only non-Chabad shul, located in the Jewish Community of Japan building in the city's leafy Shibuya district, takes no pleasure in describing the animosity between the rival Chabads.

The New York-born Rabbi Kunin, who's fresh in Tokyo, having only recently arrived from Edmonton, where he served at Beth Shalom Synagogue for a decade, put it discreetly: One Chabad is part of the movement that believes its late leader, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who died in 1994, is the messiah. The other one does not.

"They don't talk to each other," says Rabbi Kunin, leaving it at that.

When we attended Rosh Hashanah services at the Tokyo JCC, Rabbi Kunin presided before about 50 worshippers on day one (with kids in the basement), and maybe 20 on day two. Both were warm, inclusive and familiar, and honours were freely handed out to newbies (we carried and dressed the Torah).

The sole concession to our location was the customary prayer to the host country. Instead of Canada, a prayer for the welfare of Japan was recited – in Japanese. Everything else could have come from any fully egalitarian North American synagogue.

Worshippers were mainly from English-speaking countries: Canada, the U.S., Britain and Australia. Some ex-pats live here full time but most Jews are transient: Teachers, diplomats, business people, military types, and young backpacking Israelis. There were some Israelis in attendance, including the chazzan.

There were a few Japanese faces, the results of inter-marriages. The loudest and most mellifluous voice belonged to a middle-aged Japanese lady who recited every verse, prayer and hymn in impeccable Hebrew.

The building has a very Japanese esthetic. Simple beech-coloured strips of wood arch over the walls onto the ceiling in the sanctuary. The rest of the three-storey structure is elegant, with clean lines. There are meeting rooms, a lounge, mikvah, classrooms, gift shop and a rooftop terrace. The "JJBA" – the Japanese & Jewish Business Association – is advertised.

The community centre houses a synagogue inside. [Ron Csillag photos]

Emma Csillag stands in front of the Jewish Community of Japan building.

The site on which the building stands was acquired in 1952 and a synagogue was established the following year. (The opening ceremony was attended by Japan's Prince and Princess Mikasa). The structure was torn down in 2008 and a new modern building, designed by renowned architect Fumiko Maki, was inaugurated in 2009.

Jewish traders and merchants came to Japan at least around the 17th century, but the first confirmed community was in Yokohama in 1861. Synagogues were established in Nagasaki in 1894, in Kobe in 1937 (it was damaged in the 1995 earthquake and restored with the help of Vancouver's Jewish community), and finally, in Tokyo.

Rabbi Kunin is not the only rabbi with a Canadian connection to Japan: Rabbi Carnie Shalom Rose of Winnipeg served here in the late 1990s.

Following services, we lunch with the rabbi, who has mostly fond memories of Edmonton, a young man from aboard the carrier USS George Washington, and Capt. Bruce "Skip" Walker, military attaché at Canada's embassy and his family. The rabbi's wife was to follow as soon as their dogs had cleared quarantine. The chicken soup and kosher chicken, flown in from the U.S., tasted like home.

Ask what Japan's relations with Israel are like, and people shrug. "Mostly benign neglect," someone says. That may be true at the highest levels, but the two countries routinely exchange missions in technology and agriculture. Following the 2011 tsunami and earthquake, Israel sent emergency medical teams for which Japan was grateful, even more so after the Israelis left behind all their equipment. The Israelis here point out that Japan is highly dependent on Arab oil.

Anti-Semitism is virtually non-existent, especially in a land where people routinely meld Buddhist traditions with Shinto, the native religion, and with Christian weddings and Christmas celebrations thrown in.

On leaving, we hear "Shana Tova" mixed with *domo arigato*, Japanese for "thank you."

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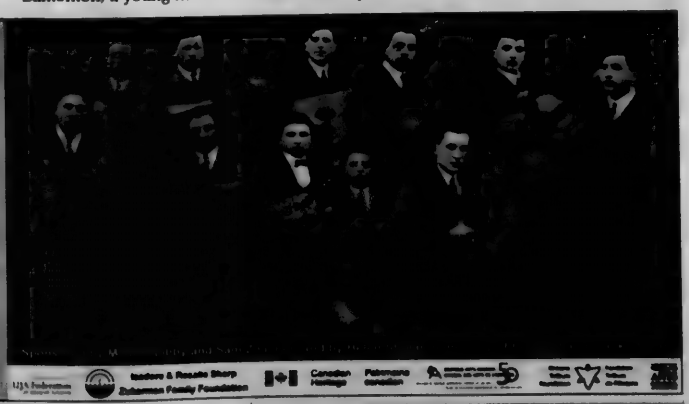

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ANNE MIRVISH PROVIDED ARTISTIC VISION TO HONEST ED

Anne Mirvish, artist and wife of the late **"Honest" Ed Mirvish**, has died in Toronto at the age of 94.

She was born **Anne Macklin** in Hamilton, Ont., in 1919. As a child, she took piano lessons, was a good singer and loved to draw. After high school she worked in an office.

She married Mirvish in 1941 and helped him establish a small women's sportswear store at the corner of Bathurst and Bloor with money attained by cashing her life insurance policy. At one point the store was called Anne & Eddie's. In 1948 the store expanded over a few adjacent storefronts and became known as Honest Ed's, now a famous bargain emporium. (Ed Mirvish died in 2007.)

Anne studied art periodically in Toronto, attended the Banff School of Fine Art in the 1950s, and studied with American abstract expressionist Paul Burlin in New York in 1962. She specialized in sculpture and for her art career took the name **Anne Lazare**, using her mother's maiden name.

She worked in cast bronze, pewter, silver, wood, marble and other materials. Her sculptures were in the collections of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington and the National Archives of Canada. Over the last decade she had several exhibitions in the John B. Aird Gallery, Canadian Sculpture Centre and other venues.

A devotee of theatre and opera, she was instrumental in persuading her husband to purchase the dilapidated Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto in 1964, thus launching his long career as a theatre impresario. She also persuaded him to buy up an entire city block of houses on Markham street and convert them into an artists' colony. "I'm the storekeeper," Ed once explained. "Anne is the inspiration."

Her influence is equally visible in her son, **David Mirvish**, the art collector and theatre impresario who took over and expanded upon his father's interests in the live theatre business.

Anne was president of a Hadassah chapter and was involved with the National Council of Jewish Women, Mount Sinai Hospital, Baycrest Women's Auxiliary, Boys Town Jerusalem, Canadian Mental Health Association and other organizations. She was a patron of the Canadian Opera Company and a life member of the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum.

* * *

Names in the News: *Ghost Dance*, the current show at the Ryerson Image Centre, 350 Victoria St., examines the role of the artist as activist, as chronicler and as provocateur in the struggle for indigenous rights and self-empowerment. Its guest curator, **Steve Loft,** is a Mohawk of the Six Nations with Jewish heritage. Participating artists include **Vernon Ah Kee**, **Sonny Assu**, **Scott Benesiinaabandan**, **Dana Claxton**, **Cheryl L'Hirondelle**, **Alan Michelson**, **Theo Sims**, **Skawennati** and **Jackson 2bears**.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Toronto Workmen's Circle hosts the book launch of the late **Chava Rosenfarb's** *Exile at Last: Selected Poems*. Program features an introduction in English by Rosenfarb's daughter **Dr. Goldie Morgentaler**, readings in Yiddish by **Rivka Augenfeld** and in English by **Ken Sherman**, and poems set to music by **Henri Oppenheim**. 471 Lawrence Ave. W., Oct. 6, 2 p.m. Refreshments, admission free.

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Seven Minutes in Heaven* (Israel, 2008), a "deceptively simple thriller (that) mixes romance, psychology and mysticism to tell a powerful story of love and survival." With guest speaker **Mark Clamen**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Oct. 20, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at the door only, 15 minutes before screenings. $15, $10. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** gives a series of eight lectures with film clips on "The Enigmatic Genius of **Robert Altman.**" Miles Nadal JCC, Mondays from Oct. 21 to Dec. 9. $90 for series, $11.25 drop in, students $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

* * *

At the Galleries

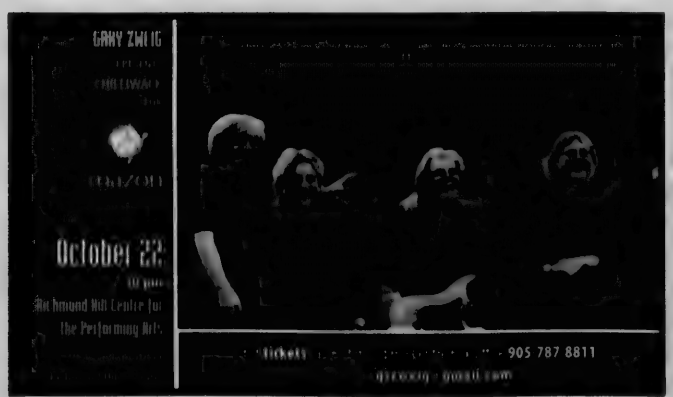
• *Impressions of Life*, an exhibit of the work of nine Toronto painters exploring the theme of "lives lived and legacies left behind," includes the work of Israeli-born artist **Adi Zur**. 201 Niagara St., near King and Bathurst (side entrance). Oct. 4 and Oct. 5, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. www.impressionsoflifeart.com

• *Migrations*, an exhibition of paintings by **Shaoul Smaira,** is on view in the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery, presented with the Julie M Gallery. To Oct. 24.

• Instructor **L. J. Neiles** leads the Miles Nadal JCC Theatre Lab, offering confidence and skill-building classes in voice, character, movement and text for actors of all levels. No previous experience necessary. $120 for 12 weekly classes from Oct. 10 to Jan. 23, 2014, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Vernissage (preview) and book launch of **Allan Silburt's** book about his father, *A Colourful Life – the Art and Drawing of Josh Silbert*, is at the Art Square Gallery, 334 Dundas St. W., Oct. 10, 7 p.m. www.art-square.ca, 416-894-6456.

• *Honouring Women* is a series of 14 large-format paintings of Jewish women by Vancouver artist **Jazmin Sasky**, formerly of Buenos Aires. They were on display at the Sidney & Gertrude Zacks Gallery in the Vancouver JCC and may now be viewed at the artist's website, jazmins.wix.com/jazmin sasky



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HEEBONICS

LGBT leader pushes for acceptance and inclusivity

Cara Stern
Staff reporter

Justine Apple led Kulanu's march at the 2013 Pride parade in Toronto.

Justine Apple says it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Kulanu Toronto has saved lives.

"Kulanu has and will continue to save the lives of many people, younger and older, who have nowhere to turn and are often rejected by their families and their friends," says the executive director of the gay Jewish community group.

Founded in 2000, Kulanu Toronto, gives lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Jews a place to connect with people who can relate to their experiences. It also seeks to educate the community and encourage people to fully include gay Jews.

"People need to open their eyes and realize that queer Jews need to be recognized," Apple says. "Kulanu Toronto provides such a vital part of the fabric of the Jewish community."

Apple says she came out as a lesbian to her family and close friends when she was 21. It wasn't an easy task.

"I was struggling at the time because my parents were having a difficult time with the realization that their eldest daughter was gay," she says. "At the time I felt very ignored in conversation, and I felt quite isolated."

A woman she was dating suggested they try out a Kulanu event. There, Apple met other Jews whose ability to relate to her situation gave her a sense of belonging.

"It was mainly women who shared my struggles and my values and my interests," she says.

"That's what brought us all together."

Five years ago, Apple was invited to join the executive committee for Kulanu, and within a year, because of her passion and leadership potential, she was asked to be executive director.

It's a tough position, she says. It requires a huge time commitment despite being a volunteer position. But she describes it as highly rewarding.

"I get to meet and work with amazing queer Jews of all ages and Jewish affiliations," she says.

"I love to see our members developing friendships with each other. It's beautiful to see."

Despite the hard work, she says she continues to do it because it gives her the chance to help LGBT Jews feel a sense of belonging and comfort.

"When I came out 15 years ago – and it feels like yesterday – I was 21 and I felt lots of backlash," she says. "I spent months and years feeling very isolated, very guilty, very ashamed."

She continued to attend her Orthodox synagogue throughout her 20s but she avoided discussing her sexual orientation especially with the rabbi who, at the time, refused to acknowledge the LGBT members of the congregation.

But Kulanu helped her realize there was nothing wrong with being both gay and Jewish.

"I was still the same special Justine I'd been before I came out," she says.

Over time, she says, she even began to feel proud of her identity.

Eventually, Apple's mother also grew more comfortable with her daughter's sexual orientation, and she even began talking to friends and family about the situation, Apple says. Having her mother's acceptance helped, and these days, her family is fully accepting of her – including her extended family members who identify as Orthodox.

Acceptance from the more observant parts of the community has been growing too, although there's a still a lot of room for improvement.

This year representatives from Conservative synagogues joined the Kulanu contingent at the annual Pride parade, and the Toronto Board of Rabbis offered its support.

Oddly enough, the inclusion of an anti-Israel group, Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA), in the Toronto Pride parade over the past few years has helped bring Kulanu into the public eye, Apple says.

Members of the media have asked Kulanu to respond to QuAIA's actions. At the Pride parade, many people walking with Kulanu told *The CJN* that QuAIA's presence, and support for Israel, did influence their decision to march.

Although QuAIA has ironically helped raise Kulanu's profile, Apple says she's hoping to shift the media focus back to spreading a positive and inclusive message, rather than focusing on condeming QuAIA's actions.

To that end, she's working on a plan to ensure that Kulanu's presence at the international event, WorldPride 2014, which will be held in Toronto next summer, will serve to further the acceptance of LGBT Jews in Toronto. She says they're even considering having a float in the parade.

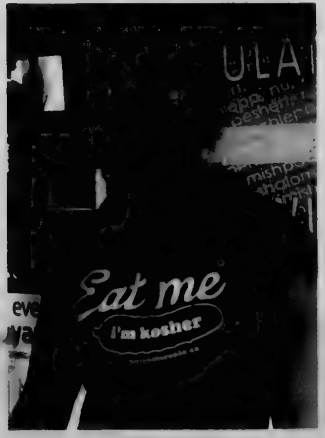
Apple says she's hoping the number of supporters will continue to grow, as well as the number of members of Kulanu.

Currently there are about 400 people on the group's mailing list. Apple's vision for Kulanu's future also involves having a space for the group to operate.

"When they're with us, they feel special and welcome and acknowledged," she says, so having a permanent space would be very helpful.

"It's people coming together in a welcoming, inclusive space where they feel comfortable to express their Jewish and LGBT identities."

For more information about Kulanu Toronto, visit kulanutoron-to.blogspot.com



Justine Apple

Deadline reminder: Oct. 7 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 17. Oct. 14 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 24. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 3

MINDFULNESS AND STRESS

Janet Murchison discusses "Mindfulness as an Approach to Stress," 6:30 p.m., Community Day Centre for Seniors, 3560 Bathurst St. RSVP to **Ella Segal** 416-785-2500, ext. 2108 or esegal@baycrest.org. Respite care and transportation available.

JERRY GRAY

The Yiddish Vinkl presents **Jerry Gray,** accompanied by his banjo, noon at the Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 (including lunch). RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

EVA GRAYZEL

Storyteller **Eva Grayzel** discusses, "Rituals Rich With Reward - Family Education Workshop for Parents," 7:30 p.m., Leo Baeck Day School, 501 Arlington Ave. RSVP bgottlieb@leobaeck.ca.

NO PLACE ON EARTH

Beth Sholom Synagogue shows the movie *No Place on Earth*. Minyan at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., movie at 7:45 p.m. $10. RSVP **Rivy**, 416-783-6103, ext. 228 or rivy@bethsholom.net.

Friday, Oct. 4

CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES

Sylvia Warsh teaches creative writing starting today at the Bernard Betel Centre. Call 416-225-2112.

Sunday, Oct. 6

CHAVA ROSENFARB

Goldie Morgentaler presents a new book of poetry by her mother, **Chava Rosenfarb,** 2 p.m., Workmen's Circle Centre, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. The book launch will feature readings and music in English and Yiddish.

FOR ISRAEL'S SAKE

JSpace holds a conference on "Raising the Voice of Progressive Zionists in Canada," 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 569 Spadina Ave. Register at www.JSpaceCanada.ca. Email **Nan Weiner** at JSpaceCanada@gmail.com.

TRAVEL TO BERLIN & WARSAW

Cathy McPherson and **Paul Weinberg** present photos and discuss their trip to Berlin, Warsaw and Krakow, 11 a.m., 918 Bathurst St. 416-789-5502.

SHAAR SHALOM SINGLES

Shaar Shalom Singles (50+)presents an autumn dance/concert featuring **Jordan Klapman** and **Sharon Smith** at 7:30 p.m., 2 Simonston Blvd. 905-889-4975, ext. 72.

ONE KOTEL FOR ALL

Rabbi Jennifer Gorman discusses **Natan Sharansky's** proposal for the Western Wall, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tikvah.

ROSH HODESH

Chavi Goldberg discusses mikvah and marriage, 8 p.m., 1089 Spadina Rd. info@thechaicentre.com.

YOM KIPPUR WAR

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky, David and **Ruth Cymerman** discuss "Memories of the wYom Kippur War," 8 p.m. at Bnai Torah.

WOMEN'S LEARNING

Yael Gelernter discusses "Leadership: A Jewish Outlook" and **Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky** discusses "Superstition: Is it Good for the Jews," 10 a.m., Beth Avraham Yosef Congregation of Toronto. 647-234-7299.

Monday, Oct. 7

UPTOWN CHABAD GALA

Eva Schloss, stepsister of **Anne Frank,** is the keynote speaker at Uptown Chabad's Gala. For tickets www.ChabadGala.ca or 416-635-9696.

HIGH-TECH TALK

Marc Saltzman, host of radio show *Tech Talk*, discusses technology with the Forestdale Heights Lodge, B'nai Brith Canada, 7:30 p.m., 15 Hove St. Call **Harvey Silver** 416-223-0780.

VISITING ISRAELI SCHOLAR

Avishai Margalit, recipient of the 2011 Israel Prize in Philosophy, is the guest scholar at Beth Tzedec. Today he discusses, "The Historian as Betrayer: The Case of Joesphus,", 4 p.m., University of Toronto; Oct. 8, "The Arab Spring and the Israeli Spring," 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec; Oct. 9, "Ashkenazi Jews and Eastern Jews: Is it a Clash?" 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec.

Tuesday, Oct. 8

BULLYING

Anthony McLean discusses "What every parent needs to know about bullying," at Na'amat Canada's Club Rimon, 7:30 p.m. at Beth David Synagogue. $20 in advance/$25 at the door. www.clubrimon.com or 416-636-5425

Continued on page 37

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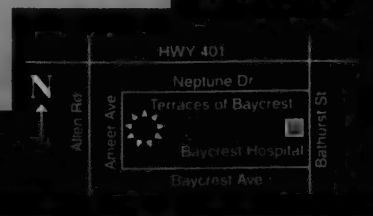

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Continued from page 36

LUNCH AND LEARN

Corey Keeble discusses "Great Synagogues of the USA," at Beth Tikvah's Lunch and Learn series. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Wednesday, Oct. 9

FAMILY FEUDS IN THE BIBLE

Hana Werner discusses "The Rape: Amnon and Tamar," dessert, 1 p.m., lecture at 1:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS

Mothers and daughters study together in a bat mitzvah program led by **Pnina Weintraub.** Call 416-633-5770 or visit www.torahinmotion.org.

LEMON BUCKET ORCHESTRA

The Lemon Bucket Orchestra performs at Beth Sholom Synagogue, 8 p.m. $18. RSVP **Rivy** 416-783-6103, ext. 228.

SAVING BULGARIA'S JEWS

Prince Hermann Friedrich of Leiningen, whose family was responsible for saving Bulgaria's Jews, speaks to Na'amat Canada, Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave., 7:30 p.m. No charge, but RSVP to 416-636-5425 or email Naamattoronto.com.

Thursday, Oct. 10

SAVING & INVESTING

Elaine Knotek-Holmes discusses "Save, Invest, Prosper at Every Age," 8 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL

Israeli Consul General DJ Schneeweiss discusses "What we talk about when we talk about Israel," 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

ETHICS AND HALACHA

Rabbi Martin Lockshin discusses "Ethics and Halachah," 7:30 p.m. at Adath Israel.

MORASHA CLASSES

Shayna Kravetz teaches, "Ten Tough Torah Questions – Part One," Oct. 10-Nov. 7, 7:15 p.m. **Bracha Feder** teaches "Leaders and the People," Oct. 16-Nov. 20. Classes at Beth Emeth Synagogue. To register, call **Loretta** 416-789-7400.

Other News

BAYT YOUTH PROGRAMS

Registration is now open for all youth programs at Beth Avraham Yoseph Congregation of Toronto. Classes include floor hockey, and girls' sports night. Call **Rich Winkler** 905-886-3810, ext. 135 or email rich@bayt.ca.

COMMUNITY HUB

Beth Emeth Synagogue dedicates its community hub project (emergency generator and Shelley's elevator) Oct. 11, 11 a.m.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS

Circle of Care, in partnership with Jewish Family and Child, is looking for volunteers to attend hospice training. Call **Lysa**, 416-635-2900, ext. 496 or lspringer@circleofcare.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 or www.jfandcs.com. All classes held at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Oct. 16 at 35 Madison Ave., 2:30 p.m. or Oct. 17, Lipa Green, 7 p.m.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement Group: A 6-session group for those under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group. Offered with the Rabbinical Assembly-Ontario. Starts Oct. 22, Adath Israel Synagogue, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers 60+: A 6-session group for men and women over 60 who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts Oct. 23, 1 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

When You're About to Separate, What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Topics include time and stress management, building self-esteem, communication skills. Starts Oct. 29, 1 p.m., 35 Madison Ave.

Adult Child Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Functioning in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals on higher order thinking skills and how to support children with difficulties. Oct. 30, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups for bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Baycrest Learning Academy for Older Adults is offering courses in partnership with the Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University. Classes start at Baycrest in October. Call **Laura Hogan** at 416-785-2500, ext. 5209 or www.Baycrest.org/LearningAcademy.

Lively Ladies, a new social group for single, widowed or divorced women over 60, is holding a membership luncheon Oct. 6, 12:30 p.m. at Viva Thornhill Woods Retirement Home, 9700 Bathurst St., Thornhill. RSVP **Raizie** 905-707-7377 or **Rosalyn** 905-889-0613.

Beth Tzedec Haverim. Views of Old Toronto are presented by **Bill Gladstone,** 1:30 p.m., Oct. 7. 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors Club. Kosher food, card games. 416-256-1892.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine Oct. 23. Dance with live music Oct. 27. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Oct. 8, **Warren Green** discusses "The Uniqueness of the American Jewish Experience," 10 a.m.

Beth Sholom Seniors Group, 416-783-6103, ext. 228. Trip to see *Cirque de la Symphonie*, Oct. 16.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Oct. 6, 12:15 p.m., 60th-anniversary brunch with the Jordan Klapman Trio. Oct. 10, 1:30 p.m., **Dr. Kerry Bowman** discusses "Health care, home care, maintaining your quality of life and independence."

Active 55+ Miles Nadal JCC Ongoing fitness classes, call **Colin Blayney**, 416-924-6211, ext. 526, or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Women's-only fitness classes start this month. Sundays Spin and Abs 11 a.m.; Mondays Power Hour 10:30 a.m.; Tuesdays Yoga 10:30 a.m., Spin 7:30 p.m.; Wednesdays Core Conditioning 10:30 a.m.; Thursdays Spin 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 4000.

Kevin Courrier discusses the show *Law and Order* Oct. 7 and Nov. 4, 1 p.m. Ext. 4235.

Learn about Jewish food practices Tuesdays Oct. 15-Nov. 5. 10 a.m. Ext. 4235.

Dr. Jonathan Breslin discusses "Ethics in Health Care: Current Challenges," Oct. 8, 22 and Nov. 5, 1 p.m. To register call ext. 4235.

Amnon Zohar discusses social and political change in the Middle East, Tuesdays starting Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Nuit Blanche Havdalah, Oct. 5 at 8 p.m. Kick off Nuit Blanche with a musical Havdalah. Ext. 388

Noam Sienna leads a study of *The Robber and the Rabbi: A Tale of Love, Intrigue and Torah Study*, Oct. 6, 2:30 p.m.

Adult choir meets Tuesdays 1 p.m. No experience or sight reading needed. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Paintings by **Shaoul Smaira** are on display in the gallery from Oct. 8-24.

Theatre Lab with **LJ Nelles** starts Oct. 10 Learn skills in voice, character building, movement. No experience needed. Ext. 606.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, Oct. 21-Dec. 9., 7 p.m. Ext. 606.

Learn more about making Shabbat with **Belinda Keshen, Sharoni Siboney.** Oct. 27, 11:45 a.m. Email: principal@djcs.org.

Family Fun Fair Oct. 27, 1-3 p.m. Crafts, games and prizes for kids, while adults can learn more about community resources. Ext. 388.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call Coleman Bernstein, 416-968-0200.

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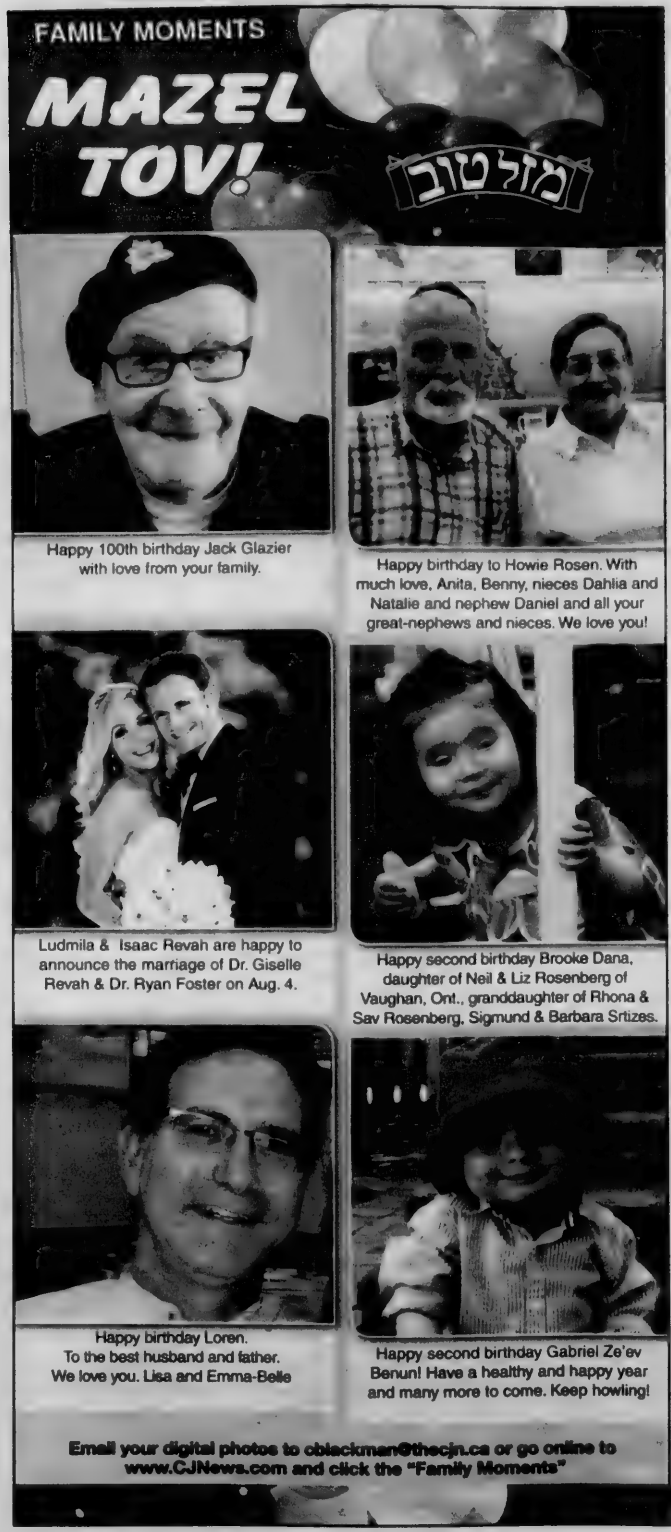

Happy 100th birthday Jack Glazier with love from your family.

Happy birthday to Howie Rosen. With much love, Anita, Benny, nieces Dahlia and Natalie and nephew Daniel and all your great-nephews and nieces. We love you!

Ludmila & Isaac Revah are happy to announce the marriage of Dr. Giselle Revah & Dr. Ryan Foster on Aug. 4.

Happy second birthday Brooke Dana, daughter of Neil & Liz Rosenberg of Vaughan, Ont., granddaughter of Rhona & Sav Rosenberg, Sigmund & Barbara Srtizes.

Happy birthday Loren.
To the best husband and father.
We love you. Lisa and Emma-Belle

Happy second birthday Gabriel Ze'ev Benun! Have a healthy and happy year and many more to come. Keep howling!

Email your digital photos to obiackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Whither the chicken?

Kosher Living
Richard Rabkin

"Where did all the kosher chicken go?"

We've been fielding this question at the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR) for the last couple of months, and perhaps this new column provides a good opportunity to address this question, as well as other frequently asked questions that we receive.

So, about the chicken.

As reported in these pages, last April, Chai Kosher Poultry suddenly announced that it would be closing its operations as of May 3, 2013. True to their word, after more than 25 years serving the kosher community, the owners closed the business. This left Marvid Poultry in Montreal as the only Canadian supplier of kosher poultry.

Approximately five months have passed, and while Marvid has thankfully worked extremely hard – I would even say valiantly – to accommodate the increase in demand, many people have still asked us why another Canadian poultry processor hasn't stepped forward. Good question. Let's analyze what is required to start a new kosher poultry processor in Canada.

First, from a religious perspective, shchitah (ritual slaughter) obviously requires trained shochtim. They have to be pious individuals who are experts in their field. Jewish law dictates that the chickens must be slaughtered with a special knife that contains not even the slightest nick that could cause unnecessary pain to the animal even for a split second. The blood must then be removed entirely through an intensive process of purging, soaking, salting and rinsing. Perhaps it is this extra care that makes even many non-kosher consumers prefer kosher meat. In fact, I've read that Martha Stewart recommends using kosher chickens (just in case you thought I made that up).

But the shochet is not the only one overseeing shchitah. In Canada, the processing of food, and in particular meat, is governed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The CFIA's regulations are quite rigorous – Canadians should be thankful that the agency is in charge of our food safety. But building a new chicken slaughterhouse that complies with the CFIA's standards isn't cheap. Put a few million dollars into the business plan for that.

Even if you have the shochtim and a CFIA-compliant plant, you can't just start producing kosher chickens. You need "quota," or more specifically, "plant supply quota."

The Canadian farming industry is governed by a process called "supply management," which is managed by the government to eliminate volatility that could leave some farmers vulnerable.

So, for example, let's say Ottawa decides that the total allotment for Canadian chickens next year will be 10 million chickens. Through the Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC), they make an allotment to each province – let's say in our example that each of the 10 provinces gets one million chickens. The provincial body – in Ontario's case it is the Chicken Farmers of Ontario (CFO) – will then apportion a percentage of that allotment to each of its chicken producers based on their respective quota allotment.

Quotas can become quite valuable, and Chai sold its quota to a non-kosher processor. So a new kosher entrant would have to obtain new quota. But remember: there's a specific allotment for the entire province – one million in our example. So if a new kosher operator were to apply for quota, the other (non-kosher) processors would say, "If they give you a 100,000 quota, you are diluting the value of my quota, because it comes off the top of the allotment for the entire province."

So as you can see, it's complicated.

But the Kashruth Council has been actively engaged with this issue. We have lobbied federal and provincial politicians, we have sought input from community stakeholders and we have mobilized community rabbis. I even went myself to a meeting of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario and made a presentation on behalf of the kosher community. They were very receptive and are working on finding some sort of solution, but they admitted the system is complex and that a resolution won't happen overnight.

Chai was processing approximately 2.4 million chickens per year. So there's a significant business opportunity for the right party and there are entrepreneurs who are working on this project. Until then, kosher chicken is still available at all of the major retailers that serve the kosher community. And if anyone ever wants chicken soup, they're invited to my house – I'm sure my wife won't mind.

Get out of the dinner rut

Sue Epstein
Special to The CJN

Getting into a "meal rut" happens to us all. And it is one of the easiest ruts to get into. You try a new recipe and the family loves it. Or it was a big hit with your Shabbat guests. And it was so quick and easy to make. What more could you ask for? Next thing you know you're making it so often your family groans when you serve it.

The "experts" will tell you that the key to avoiding meal rut is meal planning. If you're one of those who just can't plan ahead, don't worry about it. Sometimes children go through a macaroni and cheese or hot dog (or some other food) phase where that's the only thing they'll eat. This usually doesn't last long, however, and when that phase is over they don't even want to look at that formerly favoured food. There are also those families where Tuesday night is meatloaf night and Thursday night is spaghetti night. If your family doesn't mind this you've got it made!

But if they do object, try to watch that repetition and try to vary your meals. Even if you're not an experimental cook, promise yourself to try one new recipe a week, or every other week – and don't make the same food so often that your family gets tired of it. If you always make Shepherd's Pie from the leftover brisket, this week make barbecued beef with the leftovers. (Simply slice the meat and pour a bottle of barbecue sauce over it and reheat.)

Here are two dishes that I think your family will love

MAPLE MUSTARD HONEY STYLE RIBS

This is a great dish to make on a day when you're going to be busy. Put it all in your crock pot and come home at the end of the day to a delicious hot meal.

1 large onion, cut into 1/4 in. slices, separated into rings
1/3 C. maple syrup
1/4 C. Dijon mustard
2 1/2 to 3 lbs. beef short ribs, trimmed of fat

Place onion rings in 4 qt. crock-pot.

In small bowl, combine syrup and mustard; mix well. Spread evenly on ribs. Place coated ribs over onion. Cover; cook on low setting for at least 8 hours or until ribs are tender. If desired, serve with additional mustard. (Makes 4 servings)

CHICKEN COBBLER

6 skinless, boneless chicken thighs or breasts
salt and pepper
1 cup frozen peas
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/3 cup flour
1/4 tsp. dried tarragon, crushed
2 cups chicken broth
2 cups flour
1 cup coarsely shredded carrot
2 tbsp. sugar
1 tbsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/3 cups pareve milk or chicken broth

Preheat oven to 400 degree. Arrange chicken in a 13 x 9 x 2 in. baking pan.

Season with salt and pepper. Bake for 20 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear; set aside.

In a medium saucepan combine 2 tbsp. of the oil and chopped onion. Cook and stir over medium heat for 5 minutes or until onion is tender. Stir in peas, the 1/3 cup flour, and tarragon. Add chicken broth all at once. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly.

Cover and keep warm while preparing cobbler topping. For cobbler topping, in a medium mixing bowl stir together the 2 cups flour, shredded carrot, sugar, baking powder, and 1/2 tsp. salt. Stir in pareve milk or broth and the remaining 2 tablespoons oil until combined.

Place chicken back into the baking pan and pour warm sauce over the chicken. Spoon topping over sauce. Bake for 25 minutes or until topping is golden brown and a wooden toothpick inserted in the centre of topping comes out clean. (Makes 6 servings)

APPLE GLAZED BBQ CHICKEN

2 whole chickens
1 6-oz. can frozen apple juice concentrate, thawed
1/4 c packed brown sugar
1/4 c ketchup
1 tbl. cider vinegar
1 tsp. thyme
1 clove crushed garlic
2 green apples, cored, cut into wedges
2 onions, peeled, cut into wedges

Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a large roasting pan with cooking spray; lay chickens breast-side up. Combine remaining ingredients, except apples and onions. Brush half the sauce over chicken. Tuck onion and apple wedges around chicken. Bake, uncovered, 1 h., 15 min. Carefully turn chicken over; brush remaining sauce on chicken. Bake for an additional hour, or until golden brown and juices run clear.

YIELDS: Serves 10-12 people

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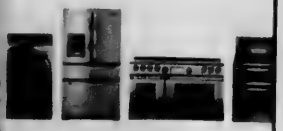
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Palestinian refusal called 'basis of conflict'

JTA

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu asserted in a major address Sunday that the primary obstacle to Middle East peace is the Palestinian refusal to recognize Israel as a Jewish state.

Netanyahu made the remark at Bar-Ilan University, his first address there since a 2009 speech in which he famously declared his support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Now, as Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have resumed for the first time in three years, Netanyahu declared that Palestinian leadership, not Israel, deserved primary blame for the conflict.

He began his speech discussing nearly 4,000 years of Jewish history in the Land of Israel and later said that Palestinian refugees should not be allowed a right of return to Israel.

"The basis of the conflict has been the same for 90 years: refusal to recognize the right of the Jews to a state in Israel," Netanyahu said. "For the process we're in to have a real chance of success, we need to hear finally from the leadership of the Palestinians that they recognize the Jewish state, which is Israel."

Netanyahu did not elaborate on a future Palestinian-Israeli border or the future status of Jerusalem, instead focusing on a retelling of the conflict's history. He listed a string of Palestinian attacks on Jews that occurred before Israel's occupation of the West Bank began in 1967. The prime minister also spoke at length about former Palestinian mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini's ties to Adolf Hitler.

"The Zionists didn't use the Holocaust to destroy the national aspirations of the Palestinians," Netanyahu said. "The Palestinian leadership used the Holocaust to destroy the Zionist movement, and almost succeeded."

The speech came five days after Netanyahu addressed the UN General Assembly, when he spent most of his time emphasizing the dangers of Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program.

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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a group at Bar-Ilan University on Sunday. *[Israel Sun photo]*

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Values charter part of 'inclusive nationalism'

Elias Levy
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The proposed Quebec charter of values is "temperate and reasonable" and in keeping with the Parti Québécois' "inclusive nationalism," says the minister responsible for promoting the legislation.

The criticism that the proposed charter is exclusionist and discriminatory against Quebec's religious minorities is "unjust and unfounded," Bernard Drainville, the provincial minister of democratic institutions and citizenship participation told *The CJN* in a French-language interview.

Bernard Drainville defends proposal to The CJN

The charter is "based on the fundamental principle that all those who live in Quebec are Quebecers, no matter what their origin, their religion or the colour of their skin," Drainville said.

"We are all Quebecers. The nationalism vigorously defended by the Parti Québécois is inclusive and open to differences... and totally opposite to the divisive nationalism described by the critics. The charter of values... is an extension of the inclusive nationalism to which the Parti Québécois has subscribed for a very long time."

As for criticism from English Canadians outside Quebec, Drainville said he'd like to remind them of a major historical fact they may have forgotten.

"In 1832, the parliament of Lower Canada was the first of any government in the British Empire to recognize, for the first time, the civil rights of the Jewish community. The parliament consisting mainly of French-Canadians – as they were then called – allowed Ezekiel Hart, a man of Jewish origin elected in Trois-Rivières to sit in the legislative assembly...

Continued on page 20

Lech Lecha
Candlelighting: 6:23
Havdalah: 7:24
Greater Toronto Area

It's the marriage that counts
Bridal Supplement — Section B

Shas founder dies at 93 — please see page 28

CANADA

Asper Way Proposed

WINNIPEG — Winnipeg's downtown development committee is backing a bid to rename a 450-metre stretch of Waterfront Drive where the new Canadian Museum for Human Rights is located in honour of Israel Asper. The museum, set to open next year, was the brainchild of the late media mogul. Israel Asper Way, in the city's Forks area, was proposed by city councillors Jenny Gerbasi and Jeff Browaty. It contravenes a 2011 bylaw restricting street name changes to honorary designations, to avoid confusion for businesses and emergency services, but the councillors say the change is appropriate and disruption would be minimal, the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported. City council must OK the idea.

Book On GG Shortlist

TORONTO — Toronto writer Kenneth Bonert's debut novel *The Lion Seeker* made the short list for a $25,000 Governor General's Literary Award last week. The South African-born Bonert, 41, was among four other finalists. His book is about a young Jewish man who immigrates to Johannesburg from Lithuania prior to World War II. It's partly inspired by stories his grandmother told him in Yiddish about her childhood in Lithuania, he told *Canadian Press*. The winner will be named Nov. 13.

Kelowna Gets Torah

KELOWNA, B.C. — Chabad Okanagan Synagogue had a new Torah scroll for Simchat Torah this year, thanks to a $40,000 gift from the owner of a local winery. Members of the two-year-old shul completed the scroll by writing letters in it with the help of a sofer from Israel during an event in a local park last month. Stephen Cipes, of Summerhill Pyramid Winery, donated the Torah, which is the first to be completed in the Okanagan.

Ex-PQ Premiers Slam Charter Proposal

MONTREAL — Two former Parti Québécois premiers sharply criticized the proposed charter of Quebec values last week.

Jacques Parizeau

The denunciation by hardliner Jacques Parizeau, who blamed "money and the ethnic vote" for the yes side's loss in the 1995 sovereignty referendum, was followed the next day by Lucien Bouchard.

Parizeau wrote in *Le Journal de Montréal* that the current PQ government is going too far in banning all provincial and municipal public servants from wearing religious garb on the job.

Parizeau, premier from 1994 to 1996, said prohibiting religious symbols for judges, prosecutors, police officers and prison guards is far enough. That was the 2008 recommendation of scholars Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, co-chairs of the Liberal-appointed commission into reasonable accommodation.

He agrees with the former Charest government's bill that faces must be uncovered to deliver or receive public services. Bill 94 died on the order paper.

The next day Bouchard, premier from 1996 to 2001, agreed only public employees in positions of authority shouldn't be allowed to wear religious symbols.

WORLD

Prayers Protested

JERUSALEM — More than 100 women attended a Women of the Wall Rosh Chodesh service Oct. 4 at the Kotel and faced raucous protests from haredi seminary girls. The students were bused in ostensibly to pray for the health of Shas leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. The monthly event was held in the women's section for the first time since last spring. A court ruling this year allowed the group to pray without fear of arrest. The prime minister has also set up a committee to forge a compromise between the group and haredim who control the site.

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News

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Creating the world's most valuable poker chip

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

All that glitters is not only gold. There are also diamonds, emeralds, sapphires, rubies, pink diamonds – even solid silver looks pretty good in the right setting.

Tastefully combine these elements, pile on the carats, give them a casino motif, and voila, you have a line of merchandise that even the Sultan of Brunei would find appealing.

One piece in particular in Gerald Lewy's collection is noteworthy for its value. It's a hand-made "casino disk," known more commonly as a poker chip, made of 22-karat pink gold, framed by 5.13 carats of pink diamonds, with a rim consisting of 17 one-carat diamonds, bearing on one side a diamond-encrusted lucky seven and, on the other, a lucky eight made of 62 small round diamonds. The numbers alone weigh in at 2.5 carats.

The disk – really a work of art – was appraised with a value of $450,000 – leading Guinness World Records to designate it the most valuable casino chip in the world.

Costing more than a house in many parts of Canada, it's no wonder there have never been chips worth that much. Lewy, its designer/creator, proudly displays the certificate attesting to his entry into the rarified realm of world records.

The disk, he said, is the culmination of 2-1/2 years work and is the centrepiece of a line of glitzy jewelry and tchatchkes that he'll soon market to those inhabiting a world of luxury most of us can only dream of.

Though it's appraised at nearly half a million dollars, the chip can be had for much less, more like $275,000. The appraised value for insurance purposes doesn't exactly match its market value, Lewy said.

Still, it's the higher price that the Guinness people relied upon, and Lewy isn't complaining, especially considering all the time, effort and expertise that went into its creation.

Lewy has been a diamond setter for 53 years. His father, Maurice, had been in the diamond business in London, England, supplying the British government with industrial diamonds. He was also in the jewelry business, manufacturing and wholesaling product that showed up in the city's prestigious Hatton Garden, the centre of London's jewelry trade.

Continued on page 16

Poker chip has been appraised with a value of $450,000.

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Most news media not charmed by new Iranian president

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

A great deal has been said over the last couple of weeks about the tremendous impact that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's "charm offensive" has had on shifting western opinion about Iran in a more positive direction. After all, he managed most skillfully to present a new, moderate face of Iran to the international community, in particular regarding Iran's commitment never to acquire nuclear weapons – while, nonetheless, insisting that his country retains the right to enrich nuclear fuel.

Some western journalists and pundits, such as Tony Burman in his *Toronto Star* column late last month, were indeed impressed by Iran's peaceful declarations, but a great many others, even some who have encouraged exploring a renewed diplomatic track in order to test Iran's intentions, remained skeptical.

The Sept. 28 *Economist* editorial, "Curb your enthusiasm," argued: "No matter how friendly Iran suddenly appears, any talks will be protracted and theatrical. Mr. Rouhani certainly had a successful first night [at the UN], thrilling his audience with displays of humility… However, the Iranian who would approve any deal is not Mr. Rouhani, but his boss, the country's supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, whose antipathy towards America goes back to the American- and British-sponsored coup in 1953 that deposed Iran's first elected leader. And given Iran's long history of evasiveness on the nuclear issue, the suspicion is that it is merely buying time for its centrifuges. Looming in the background is the precedent of North Korea, which agreed on a disarmament deal with America in 2005, then reneged on it and has now become a nuclear power."

In his Sept. 29 *Foreign Policy* column, Aaron David Miller agreed about Khamenei, saying that, given his "withholding nature," the "Supreme Leader may actually see benefits in keeping the U.S.-Iranian relationship in a kind of managed tension." Miller argued that the "tough and wily Iranian regime [is] close to crossing the nuclear threshold, but is probing to see whether it can get sanctions relief without giving up all of its nuclear gains. Indeed, it's far from certain that despite the pain of sanctions, the Supreme Leader is in any hurry to drop the program's military aspects without major concessions from the United States."

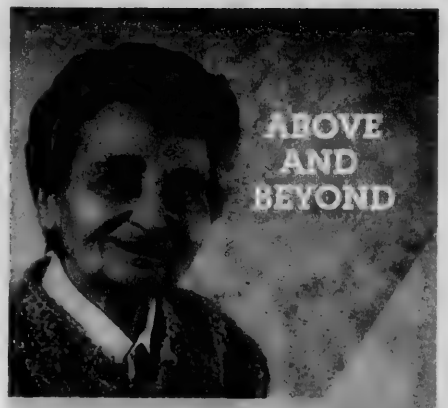
Others have pointed out that for all his soft talk, Rouhani shares Khamenei's attitudes about Iran's nuclear ambitions. Charles Krauthammer, for instance, in a Sept. 28 *National Post* column, noted that "[a]s Iran's chief nuclear negotiator between 2003 and 2005, [Rouhani] boasted in a 2004 speech to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council, 'While we were talking with the Europeans in Tehran, we were installing equipment in parts of the [uranium conversion] facility in Isfahan… In fact, by creating a calm environment, we were able to complete the work in Isfahan.'"

Likewise Jeffery Goldberg in his Sept. 30 *Bloomberg* column: "Until proven otherwise, there's no reason to think that Rouhani, who is acting on Khamenei's behalf, is ready to shut down his country's nuclear program, despite airy statements to the contrary. The Iranian leadership wants to maintain its ability to produce nuclear weapons while at the same time convincing the West to lift sanctions. So far, Rouhani's difference is one of style, not of substance."

In its Sept. 26 editorial "Sober but dangerous," the *Globe and Mail* took a realistic view of Rouhani's rhetoric at the UN, noting that, while he affirmed Iran's right to enrich uranium, "he did not specifically insist on the making of high-grade enriched uranium, which can be readily turned into weapons-grade uranium." That position needs to be tested this month during nuclear negotiations in Geneva, negotiations that the *Globe* views, in intriguingly qualified terms, as "not yet doomed to futility."

The *Globe* concludes on both a somber and sobering note. It expressed skepticism about Khamenei's 2012 fatwa against nuclear weapons, cautioning that "if the rulers of Iran chose to believe themselves in great danger, they would doubtless try to be in a position to make such weapons in a hurry, claiming necessity. It is such a situation that the world needs to prevent."

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.



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HEY BABY

Twenty-two months after conception, La Petite the elephant gave birth to a baby elephant at Israel's Ramat Gan Safari Park. The father, Motek, whose name means sweety, seemed indifferent, but the herd was joyful about the new addition.

[Israel Sun photo]

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The Jewish kippah problem

Guest Editorial

Quebec has a kippah problem. A proposed "charter of values" will prohibit public employees from wearing hijabs, turbans, kippahs, and bizarrely oversized crosses. Apparently, the government believes that religious symbols worn by less than one per cent of the population threaten to turn Quebec into a theocracy.

The Jewish community has united in opposition to the proposal. This threat to minority religious rights is unsettling, and Jews of all backgrounds feel a sentimental tie to the beleaguered kippah.

But as Jews, we have our own kippah problem. Our attitudes toward the kippah reflect our ambivalence about being a Jew in the non-Jewish world.

After the Jews were given political rights in Europe, many chose the route of partial assimilation. Their motto was "be a Jew at home, and a mensch in the street." In their desire for acceptance, Jews modified their public image.

The tradition of wearing the kippah was quickly tossed away. At the turn of the century, the kippah was discouraged by the Reform movement as an ancient relic. One historian remarked that "worship with an uncovered head" was a "hallmark of Reform Judaism".

Other Jews saw integration as dangerous. They followed an ideology of "shalem," of being distinct. They spoke Yiddish, wore a shtreimel and used their Hebrew names on official documents. These Jews insisted on being part of a counterculture and defiantly refused to integrate.

Most Jews fall between the poles of ghettoization and assimilation. We know how to fit into the larger culture, yet still want to be profoundly Jewish as well. And so we wonder: how different should we be?

And that's the Jewish kippah problem. We want to be serious Jews, but we also don't want to stick out that much. It's a simple psychological fact: people want to fit in with the majority.

Even Orthodox Jews are sometimes uncomfortable wearing a kippah. It's not uncommon that when I'm in remote venues with few Jews, I'll meet a modern Orthodox friend who's chosen to wear a baseball cap instead of a kippah, so that his head covering is less conspicuous.

This kippah problem is our greatest challenge: how to be comfortable while being different. A new Pew study shows that 32 per cent of American Jews have a Christmas tree. Christmas is ubiquitous. To resist it is difficult, because it's difficult to swim against the stream. To put it directly, kippahs are awkward while Christmas trees are comfortable. That's our kippah problem.

I wish I had a magic solution, but I don't. Being a Jew in North America means having the courage of your convictions and proudly being different. That's not so simple, even for a rabbi.

Recently, I was on a CBC panel debating the charter of values. I left just before sundown, at the last moments for the afternoon prayer. The vigorous debate left me feeling a bit leery of public displays of religion, and I wondered whether I should pray covertly while sitting in my car. I sat for a moment in my car, then reconsidered. I then stood outside in the parking lot and prayed. Those moments of prayer inspired me to realize that yes, you can be both a mensch and a Jew, both in the street and at home.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz

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Story should have focused on tower

I was glad to read about the tower dedication in memory of my son Jacob Hertzman ("Holy Blossom tower dedicated in memory of late teen" *The CJN*, Sept. 25).

Jacob loved Holy Blossom, and the temple community responded in kind.

Had your reporter contacted me, I could have told her what a welcoming shul we belong to, how the clergy and religious school enabled Jacob to participate there, that we have a Project Tikvah Fund to benefit other children with special needs, and that Jacob and I were among the original cohort for Shabbat family services.

I would have described the Sept. 7 Shabbat of Dedication, when I had the privilege of chanting Torah, Jacob's brother Ben chanted Haftorah, and friends and family were called to the bimah for aliyot.

The part about Rabbi John Moscowitz's departure was unnecessary and irrelevant, citing an incendiary, disparaging article previously published in another newspaper.

Better to have maintained the reverent tone and direction that began this piece, thereby honouring my son's life and Holy Blossom Temple.

Jill Hertzman
Toronto

• • •

Like an old friend

What a shock I had to find *The CJN* at someone's house last week. I lamented its demise last spring, when I was told by a *CJN* employee to get a refund for my subscription since you were shutting down. I have since been out of the proverbial Jewish Toronto loop. I missed knowing what is going on in Toronto, Canada, Israel and the world from the Jewish perspective.

When I sat down to read the paper, it was like a visit from an old friend. I enjoyed finding out that my old haunt, the Holy Blossom Tower, is being dedicated to my favourite student, Jacob Hertzman. I learned of the Jewish-Israel perspective on the Kenyan situation, I read commentaries by my favourite columnists and I was updated by several very special stories, such as Gilad Schalit's recent visit to Toronto. I wonder how many others don't know that *The CJN* continues to be. Please renew my subscription.

Maja Bulum
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Edmonton school better than OK

Karen Skinazi and parents like her are impressive in their persistence and diligence in finding appropriate Jewish day schools for their children ("Our Jewish day school closed – just before the new year" *The CJN*, Sept. 12). However, I was disappointed by the opening lines of her article regarding the Edmonton Talmud Torah: "The school was fine – neither spectacular nor terrible. I sent him there because, frankly, it was the only Jewish game in town."

This attitude does a disservice to the incredible foresight of the leaders, administrators and parents of the Edmonton Jewish community. Our Talmud Torah is now the oldest continuously operating Jewish day school in all of Canada. In May 2012, a community-wide celebration was held to mark its 100th anniversary.

Skinazi should have been thrilled that, while living in "Canada's oilpatch" in northern Alberta, a quality Jewish day school education was available to her children, thanks to the long-term commitment and dedication of this relatively small, but vibrant and welcoming Jewish community.

Penny Hardin
Edmonton

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Who does CIJA speak for?

More pontification from Shimon Fogel in today's *CJN* ("We can't have it both ways" *The CJN*, Oct. 3)? Is he the new editor of *The CJN*? He uses lots of big words that one needs to look up in a dictionary to understand. And the point? Be nice to those who aren't so nice to the Jewish community and Israel? Be nice to those politicians who are documented supporters of Islamic Society of North America and other groups deemed terrorist by the government of Canada? *Sha shtil* is his message. After all, that works, doesn't it?

Who elected him and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs to speak for the community? Nobody! So how about a more balanced perspective for the rest of us – and let's hear some facts, not hyperbole.

Patricia Starr
Toronto

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Netanyahu may have little choice but to wait

David Horovitz
The Times of Israel

You're wrong, I'll be vindicated, but I know I can't stop you trying.

Stranger things have happened. I'm not a fool, and you're damn right you can't stop me trying.

That was the blunt, unspoken essence of the gracious display staged by U.S. President Barack Obama and his guest, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House on Sept. 30, showcasing a mature but asymmetrical partnership – between a superpower and, however unpalatable for Israel, a supplicant.

The prime minister "is always candid," Obama vouchsafed just a little wryly at the tail end of his remarks. And one can imagine that Netanyahu was candid indeed behind closed doors, marshalling compelling argument, and evidence, to underpin his public contention that Iran "is committed to Israel's destruction."

But ultimately, Netanyahu knew all along that he and Obama would have to agree to disagree, that the president would not be deterred from putting the diplomatic route to the "test," and that attempting a repeat of his May 2011 Oval Office lecture style (when he told Obama bitterly that Israel's pre-1967 lines are indefensible) could only be counter-productive. He is certain there is no diplomatic route, only a blind alley, but he held his tongue.

And so Obama – much more familiar with Netanyahu's thinking, and with Israel's nuances, after his visit in March – could afford to be magnanimous.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Barack Obama hold a meeting in the Oval Office Sept. 30. (Kobi Gideon/GPO/Flash90 photo)

Thus the president promised that economic pressure on Iran would not be lifted lightly, assuring his visitor airily that "anything that we do will require the highest standards of verification in order for us to provide the sort of sanctions relief that I think they are looking for." And importantly for Netanyahu, he declared that "we take no options off the table, including military options, in terms of making sure that we do not have nuclear weapons in Iran" – a threat he had chosen not to issue in the specific Iranian context during his address to the United Nations General Assembly last week.

There are those who might see in Obama's restating of the military option, and his apparent tough line on sanctions, a victory of sorts for Netanyahu. But in truth, anything less would have been a stinging public rejection of Israel's assessments and orientation.

Netanyahu has no time for Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's we're-no-threat-to-anyone platitudes. He's certain that Tehran is fooling the international community and that the regime is duplicitously seeking to attain and retain nuclear breakout status – with the means and the material to make a dash for the bomb when it so chooses. That must not be allowed to happen, and so for Netanyahu, as he put it on Sept. 30, "the bottom line, again, is that Iran fully dismantles its military nuclear program."

Yet for Obama, now at least, there's a modicum of doubt, and a readiness to consider that Iran might just be changing for real. Or Obama is showing a readiness, at least, to play out the diplomatic track.

In what he considers the certain event that Iran proves obdurate and unforthcoming, Netanyahu would like the United States to intervene militarily, or failing that, to back Israel in doing so.

But the Israeli option has plainly receded for the time being, since the prime minister can hardly contemplate military action so long as the president is – however frustratingly, even infuriatingly for Netanyahu – engaging with Iran and giving peace a chance. Former Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin's Israel defied and surprised the United States in striking then-Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's reactor at Osirak in 1981, but it wasn't the resounding slap in the face that independent Israel action against Iran would be today. Then-U.S. president Ronald Reagan wasn't personally invested in trying to resolve the crisis through negotiations at the time.

If, as Netanyahu has always contended, the Iranians are buying time, he has little choice now but to hold his fire and wait things out. In eschewing the bitter public lecture style on Sept. 30, Netanyahu seemed to be acknowledging as much.

Timesofisrael.com

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Canadian Jews must champion freedom agenda

Gil Troy
in Montreal

The many liberties that make North America history's greatest experiment in mass democracy and freedom should not be taken for granted. Our comfortable lives in the United States and Canada often spawn a dangerous complacency. Canadian Jews in particular must be vigilant about championing the freedom agenda, especially with the ugly authoritarianism overtaking Quebec

Of course, this isn't a specifically Jewish issue. This is an all-Canada issue and a broader human rights issue. But therein lies its power. American Jews, in particular, have been extremely effective in advancing all-American issues that benefit American Jews. This alliance of altruism and interest has historically been best expressed in the American Jewish alliance with the Democratic Party and liberalism itself.

As refugees from eastern Europe (mostly), American Jews were traumatized by czarist oppression. In fighting for human rights, they were fighting for Jewish rights – and it worked, facilitating Jewish communal growth and individual Jewish prosperity. Especially after president Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal brought Jews into his Democratic Party coalition of the "Forgotten Man," American Jews became so devoted to progressive ideals, they often confused Judaism and liberalism. Many now seem more committed to liberalism than Judaism itself.

Today, the situation is touchier. Most American Jews are so integrated, assimilated and acculturated that they lack the insecurity or recent memory of oppression that motivated their parents or grandparents. But, most dismaying, liberalism itself has changed. The 1960s spawned an identity politics that often sacrifices true liberalism's universal ideals to protect certain groups – and Jews these days are rarely considered one of the groups.

The civil war within the left can be illustrated by looking at the proposed charter of Quebec values. Once upon a time, such an affront to freedom and diversity, squelching free religious expression for anyone on a government payroll, would offend everyone on the left. And it certainly is offensive to traditional liberals who believe in universal freedoms and erring on the side of liberty. But there are those today on the radical, politically correct left, in Canada and elsewhere, who would salute this charter as a necessary bulwark against organized religion and as a form of collective affirmative action, using government to protect Quebec values. Identity politics, in America, Canada, and elsewhere, championing those deemed oppressed even over core ideals, encourages a PC view that ignores Palestinian terrorism and Israeli democracy to condemn Israel and Zionism.

While Canadian Jews also tended to be pro-rights and left-leaning, the dynamic north of the border was and is different. One reason why Canadian Jews now must mobilize is because Canadian ideology views the whole questions of rights differently than most Americans do. Canada is more collectivist. Canadian rights are granted to Canadians by the government and are not inherent as they are to Americans. That's why a provincial legislature can pass legislation overriding core freedoms, "notwithstanding" the rights granted in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Americans find language laws, language police and restrictions on what religious people wear unfathomable, because they believe their rights belong to them and aren't issued by the government. All Canadians, but particularly Canadian Jews, should hop aboard that freedom train and trigger a broader debate in Canada about what liberty in this extraordinary democracy is all about.

The charter of Quebec values debacle proves this debate's importance. Even if the charter, imposed by a minority government of mediocrities, fails, the damage has been done. Quebec has become a laughingstock among the world's democracies, which is an unfortunate PR blow.

Even more important, such proposals have a chilling effect, even if they fail. The fact that any kippah-wearer, or hijab-wearer or turban-wearer in Quebec today has felt diminished, inhibited, threatened, or even outraged by the legislation is an imposition on them and their community. It's simply immoral, in a diverse, multicultural democracy, for such proposals to be advanced by the rulers in charge. Note that Israel, which is pilloried in the international community for all sorts of alleged offences, has no such legislation against its Muslim citizens – and, as far as I know, has never contemplated it.

This issue is not only one of self-interest, it's a core value. The Torah itself urges us to "proclaim liberty throughout the land." We understand that proclaiming sometimes isn't enough. You have to fight for your rights, too.

Appreciating Israel

Urban Writer
Avrum Rosensweig

The State of Israel sits among countries that are hostile toward her. It's a hot country with desert winds, and a cold country with snowy, blustering gusts. The Jews who have settled her arrived on her shores from more than two dozen countries around the world, from as far away as Siberia to the north and Argentina to the south.

Only recently did its population, Jew and Arab, hit eight million. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Yet, she has a greater number of startup businesses than all the European Union countries combined. Her $100-billion-plus economy is greater than that of all of her immediate neighbours combined. Israelis invented the cellphone and voice mail. Her crisis response is respected around the world. Her ability to create seems endless and her title of "light unto the nations" is appropriate and shining brightly.

I write this article as a reminder to all people, especially young ones, that we should never, ever, take Eretz Yisrael for granted, and forever be aware of her importance. My fear, however, is that over time, her prominence in the eyes of many is shrinking. This dynamic scares me.

Why do I say this? I am exposed to many young people in the Toronto Jewish community. I talk with them and frequently steer the conversation toward Israel, emphasizing its significance in our lives as Jews.

Many teens and young adults will tell me that they are focused on developing their lives, making money, their education and enjoyment. When I ask them about Israel, their knowledge of it, and their feelings and thoughts about it, too many times their faces go blank.

This is a challenge to our community and all of the Diaspora.

The obvious solution is hasbarah (explanation) within our own ranks. Wherever and whenever we can, teachers in our day schools and talmud torahs should be explaining Israel in greater depth, with an emphasis on her successes, understanding that our Israel is responsible for medical findings that are saving millions of men, women and children all over the world.

However, I suggest that our educators, leaders and parents also need to educate themselves more on the history of Israel, with a focus on her history, aliyah and the sacrifices Israelis have made on behalf of Jewish people and non-Jews everywhere.

By this I mean it should be clear to all of our children that Israel's survival has been and is predicated on neighbourhood bravery and valour. Our progenies need to take a virtual walk through any neighbourhood in places like Jerusalem, Chazor and Sderot, and knock on doors and ask a simple question: "Who in this household has been in the army, fought in a war, lost their lives or been injured?"

The questioning can dig deeper. Let them ask: "When did you come to Israel? From what country? What was your reason for coming here, and what hardships have you faced?"

Let them listen, and hear the stories of Ethiopian Jews who barely made it onto the plane to escape guerilla fighters about to attack Addis Ababa. Let them hear the history of the Holocaust survivor who arrived in Israel from a displaced persons camp and was immediately handed an M1 to go out and fight in a war imposed upon the infant state.

These are worthwhile histories to listen to, as they address some fundamental tenets within Judaism, including, appreciation for what others have done for all of us and the courage to fight when called upon. Our young people, just like us, need to be reminded that 18- and 19-year-olds have lost their lives in protection of our Jewishness and our place in the world.

They must embrace this reality and hold it dearly within their hearts and minds. They must understand that the Jewish People's relative comfort in the world today is predicated on it, and that the Israel has been able to grow, prosper and help the rest of the world, because of these young people who were prepared to fight our enemies, and die.

Jews – know the gift we have in the State of Israel. Young people – be aware that your Israeli counterparts have played a significant role in your life. For this, you need to be thankful.

avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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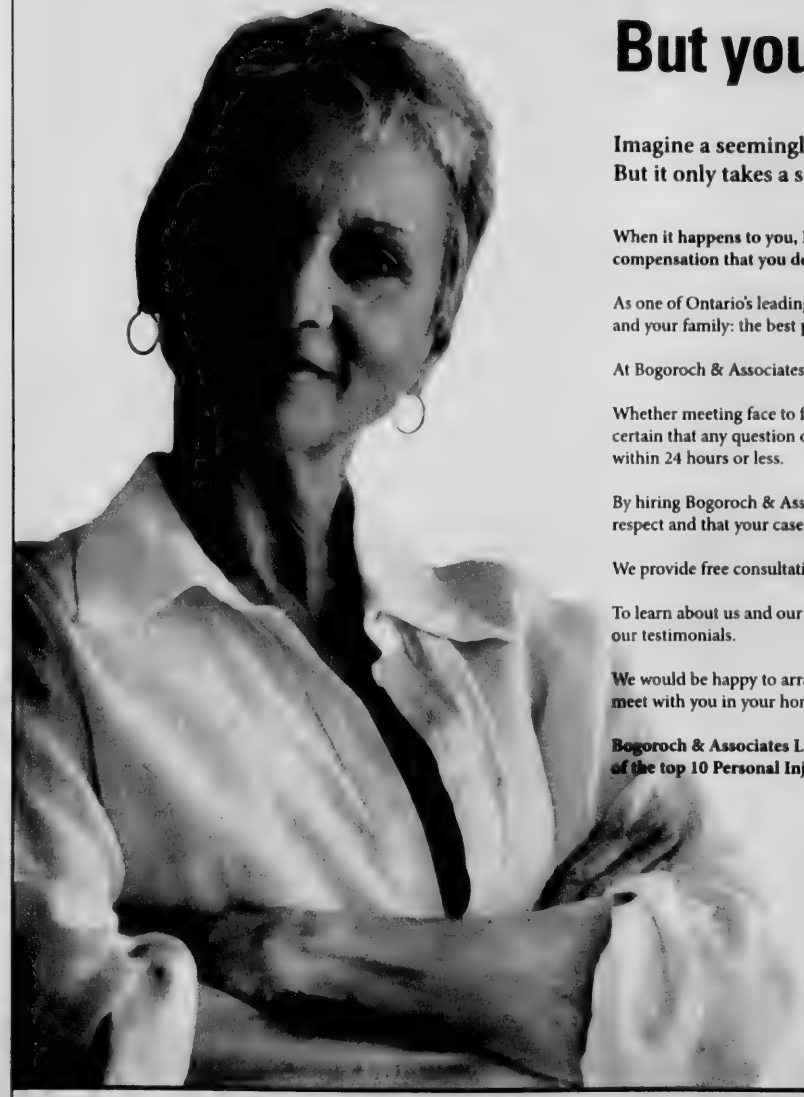

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Volunteers seek a Torah for Shabbat services

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Joe Black, 87, has always had a mission in life – to help others. And now he is asking for help himself.

For more than 20 years, Black and other volunteers have conducted Shabbat services in English and Hebrew for the residents of two Toronto-area retirement homes, Cummer Lodge and Valley View Residence, alternating between the two.

Black told *The CJN* that Cummer Lodge has a Torah, but the volunteers need a Torah for Valley View Residence.

"The residents get a great deal of joy when we conduct the services, as many are in wheelchairs. They light up when we carry the Torah around to them and they can touch it and kiss it."

Sabbath services for the residents at Cummer Lodge are led by a volunteer. *[Papa Jo photo]*

Black, now a "sort of retired" photographer, was well-known for generations at Graphic Artists.

He was the official photographer for the National Hockey League, Canadian Football League and many corporate and private events. He lectures at the Bernard Betel Centre, has a very large library of Jewish films and still does photography.

Over the years, Black said, the group has had Torahs on loan, adding: "Many years ago, we purchased one Torah from California for the Cummer Lodge. At that time, the volunteers were capable of having a fundraising event. We are too old now to organize such an event to purchase another Torah."

He said the volunteers would like to have one donated or loaned to Valley View Residence, and he hopes there is a Torah somewhere that's not being used.

"Along with our Shabbat services," he said, "we have a sing-along after the service and a 90-year-old lady plays the piano. The residents love the Yiddish, freilech music."

But having a Torah could make it even more enjoyable for the participants at Valley View Residence.

"There may even be a Torah that is not kosher, which we could use, since the service is not read from the Torah."

Black and his son Martin built an Aron Kodesh for both Cummer Lodge and Valley View Residence.

If you have or know of an extra Torah that is not being used, please contact Joe Black at 647-342-5929.

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Senior's creative aspirations are a labour of love

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Rae Tobias has been sculpting with clay for 40 years, and the 92-year-old shows no signs of slowing down.

"I always did something with the arts –oils, painting, design, quilting," Tobias says. "After my youngest daughter went to university, I felt it was time for me to try something new. Clay is something I have always wanted to try, so I took a two-year program at George Brown College. From college, I went right to the Koffler Centre of the Arts' ceramics program and I'm still a student there."

Tobias' husband, Albert, died eight years ago. The matriarch of a large Jewish family, she has three daughters, 13 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Creating decorative and sculptural pieces with hand-making techniques, including working with the wheel, Tobias proudly showcases her handiwork displayed throughout her home.

"My eyesight is not what it once was. I have macular degeneration, but I somehow manage. My fingers have picked up the touch," Tobias said.

A large part of her studio time is dedicated to filling many orders from her loved ones.

"My most recent request was from my seven-year-old great-grandson, Spencer Mozeg, who said, 'I'd like a mirror, Bubbie,' so I thought, 'I have to create something that appeals to him.' With his love of hockey, I designed a hockey player mirror with the Number 99 of Wayne Gretzky. The red hair peeking out represents Spencer, since he has red hair. I extended the ears a little bit, for the fun of it."

Tobias said he loved it so much he put in another order. "'Bubbie, will you make me a house?" he asked – then added, 'And, Bubbie, I want people in the house.'

'To that I answered, "What's a house without people?"'

Rae Tobias holds the hockey player mirror she made for her great-grandson.

Michelle Mendlowitz, Tobias' instructor at Koffler, says that despite being the oldest person in the room, she's often the most productive.

"Rae has the ability to motivate everyone around her. She is always ready to share her knowledge with classmates."

Koffler offers classes in ceramics, visual art, painting, photography, drawing, studio, and more, with programming at the Prosserman JCC on the Sherman Campus and at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre on Lebovic Campus in Vaughan.

"The love of creativity motivates me, as well as my being active in the community," Tobias adds.

"I play mah-jong weekly with the ladies. In fact, I was inspired to design a sculptural piece of our group."

Tobias confidently showed *The CJN* her sculpture.

"I have designed pieces on commission, but usually I don't. I do this as a hobby. It's a labour of love. I have no plans to retire anytime soon. I'll go to the end," Tobias says.

Jewish veterans dedicate two monuments

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Two hundred and two Canadian Jewish soldiers who fought valiantly for their country during World War I now have two monuments in honour of their courage at Mount Sinai Memorial Park in Toronto.

In a special remembrance ceremony on Sunday, members of the Royal Canadian Legion General Wingate Branch No. 256 unveiled the two monuments that feature the names of Jewish soldiers who served Canada during that war.

General Wingate Branch No. 256 is the Jewish branch of the Royal Canadian Legion and is located in Toronto.

"It's a long road that has brought us to this proud moment," said Murray Jacobs, event chair and past president for General Wingate Branch No. 256.

"These young men put their country before themselves and laid down their lives for Canada and freedom."

The list of soldiers came from Oscar Adler, a branch board member. Seven years ago, Adler presented the findings of a research project, where he found that the names and statuses of 201 Jewish men and one Jewish woman who served in Canada's armed forces in World War I.

"I looked at some of the research. Some of them were 15 or 16 years of age," Harold Davis, a branch vice-president, told *The CJN*.

Moe Polansky, left, and Harold Davis, right, third vice-president for General Wingate Branch No. 256, unveiled two monuments commemorating 202 Canadian Jewish heroes who fought during World War I. Jack Jackson played the pipes.
[Jordan Adler photo]

"They just joined up and they came from right across Canada – little towns in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario."

The monuments stand next to a cenotaph memorial the branch dedicated to Jewish veterans who fought in the two world wars and Korea and were buried overseas.

Julian Fantino, federal minister of veterans affairs, was present for the unveiling, which drew dozens of veterans and their families, even in rainy weather. Fantino compared the honoured soldiers to heroes in Jewish history, from Judah Maccabee to the fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

"The place of the Jewish community in Canada is immoveable," Fantino said. "The wisdom, culture and service of the Jewish people have made Canada and indeed the world a far richer and better place."

Joe Oliver, federal minister of natural resources, and Norm Kelly, deputy mayor of Toronto, were also present at the ceremony. Kelly presented to General Wingate Branch No. 256 a letter from Mayor Rob Ford, who could not attend because he was away on city business.

"They are our heroes," Ford wrote in the letter. "We thank them and their families for their selfless and unwavering support to defending freedom's frontier."

As the war's 100th anniversary approaches, the two monuments are the only specific memorials that list the names of Canadian Jewish veterans who served during World War I.

Jacobs, a veteran of World War I who landed in Normandy just four days after D-Day, told *The CJN* that, historically, there has been little recognition for Canadian Jewish veterans.

Thirty-eight per cent of all Jewish males living in Canada during World War I served in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces.

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Students look to the past for Learnathon

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The students at Eitz Chaim Day School in Toronto will keep a decades-long tradition alive as they prepare for a fundraising initiative called the Learnathon.

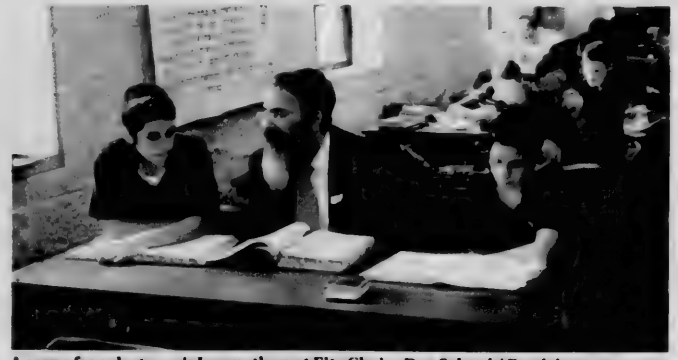
"This year, we're going to be raising money for UJA [Federation of Greater Toronto], and we're doing it in memory of children who were killed in the Holocaust," said Rabbi Isser Pliner, dean of Eitz Chaim Schools.

Rabbi Pliner explained that on Oct. 24, students will begin canvassing the community to be sponsored for a learning marathon that will be held Nov. 12 at the schools.

"The Learnathon that Eitz Chaim runs has probably been going on for more than 30 years. It was really Eitz Chaim's response to the UJA Walkathon. Since Eitz Chaim has school on Sunday [when the walkathon is held], our administration suggested that we would have the kids learn instead," he said.

About 400 students from grades 5 to 8 at all three campuses are participating in this initiative.

The Holocaust theme was chosen this year to try to make the project more meaningful to the students, Rabbi Pliner said.



A scene from last year's Learnathon at Eitz Chaim Day Schools' Patricia campus

"The program has kind of dwindled over the years, and I think what has been lacking was perhaps a lack of relevance," he said.

"UJA should be very relevant, and we try our best to promote them as much as we can, but it's hard to get excited about an organization. So you need to get the kids excited about something. If there is a tragedy that is happening in the world, the kids can come out and raise money for it."

Last year, the children raised funds in support of the victims of Hurricane Sandy, and in 2006, students collected donations for United Hazalah of Israel, an independent, volunteer emergency medical services organization.

"They had to replace a lot of their equipment following the 2006 Lebanon incursion, and we were able to rally around raising money to buy things that were necessary," Rabbi Pliner recalled.

He said this year, to honour the child victims of the Holocaust, each student will receive a short biography of a child who was killed.

"The students will learn a little about a child, but they will also be learning about different aspects of the Holocaust and aspects of the Torah and Tanach that are associated with events like the Holocaust," the rabbi said.

"We have names of those children, and we're going to use them as our focus. It's important to give kids focus."

The Learnathon will also feature guest educators. Rabbi Shmuel Klein, the director of publications and the head of the Holocaust studies program at Torah Umesorah, an organization that promotes Torah-based education, will be coming from New York to address the students.

"He used to be one of the principals here at Eitz Chaim and a teacher... When he was here, he was very instrumental in developing our whole Holocaust programing," he said.

"We hope he'll charge up the crowd in educating the kids."

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Grant helps expand special needs program

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

For Robin Quint, Camp Ramah's Tikvah program for teens and young adults with special needs is a huge help.

When her 23-year-old daughter, Terri, is away at Ramah, Quint can rest easy knowing that not only is she making friends and enjoying summer camp activities, she's also gaining skills to help her in her life outside camp.

"Letters are written and I can see someone has helped her. She can read and understand what I've written," Quint said. "There's also an emphasis on her showering herself and lots of other life skills."

Terri Quint

This year, thanks to a $50,000 grant to the Ramah network of camps from the Ruderman Family Foundation – $10,000 of which went to the Canadian camp – Ramah was able to expand the Tikvah program, employing a dedicated head of its vocational program.

The Utterson, Ont., camp brought Tikvah participants to the nearby town of Bracebridge, where they could volunteer with seniors at a retirement home and at a local YMCA.

At the camp, they worked in the laundry facility and guest housing, giving them an opportunity to develop skills they can use outside camp.

The heads of the Tikvah program, Casey and Adam Green, work with the vocational education participants to identify strengths and interests, so that they can tailor a program to each camper's needs.

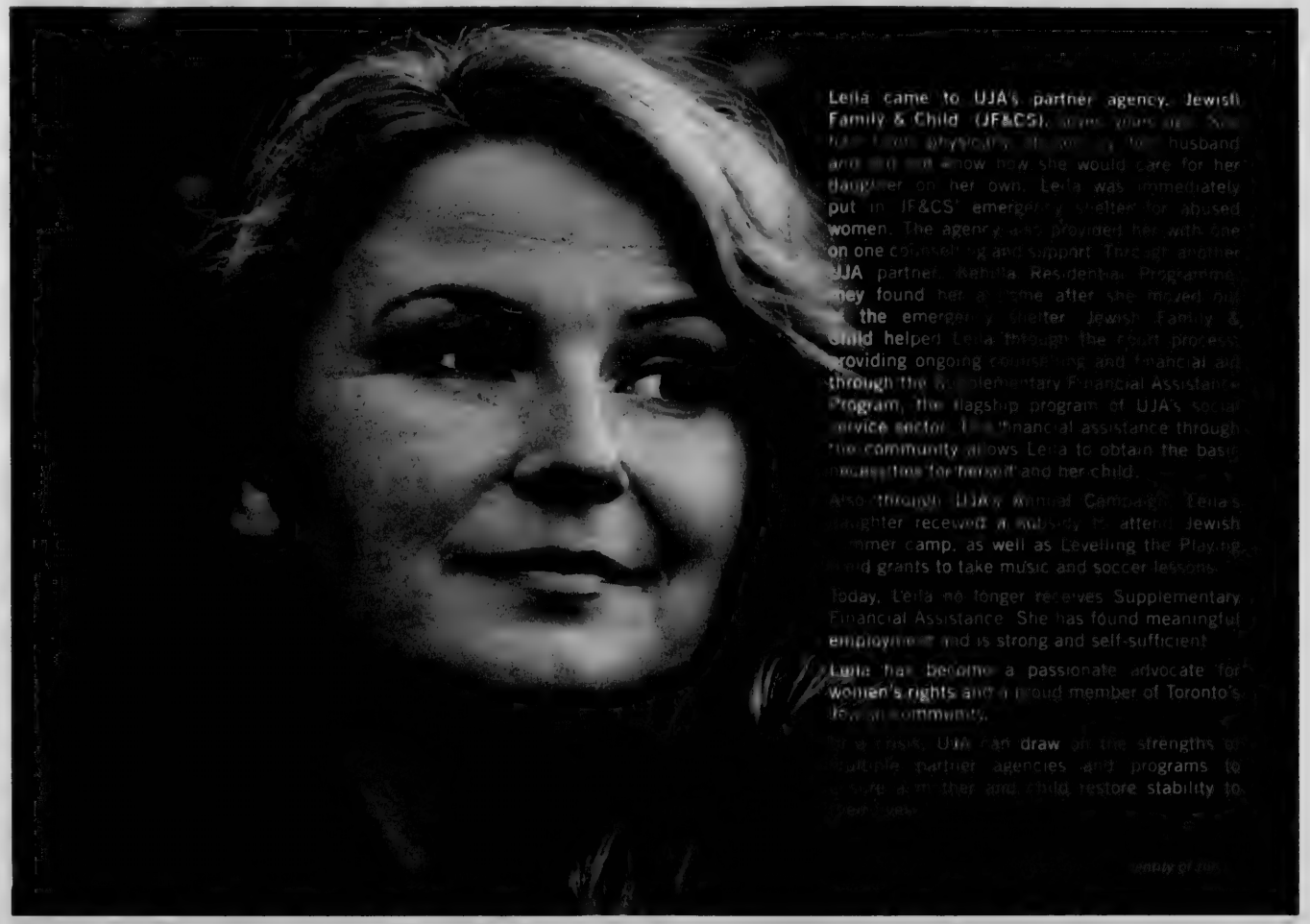
Casey Green said one of the biggest benefits for participants is the socialization experience, giving them an opportunity to experience life outside the sheltered camp community.

"If you're helping out a camp and everyone knows you, it's different from volunteering and having to understand social nuances," she said, explaining that at camp, it might be acceptable for the participants to be late for their volunteering jobs, but people might be less forgiving out in the wider community.

Terri Quint, who's been going to Ramah since she was a teenager, said she loves camp as a whole, but her favourite part of the Tikvah program is the work component. One of the skills she learned this year is how to do laundry.

Although Robin Quint said it's hard to pinpoint what others skills her daughter picked up at camp versus at the other programs for young adults with special needs that she attends regularly, she said she's noticed a change.

"She's done unbelievably well with the help from Ramah, without a question," she said. "I can only highly recommend that camp in the strongest possible way."


Leila came to UJA's partner agency, Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS),
husband
and did not know how she would care for her
daughter on her own. Leila was immediately
put in JF&CS' emergency shelter for abused
women. The agency also provided her with one
on one counselling and support. Through another
UJA partner, Kehilla Residential Programme,
they found her a home after she moved out
of the emergency shelter. Jewish Family &
Child helped Leila through the court process,
providing ongoing counselling and financial aid
through the Supplementary Financial Assistance
Program, the flagship program of UJA's social
service sector. This financial assistance through
the community allows Leila to obtain the basic
necessities for herself and her child.
Also through UJA's Annual Campaign, Leila's
daughter received a subsidy to attend Jewish
summer camp, as well as Levelling the Playing
Field grants to take music and soccer lessons.
Today, Leila no longer receives Supplementary
Financial Assistance. She has found meaningful
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United Jewish Appeal

Sherri Wise was a victim of 1997 Jerusalem attack

Canadian terror victim sues Iran

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Sixteen years have passed since Sherri Wise was nearly killed in a horrific terrorist attack in Jerusalem, and thanks to the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act that passed last year, Wise can finally seek damages from the Iranian government.

A claim filed in the British Columbia Supreme Court late last month by the 43-year-old Vancouver-based dentist is the first such case to be launched in Canada against Iran, a listed state sponsor of terrorism.

The lawsuit accuses the Islamic Republic of supplying Hamas with weapons, training and funds to facilitate terror attacks, including the 1997 attack in which Wise was severely injured.

"I was volunteering as a dentist for three weeks, working on underprivileged children in a program called Dental Volunteers for Israel," Wise said in an interview with *The CJN*.

In the six months before she arrived in Israel in August 1997, Israel had suffered three terrorist attacks: the Island of Peace massacre in March 1997 in which seven 11-year-old girls were killed; a suicide bombing in a Tel Aviv coffee shop that killed three and injured 49, and the Machane Yehuda bombing that killed 16 Israelis and wounded 178.

She said before she left for Israel, she thought, "'What are the odds of this happening? If it happens, do you think it's going to happen to you? No.'"

On the last day of her volunteer stint, she decided to go for lunch with a couple of friends at an outdoor café on Ben Yehuda Street, a trendy pedestrian mall.

"It was a gorgeous day, really hot out, and at one point, I saw this really strange-looking person walking down the street. It was a man dressed in women's clothing… he was in a skirt, in drag," she said, adding that she simply shrugged it off.

She then asked her friend to switch seats with her because she wanted to get out of the sun.

"Before I could even sit back down in her chair, the first two bombs went off. I was knocked to the floor and when I turned around to see what was happening, the other bomber was directly in front of me and he pulled the detonator."

Three Hamas suicide bombers were responsible for murdering five Israelis, including three 14-year-old girls, and wounding 190 more.

"I had burns on 40 per cent of my body.

Sherri Wise

I lost a lot of hearing, my hair was burned off and I had a bolt through my foot. I was stuck to the table, because all the nails [from the bomb] that went through the table went into my leg, so I was impaled on the table," she recalled.

She spent two weeks in an Israeli hospital, then flew to Winnipeg to stay with her parents for three months before returning to Vancouver.

She spent six months being treated at burn clinics, and because of swelling and sensitivity in her arms and hands, she wasn't able to return to work for nearly a year.

Her insurance policy, which "was void in the event of terrorism or war," would not cover her medical expenses. Neither would British Columbia's health insurance, which doesn't cover injuries sustained out of province.

Despite having to pay out of pocket for her recovery and her loss of income that resulted from being unable to work, she didn't consider pursuing legal action until she became involved with the Canadian Coalition Against Terror (C-CAT) in 2004.

C-CAT is the organization that led the campaign for the passage of the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA), which was enacted in March 2012, allowing Canadians to seek damages against Iran and Syria, which were designated as state sponsors of terror.

Although her claim doesn't seek a specific amount in damages from Iran, Wise and her lawyers are hoping for a share of Iran's millions of dollars in assets in Canada.

Last month, the Department of Foreign Affairs released a list of Iranian-owned properties in Ottawa, as well as 14 Canadian bank accounts holding at least $2.6 million in total.

Complicating things are three American cases against Iran that have been filed in Ontario. The Americans were awarded more than $300 million by U.S. courts, but because Iran didn't have assets in the United States, they asked the Ontario court to award them Iran's Canadian assets.

In a sworn statement presented at a Sept. 30 Ontario Superior Court of Justice hearing, Wise argued that she would be "severely prejudiced if I am not permitted to intervene and if the plaintiffs' motion is not adjourned so my lawyers have time to prepare submissions."

She added that, "it is unlikely that the defendants [Iran] will have any assets remaining if the plaintiffs are granted default judgment."

Wise's lawyer, Mark Freiman, explained to *The CJN* that the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act "allows Canadian victims of terrorism to sue for acts of terrorism committed since 1985… There is another provision that says people who hold judgments from another country against a listed state sponsor of terrorism, with respect to acts of terrorism, can enforce those judgments in Canada," he said.

Freiman said that during the hearing, he "asked the judge to allow us to take part in the proceedings, because we believe there is an important issue that has to be decided about the act itself… The question is whether it also allows for foreign judgments stretching back that far to be enforced in Canada. We don't think that is the intention or the effect of the law."

The judge ultimately ruled that Wise didn't have a legal interest in that proceeding.

But Wise and her lawyers aren't giving up.

"We're in it for the long run and we will see it through and we will take every legal avenue to pursue it," Wise said.

Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University

The Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University celebrates with Bar-Ilan University's Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies 20 years of strategic foresight with a

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Mazel Tov to

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Mr. Saul Koschitzky,
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Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu opened the conference with his eighth appearance at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies with his address, "Israel's Future Challenges".

Canadian Friends wishes a hearty Mazel Tov to the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies. May they go from strength to strength.

CJN'S PARTY PLANNER
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NOVEMBER 14TH ISSUE

Residents oppose Bathurst Manor Plaza plan

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Bathurst Manor residents expressed their obvious displeasure with revised plans for the redevelopment of Bathurst Manor Plaza at a community consultation meeting held last week at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

In the third community meeting on the matter since 2006, lawyer Adam Brown, who was presenting the revised plans on behalf of the site's owners Kilbarry Holding Corp., had to speak over the shouts and rumblings of the more than 300 people who attended.

The revised application, which would shift the buildings away from single family homes located to the north of the site, includes 44 townhouse units, two condominium buildings with 350 residential units and retail space, all to be built in three phases. Parking would be available below and above ground.

He said the proposed plan includes living space for about 700 people, and the anticipated start date for Phase 1 is "unlikely before 2014." Each phase should take about 2-1/2 years.

The plaza, on the northeast corner of Wilmington Avenue and Overbrook Place, has been in decline since its anchor supermarket closed in 2004.

Brown, who had to rush through his presentation because people were impatiently waiting to ask questions, said retail patterns are changing and people are no longer turning to neighbourhood stores for their shopping needs.

Bathurst Manor Plaza has seen better days. *(Jeff Rosen photo)*

"Plazas are going into decline. Putting in residential [housing will make the plaza] more viable," he said.

Despite Brown's assurances that the area has the "capacity to accommodate the development," residents said they worried about, among other things, increased traffic, drainage and sewage, overcrowding in local schools, and, as one resident expressed loudly, "turning our neighbourhood into a ghetto."

Brown said school overcrowding is not an issue, because new students will be bused to outside schools, since local schools are full.

One resident replied that this would add new buses to an already high-traffic area, while another woman, who identified herself as a local teacher, said she doesn't believe the Toronto District School Board has money for extra buses. "That means more children will be put into these schools. These are problems that are not being addressed."

James Pasternak, city councillor for Ward 10, which encompasses Bathurst Manor, assured the crowd that the meeting was solely informational and that nothing has been decided yet.

"We have to make sure your voices are heard," he said.

Cassidy Ritz, a senior planner for community planning with the city, said the municipality is taking this matter very seriously.

"Following this meeting, we will determine if the applicant should make further changes. The applicant will then make further changes, or proceed with the application."

Mark Adler, the MP for York Centre who said he was at the meeting as a resident and not in an official capacity, received no response when he asked who among the crowd supported the development.

"I don't know how it has gone this far. [Why] is city hall making the decisions instead of elected officials?" Adler asked during the question period.

"Tonight is a call to action, and we have to get [Mayor Rob Ford] involved. Let me know if you're prepared to fight to defeat the current configuration."

He invited residents to call him or drop into this office. "As a community, we will figure this out."

Pasternak said that if the applicant brings in a dramatically different plan, there will be another community meeting to consider it.

"I have vigorously opposed this plan for many years and will continue to do so," Pasternak told *The CJN*.

"The density and the unit configurations are totally inappropriate for this site. It does not reflect the character of the neighbourhood, the wishes of the community and the overall historical role of the plaza as a centre to the community. We want the site cleaned up but not at any cost. If this comes before North York Community Council and City Hall I will have the votes to defeat it."

Pasternak, who as a school board trustee in the area also fought this plan, said local schools are at or near capacity, and mass busing is a "disastrous option and a total disruption to the community."

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Diamond setter recognized by Guinness

Continued from page 3

When the family moved to Canada in 1947, Maurice continued to sell industrial diamonds. An NFB documentary narrated by Lorne Green looked at the business and featured his father, Lewy said.

Part way through high school, a learning disability attributable to dyslexia led Lewy to realize the academic life was not for him. His father advised him to learn a trade, and Lewy chose diamond setting. He entered into a nine-year apprenticeship under Stan Levine.

"You learn everything about diamond setting. It's like learning to be a brain surgeon, there's so much to do," said Lewy.

He developed a particular aptitude for more difficult work, such as setting half-millimetre stones.

Eventually he went into business on his own, setting diamonds in all kinds of jewelry. He also served as a consultant to other jewelers on the mechanics of setting stones.

"It's like [being] an engineer," he explained.

Over time, the industry changed. Stone-setting was outsourced abroad, where skilled craftsmen would work for a fraction of the cost in Canada.

A career change followed. Lewy began training young people at George Brown College, while continuing to freelance for private customers.

Three years ago, while attending a trade show in Tucson, Ariz., he was shown a standard plastic poker chip. He said to himself, "There's something wrong with this. It has no flair. It's boring."

He began to experiment, giving new looks to the old chips. In his earliest effort, he embedded a couple of plastic dice in the chip. He went on to experiment with metal chips, using simple designs that incorporated the number seven on one side, and eight on the other.

Gerald Lewy [*Paul Lungen photo*]

Eight, he said, is considered lucky in some Asian cultures.

"Every few weeks, I'd come up with something else," he said. He'd wake up at 4 a.m. with an idea and jot it down.

Lewy believes his dyslexia may well have helped him. To make sure no mistakes crept in, he double-, triple- and quadruple-checks his work.

"The nice part is, I'm dyslexic and I created it. It came out of my head. There's nothing similar. Nothing comes close to it,."

Lewy proudly displays the prototype chips that preceded his record-setting one. They get progressively more intricate, with more and more glittery stones. For the models, he uses cubic zirconia instead of diamonds, imitation sapphire and imitation emeralds, to give them colour. For the final sale product, he substitutes the real gemstones.

His efforts culminated in the record-breaker, but all the while he worked on other items, like diamond-encrusted bracelets, featuring the four card suits using different precious stones. He has a diamond encrusted money clip, pendants, rings, gold-plated or solid gold dice with precious stones for pips – glitter that wouldn't look out of place on the Las Vegas strip.

His next step is to complete the line and market it to those looking for the best in luxury items.

Not bad for a guy who gave up academics to work with his hands.

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Canada-Israel energy ties hold great promise

When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Canada last year, he talked about our two countries' strong diplomatic ties and shared values. Why then, he asked, don't we do more business together. Currently, two-way merchandise trade between our two countries totals $1.4 billion annually, a respectable number, but one that has the potential to grow substantially, especially in the area of energy.

Joe Oliver

You may have heard the complaint that Moses searched for 40 years in the desert to find the only place in the Middle East without oil. Well, it turns out Moishe Rabbeinu, in addition to his extraordinary spiritual leadership, had sound geological instincts, even if it took us quite a while to prove it.

Off its coast in the Mediterranean, Israel has made one of the world's largest discoveries of offshore natural gas in the last decade. There has also been a major discovery of oil shale deposits in the northern Negev, and just last month, off Ashdod. These new reserves hold the promise of energy security for Israel – an astonishing development – with great potential for its economy and security.

However, as large energy resources are a first for Israel, it has not yet acquired the infrastructure, technology, geologists, skilled trades, relevant regulatory system or capital to fully support their development. That's where Canada can help. We're a global energy leader, with decades of experience developing both offshore and onshore unconventional resources.

In my capacity as minister of natural resources, this has been the focus of my trips to Israel. They included meetings with political leaders, including the prime minister, industrialists and financiers, as well as scientists at the Technion and the Weizmann Institute.

Working with my Israeli counterpart, Uzi Landau, we announced the creation of the Canada-Israel Energy Science and Technology Fund. Through matching $5-million investments from our two governments, it's anticipated that between $20 and $40 million can be leveraged through the private sector. Brilliant Canadian and Israeli researcher scientists, drawn from academia and industry, will collaborate in unconventional oil and gas and research and development in renewable energy. This is a sweet spot for Canada, as we work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support green energy.

We're also working to bring companies from our two countries together to discuss opportunities for investment, joint ventures and the sale of goods and services.

By developing these scientific and commercial ties, Canadians and Israelis can reinforce political and cultural connections and build even closer relationship, based on shared values and mutual interests.

Joe Oliver is the MP for the Toronto riding of Eglinton-Lawrence.

TURBANS VS. KIPPOT: Young people from the Jewish and Sikh communities in Montreal played a friendly soccer match at Mackenzie King Park on Sept. 29, organized by Congregation Dorshei Emet. The "Turbans vs. Kippot Faceoff" served to show how Jews and Sikhs have found common cause in the protest against the proposed charter of Quebec values. All ages also enjoyed a picnic of samosas and falafel.

(Robert Sasson photo)

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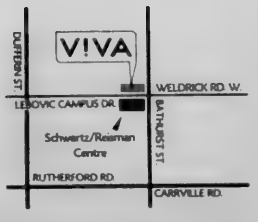

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EMSB seeks way to keep Jewish clubs

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) has reconsidered the cancellation of an extracurricular Jewish club for students at Royal West Academy, a high school in Montreal West.

On Oct. 1, the EMSB said it has decided that the club, which last year met weekly at lunchtime with Rabbi Dovid Pearlstein, might be able to resume in a manner that conforms with a law prohibiting religious instruction in schools.

Angela Mancini

The announcement followed the adoption of a resolution by the EMSB's commissioners requesting that the administration withdraw a directive that effectively spelled the end of the Jewish club at Royal West, as well as similar ones at Royal Vale and Westmount High Schools, and find a legal way for them to continue.

The clubs could be resurrected under "Life 101," an extracurricular program already in place at some schools. It may consist of classroom or lunchtime workshops where issues such as world religions, religion and science, and tests of faith, or broader issues such as the Holocaust and genocide, are discussed in a non-sectarian manner.

The EMSB's reversal came after a Sept. 25 report in *The CJN* in which the rabbi and the teacher who oversaw the Royal West club expressed surprise and disappointment that the clubs were no longer being permitted.

Rabbi Pearlstein, who is associated with Chabad's Chai Centre, said he had suddenly been told that the clubs could not go on, after several years of existence. The Royal West club received a grant from Federation CJA's Gen J program last year.

He said the clubs were open to everyone and he provided no overt religious instruction, such as prayer, concentrating instead on ethical dilemmas that all students could participate in.

The EMSB had cited Bill 118, the Quebec legislation adopted in 2000, concerning the place of religion in the public school system, which had a few years earlier been reformed from being organized along Catholic or Protestant lines to being French- or English-based.

That law stipulates that any activities sponsored by schools must be inclusive, pluralistic and educational.

"Religious services for one particular faith cannot be held in the building during or after school hours," said EMSB spokesperson Michael Cohen.

"The law clearly states that if a school wishes to have a multicultural or multifaith discussion or presentation, representative religious leaders from a church, synagogue, mosque or temple may participate only as invited guests of the trained [staff] facilitator."

In a prepared statement, the EMSB acknowledges that the Jewish club at Royal West was open to all students. The problem was that the "outside rabbi needed to be accompanied by a trained facilitator."

Rabbis and other clergy can be brought in as guest speakers for Life 101 program, as long as a "pluralistic" approach is maintained.

Royal West math and science teacher Carolyn Gehr, who brought the cancellation of the clubs to the attention of *The CJN*, served as her school's club director last year. That was how she was described in a press release issued by the EMSB last March about the club, focusing on its celebration of Purim.

"Royal West was in the process of preparing for a program which would meet the needs of the students and be in line with Bill 118, organized by its trained spiritual community animator when the *CJN* story was printed," the EMSB said.

The Royal Vale club was stopped because it was taking place without the knowledge of the then-new principal and the Westmount one "ended on its own several years ago," it said.

Royal West principal Tony Pita said he has explained the Life 101 program to a number of parents whose children wanted to take part in the Jewish club, and they're satisfied with the idea.

Gehr, who is on maternity leave this year, commented: "It has potential. Let's see how it turns out.

"It is gratifying to see that people at the board are truly searching for a satisfying solution to this issue, and not just sweeping it under the carpet."

EMSB chair Angela Mancini stressed that the board is committed to meeting the needs of its diverse student population to the extent the law allows.

"Since 2000, the EMSB has worked hard to support school environments that reflect diversity and pluralism in accordance with Bill 118," she said.

"Consequently, the schools of the EMSB have held and will continue to hold multifaith celebrations and encourage activities and clubs that honour and respect our multicultural society, in line with Bill 118, while focused on the needs of the students."

Mancini noted that the EMSB continues to offer the Heritage Language Program, commonly known by its French acronym PELO, in co-operation with the education ministry.

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Quebec minister defends proposed charter

'Jewish General a jewel of Montreal community'

Continued from page 1

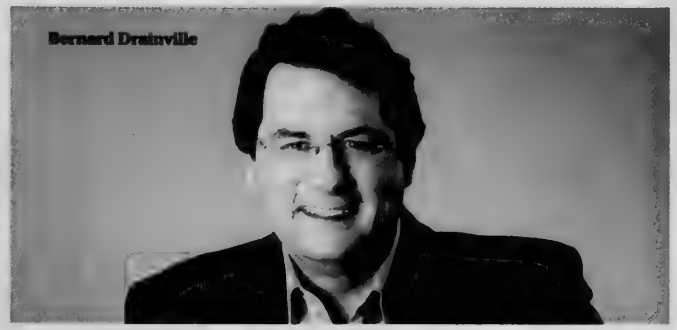
"The Jewish community has been an integral part of Quebec for a very long time, since they settled here in the late 1700s. They have made a major contribution to the development and evolution of Quebec society... and we believe that they continue to be an extremely important part of Quebec society today."

As for the prohibition against public sector workers wearing overt religious symbols – such as kippot, hijabs and crosses – Drainville said it's not discriminatory because "its application will be limited strictly to working hours.

"The state in no way whatsoever wants to confine or interfere with the religious convictions or morals of our citizens when they are not [employees] of the state."

It was this conviction that led the government to "confine the proposed neutrality" to these situations only, he said.

"For example, there was never any question of... limiting the wearing of religious symbols in the public sphere, as the French did with the full veil... Neither was there ever any question of limiting the wearing of religious symbols by ordinary citizens. In France, they forbade the wearing of ostentatious religious symbols in classrooms... Let's be clear: the restriction


Bernard Drainville

on wearing overt religious symbols will be limited only to the state and to employees of the state."

Asked about the likely effect the new legislation would have on Montreal's almost 100-year-old Jewish General Hospital, Drainville stressed that "for the Parti Québécois government, the Jewish General Hospital is a jewel of the Montreal community and of Quebec society. The hospital is an institution that has huge credibility and adds greatly to the richness of the Quebec health and social services network.

"We are very conscious of the socio-historic circumstances that led to the creation of the Jewish General in the '30s: Jewish doctors did not have the right to practise their profession in the other Quebec hospitals. There were also members of the Jewish community who had problems being treated in some hospitals," he added.

"We want the Jewish General Hospital to keep its identity and its personality. There is absolutely no question of jeopardizing the identity of this important health-care institution. Besides, we have taken note of the wishes of the Jewish General Hospital to exercise its right of withdrawal [from the requirements of the charter], renewable, as provided in the proposal... currently on the table. This would permit the employees of the Jewish General Hospital to continue to wear religious symbols within their workplace."

Nevertheless, Drainville recently said that he hopes public institutions, including the JGH, that take advantage of the proposed charter's opt-out clause won't do so forever and that they'll accept the new reality.

Asked whether there's a contradiction between recognizing the JGH as distinct and expecting it to eventually adapt to the charter, the minister said, "All I can say at this stage is that we're very conscious of the distinctive, special character of the hospital. Our intention is not to question in any way the identity of this renowned institution, which we value very highly."

This article was translated from a French story in this week's Montreal edition of The CJN.

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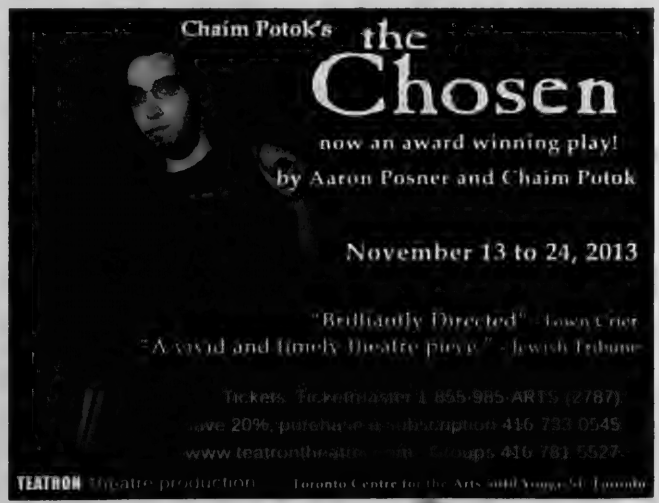
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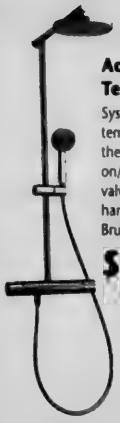

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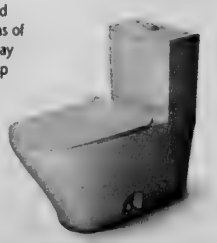

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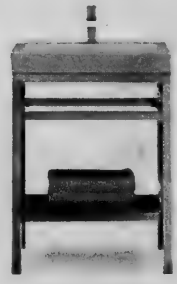

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UK envoy for post-Holocaust issues to speak

Jewish museum seeks $100,000 to survive

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — A major fundraising event in Saint John, N.B., is expected to raise more than $100,000 for the long-range survival of the community's Jewish Historical Museum.

Andrew Burns, the United Kingdom's first envoy for post-Holocaust issues, will be guest speaker at a $100-a-plate luncheon Oct. 11 the Delta Brunswick Hotel. The former British high commissioner to Canada and Britain's ambassador to Israel will talk about the relevance of the Holocaust around the world, 70 years after World War II, in a speech titled "Still Coping with the Consequences of the Holocaust."

Proceeds from the event will go the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum Fund, administered by the Greater Saint John Community Foundation, which gives annual grants to the museum to ensure that it continues in perpetuity. The fund operates independently from the museum itself.

Andrew Burns

Retired university professor Gary Davis chairs the museum's board. Along with former Canadian senator Erminie Cohen and community philanthropist Jaqueline Oland of the Moosehead Brewery family, he helped bring Burns to Saint John for the occasion.

"Jackie knew Burns from other activities, suggested him as a speaker for us a couple of years ago, and we were finally able to co-ordinate his schedule with our event," Davis said. "He's attending an International Holocaust Alliance Conference in Toronto that week and has made time to be with us for a day."

More than 300 tickets have been sold to the luncheon, the majority to non-Jewish members of the Saint John community, which only has about 30 Jewish families remaining from a vibrant group of more than 260 families in the mid-1950s. The community was established in the 19th century.

"It was risky at the start [as we planned this], but we've had some enthusiastic support from corporations and individuals," Davis said. "We set goals, budgets and the desire to find a great speaker, and we've done it. We're hoping to sell 450 tickets by Oct. 11."

The museum, in its 27th year, was a dream of primary founder Marcia Coven for years prior to its opening in 1986. It preserves the history and heritage of the city's Jewish community through its collection and displays. It collects and preserves books, oral and video interviews, manuscripts, records, biographies, photographs and other documents that relate to the history of Jews in Saint John.

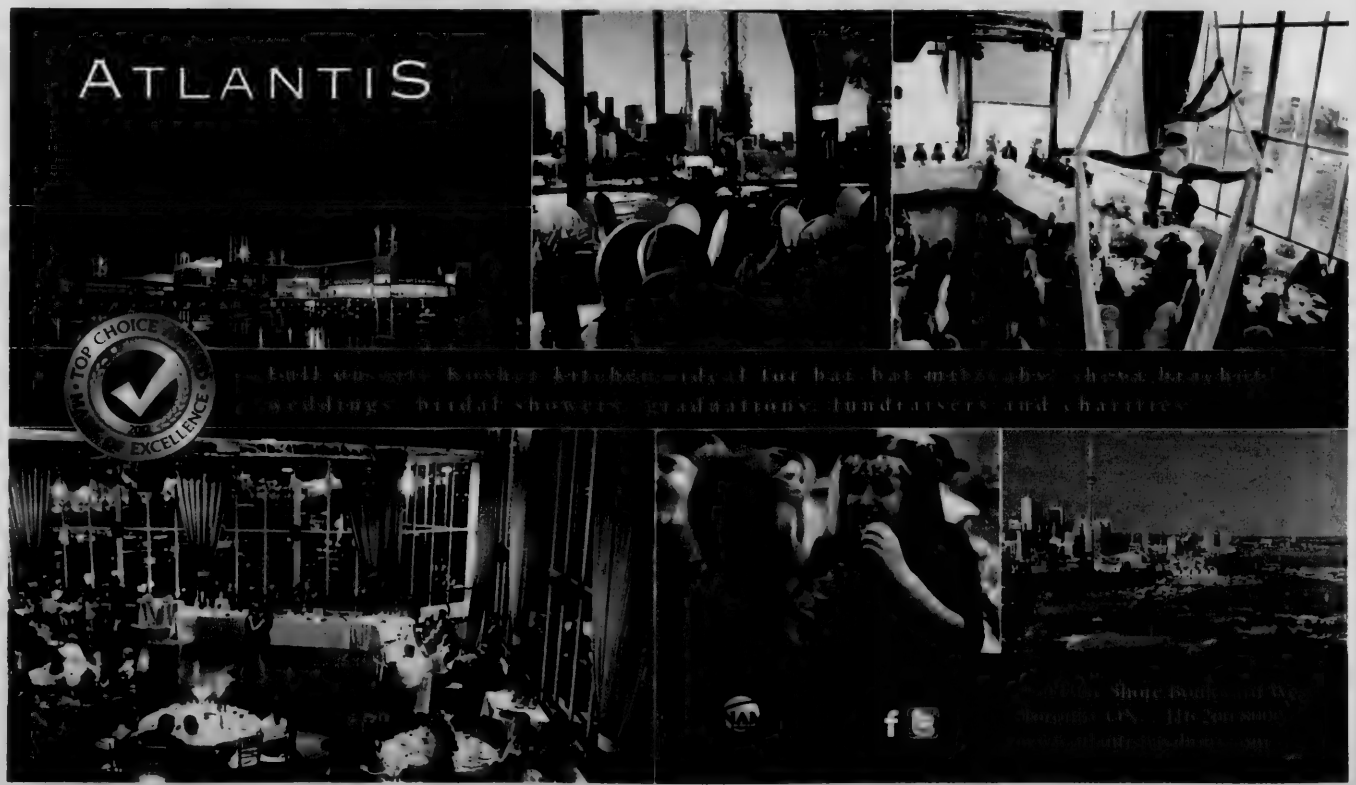
Davis said up to 7,000 visitors a year have entered the museum, which has a membership of 200, about 60 per cent of whom are Jewish, and many Saint John ex-pats now living in Toronto and the United States.

"We're encouraging those who can't be here from away to attend the luncheon to support us with a donation to ensure the museum's survival."

The museum is directed by a volunteer 10-person board, of whom three are non-Jewish: a university history professor, a Presbyterian minister and another interested community member.

"They're very interested in the preservation of the Jewish community and religion and have a great overall interest in history," Davis said.

For more information, to buy tickets or to make a donation, contact the museum's curator, Katherine Biggs-Craft, at sjjhm@nbnet.nb.ca or 506-633-1833. The museum's website is personal.nbnet.nb.ca/sjjhm.



Universities graded on level of free speech

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL—McGill University's student union rightfully deserves its failing grade for free speech for making a campus group change the name of a pro-Israel party it organized last year, according to a former group member.

"I don't know if I feel vindicated," one-time McGill Friends of Israel (MFI) board member Russel Sitrit-Leibovitch told *The CJN* just before making aliyah Sept. 29.

"But it is definitely satisfying to know that McGill got the bad grade it deserved."

Overall, McGill got a D average in the 2013 "Campus Freedom Index" released Sept. 24 by the three-year-old, Calgary-based Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (JCCF).

According to the report, 12 of the 45 universities in the index were involved in supportive and critical incidents related to Israel that were compromised by censorship. Others included Guelph University, York University, the University of Ottawa, and Wilfrid Laurier.

The report was co-authored by centre president John Carpay and communications co-ordinator Michael Kennedy.

Kennedy was quoted as saying that free speech appears "very much in danger" on Canadian campuses.

"You have universities that cancel events organized by student groups because the ideas they're discussing are too controversial, and you have student unions who deny certification to student groups based on their views as well," he said.

The index rated the "state of free speech" – or lack thereof – at 45 Canadian public universities and their respective student unions, comparatively rating their policies ("what they say"), against their practices ("what they do").

The grades could range from A to F.

It found that 23 – more than half – "failed to uphold free expression rights on campus" because of censorship.

The incident at McGill in March 2012 coincided with Israeli Apartheid Week, which MFI – now renamed McGill Students for Israel – decided to counter with an "Israel-A-Party" event that Sitrit-Leibovitch, then a 21-year-old political science student, helped to organize.

McGill University's Arts Building

But McGill's student union – the Student Society (SSMU) – said the event's title "made a mockery of oppressions" and it obliged MFI to change it or risk losing its club status.

That decision, the Calgary centre said in its report, "sets a dangerous precedent for student groups who, like MFI, want to maximize campus interest in their events by using creative language."

Reacting to the index, SSMU president Jonathan Mooney said it's an ongoing challenge to strike a balance between what is – or isn't – acceptable to say on campus, because it's a "subjective exercise." Mooney was not on the SSMU executive at the time of the "Israel-A-Party" incident.

The University of Manitoba Students' Union tied McGill and five others as second-worst student union for its resolution to strip student group status from an anti-"Israeli apartheid" club.

Six of the seven second-worst student unions got Fs for restricting free speech, the seventh a D. They included the unions at Queen's University, Ryerson University, and the University of Calgary.

However, Judy Zelikovitz, vice president (university and local partner services) for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs said that she has read some of the report, and found some of the findings to be dubious.

"While the report makes some valid points, other passages are just not credible and suggest to us that the entire report should be taken with a grain of salt," she said. One example is the section where the researchers claim that referendum campaign spending limits constitute monetary obstacles on students exercising their right to free speech.

The jccf.ca website states that the centre was founded as a "voice for freedom in Canada's courtrooms," and its mission is "to defend the constitutional freedoms of Canadians through litigation and education."

With files from Cara Stern

The best and the worst

The best and worst universities and student unions were determined by taking an average of grades for both policies and practices. To read entire report, go to http://bit.ly/19hZtu5

Universities Best /Worst	
Acadia University	B
Carleton University	F
Memorial University of Newfoundland	B
University of Ottawa	F
Ryerson University	B
Simon Fraser University	B
University of British Columbia	B
University of Regina	B

**McGill University and York University tied as the second-worst universities in the country, both earning a D average.*

Student Unions Best /Worst	
Carleton University Students' Association	B
Lakehead University Students' Union	F
University of King's College Students' Union	B
University of Victoria Students' Society	F
York Federation of Students	F

**Seven student unions tied as the second-worst student unions in the country, namely, Brandon University Students' Union, the Students Society of McGill University, the Memorial University of Newfoundland Students' Union, Queen's University's Alma Mater Society, the Ryerson Students' Union, the University of Calgary Students' Union, and the University of Manitoba Students' Union.*

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Canadians aid Israel Tennis Centers

David Grossman
Special to The CJN

Dozens of invited guests packed a Yorkville restaurant to check out a silent auction that raised money for the Israel Tennis Centers (ITC) and to hear from a number of special guests about the ongoing community commitment to the ITC.

All in all, the 10th annual Invitational Tennis Pro Am raised more than $300,000 in a series of men's and women's tournaments involving amateurs and professionals, held at the York Racquets Club.

Thanks to the goodwill of many Canadians, tennis is challenging soccer and basketball for popularity in the land of milk and honey.

In 1979, Canada Stadium was inaugurated at the ITC's Ramat Hasharon location thanks to the support of Canadians.

In the past four decades, tennis blossomed because of a network of ITC facilities. Jewish, Christian and Muslim children of all ages get a chance to play at 14 locations scattered across the country.

According to ITC Canada's executive director, Toby Rosner, the 2013 event may have been one of the best.

"It has been a huge success," said Rosner. "So many people worked very hard and we're absolutely delighted to have reached our goal and donations keep coming in."

Rosner said this year's event highlighted a variety of tennis professionals and guest celebrities who were auctioned off to play alongside others in a series of tennis matches.

Rosner also confirmed the ITC would name a tennis court in Israel to honour the memory of former York Racquets Club member Ian Wexler, who died last March.

Harel Levy, one of Israel's all-time top tennis players, now retired, was among the celebrity group auctioned off to compete. Others included Canadian Davis Cup player Jesse Levine and former tennis pro turned commentator Brad Gilbert.

"Kids have a place to learn, to have fun, to meet others, to play tennis," said the 35-year-old Levy, now director of the centre's high performance tennis program.

Levy still talks about his 2001 Italian Open victory over Pete Sampras, a former world No. 1 player.

"There are things like that victory you never forget," said Levy, who also reached the final of the Toronto Masters tourney 13 years ago and had a career-high world ranking of No. 30 in singles.

From left, Jesse Levine, Dvora Marsha and Harel Levy

"Kids in Israel look for role models. We're trying to grow the next generation of Israeli tennis players, and it's not easy. Anytime you can take kids off the street and give them a productive opportunity, like playing tennis, I think it's marvelous," he said.

Levine, who lived in Ottawa before moving to Florida, turned pro at age 19. He's played on Canada's Davis Cup team and is still hoping to crack Canada's Olympic team for 2016. But he's not used to being put up for auction.

"I told my mother that I was being auctioned off," laughed Levine. "I told her it was all for a good cause: to help young Israeli tennis players."

"Tennis has been good to me, and it's always great to give back. It's a mitzvah to help others," said Levine, who has never been to Israel. "In Florida, I have watched young Israeli tennis players. Some of these kids have lots of talent and need to be given chances to get better."

Dvora Marsha knows it all too well. Now 29 years old, she came to Israel in Operation Solomon – the migration of thousands of Ethiopian Jews in 1991 – and, able to develop in tennis, became one of Israel's top female players.

"Tennis can change a child's life, and it had a huge impact on me in Israel," she said. "They gave me equipment, shoes, lessons and lots of confidence. It's hard to say where I would be now without that support.

"I went on to coach competitive programs and help others the way I was helped. My biggest highlight is working with kids – because I see myself from years ago."

Rosner said Canada has raised more than $20 million in almost four decades and all the money has gone toward improving tennis in Israel.

VISITING SCHOLAR
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October 18 to 22
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1. Friday, October 18
7:30 PM
Homeless in Toronto: A Shabbat Event for Young Professionals (22 to 36) Celebrate Shabbat together at *The Thirsty Fox Pub* (1028 Eglinton Avenue West), while we explore the topic of homelessness in Toronto. Featuring Avrum Rosensweig, founder and director of Ve'ahavta. Kosher dinner. Cost: $18; RSVP to Avital at 416-781-3511 by October 15.

2. Shabbat, October 19
Shaharit at 8:45 AM
Pulpit lecture: *So You Fell Asleep During Services... Do You Still Count For a Minyan?* *(And Other Little-Studied Jewish Laws and Customs).* What do Jewish texts tell us about why we are here and what we should be doing with our lives?

3. Monday, October 21
7:30 PM
Famous Celebrities and *Mitzvot*
What do Bruce Springsteen, Steven Spielberg, Paul Newman, David Copperfield, Ben & Jerry and Liz Taylor know about *mitzvot*? Danny Siegel will explore what lies behind their admirable actions and what we can learn from these and other famous Jewish celebrities who are known for performing *mitzvot*. No charge.

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JVS installs new president at AGM

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

It's the start of a new era for Jewish Vocational Service Toronto.

Lorie Shekter-Wolfson was officially named president and CEO of JVS at its 66th annual general meeting in late September, held at Beth Torah Synagogue.

Shekter-Wolfson, who was most recently assistant vice-president at George Brown College, said she's looking forward to the challenge.

"It's really exciting," Shekter-Wolfson said. "As I had said in my [introduction] speech, I've known of JVS for years and had the privilege of working with them as a partner when I was dean at George Brown and have been involved in the Jewish community on a volunteer basis.

"This is really my first opportunity to actually be a paid executive and work in the Jewish community, and it's very exciting to be able to put a stamp on that and be part of the future of this organization."

Shekter-Wolfson was formally introduced at the annual event, which also saw an appearance from York Centre MP Mark Adler and a keynote address by United Way president and CEO Susan McIsaac.

"I was honoured to be invited to come up," McIsaac said. "I have been up to the JVS on many occasions and worked with the staff and volunteers, and I feel that they are an amazing partner to United Way."

McIsaac spoke of some of JVS' and United Way's combined efforts across Toronto.

"There are still so many gaps across our city, people for whom opportunity isn't real," McIsaac said. "I think the work JVS is doing on the ground, in the community and in particular, in some of our priority neighbourhoods, is fundamental in terms of helping people get a hand up.

"When I think about youth, newcomers and neighbourhood, those are three key areas of priority for JVS," McIsaac added. "We [at United Way] are so aligned in our work that it's been at the base of our partnership for years.

"[JVS] is so important in helping to give opportunities, the kind of opportunities that can help someone be successful in life."

McIsaac said she was also impressed hearing many stories at the meeting of individuals whose parents or grandparents were helped by JVS or someone who would go on to work or volunteer there.

From left, Paul Habert, JVS chair; Lorie Shekter-Wolfson, JVS president and CEO; Susan McIsaac, president and CEO, United Way Toronto, and Kim Coulter JVS chief operating officer

"I think there's a cultural aspect to the work they do," McIsaac said. "We heard stories of people [getting help] postwar [JVS opened in 1947], and I think that's something unique in the city, something that's part of the heritage and pride of JVS, as it should be."

Shekter-Wolfson says JVS reflects a key component of Judaism.

"It's the Jewish response to tragedy, it's the Jewish response to need," Shekter-Wolfson said.

"The Jewish population has always been so successful at that, and I think that it's tremendous to have a Jewish organization be at the forefront of helping people, regardless of their background."

She said she'll oversee JVS as it tries to keep its programs functioning properly in the face of financial pressures.

"It will [involve] continuing with the level of service, diversifying the services and [working on] revenue sources," Shekter-Wolfson said.

"Governments don't have the money they once had, money that these services used to rely on. That means organizations such as JVS have to think differently about how they're going to do their services when finances are clearly a piece of that, in order to make up [for that] with all of the challenges ahead."

JVS also handed out a number of awards to staff, volunteers and individuals who have sought out their services.

Ilya Gilan was given the Joseph Skolnik Award for New Canadians, having used JVS's help when he came to Canada a couple of years ago. The Betty Skolnik Award for emerging professionals went to Aaron Herman, who now works in accounting. Cronos Consulting Group earned the David Mouckley Outstanding Employer Award for providing special initiatives to clients with barriers to employment. Arrathiyah Thirrukkumaran won the Manny Mitchell Volunteer Award for making a significant contribution to JVS over the past few years.

Survivor sees family photo for first time

CJN Staff

David Zyk with photo of his family from Lowicz, Poland

Some 70 years after he last saw his father, mother, brothers and sisters alive, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto and Bergen-Belsen concentration camp was recently given a photograph of his family for the first time.

"When I received this photo, I said, 'This is better than winning the biggest lottery in the world,'" said 88-year-old David Zyk, who recently travelled to Toronto from his home in Melbourne, Australia, to meet the cousins who had kept the photograph over the years.

Born in Lowicz, Poland, in 1925, Zyk was 16 years old when the Nazis forced him and his family into the Warsaw Ghetto in 1941. The youngest of five children, he was the only one of his family to survive. After the war, Zyk, believing he had few relatives left anywhere in the world, moved to Australia, where he worked in a factory that made gas stoves. But he remembered that his family used to receive packages before the war from an aunt and uncle in Toronto. He knew only that his uncle's name had been Fishl Phillips and that his aunt's maiden name had been Gerszt.

Recently a distant relative of Zyk's, Ner Bresler of Brooklyn, N.Y., made contact with him and hired Toronto-area genealogist Bill Gladstone to track down descendants of the Phillips family. Gladstone used cemetery records, tombstone inscriptions, newspaper obituaries and other sources to find Phillips family members in both Toronto and Buffalo. And yes, the family had a photograph of unknown relatives from Lowicz. About a dozen members of the Phillips family – including Ronni and Bernie Garshowitz of Toronto, Ferne and Gordon Mittleman of Buffalo, and Fran and Arnold Cohen of Holland Centre, Ont. – met with Zyk and Bresler during their visit to Toronto in late September.

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Mesopotamia exhibit and ancient Israel

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

The Royal Ontario Museum's (ROM) current exhibit on Mesopotamia is one of the best that the museum has mounted. Here is an area that has had a profound impact on civilization. In fact, it gave birth to civilization as we know and define it. And, as initially discussed in a previous column, its impact on Israel was tremendous.

Abraham was reputed to have come from Ur, one of the great urban centres of the Sumerians, who had the first civilization in recorded history. Ironically, the Sumerians virtually disappeared from history for thousands of years until they were rediscovered by archeologists at the end of the 19th and early 20th century.

It was in the first millennium BCE that Mesopotamia left an indelible impact on Jewish history. First the Assyrians (who are amply represented in the ROM exhibit) left their mark on ancient Israel. By 722-701 BCE they had destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and deported a sizeable number of its inhabitants, thereby giving rise to the legend of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.

Then came the neo-Babylonians who, under their king, Nebuchadnezzar, sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the First Temple in 586 BCE. They also deported a large number of the upper classes to Babylon. (Some have placed the number as high as 15,000.) Who can forget the lament in the Bible that would become a dirge for the Jewish People until 1967 – "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion."

By this time, Babylon had become the "Big Apple" of the ancient world. The ROM's computerized re-creation gives a wonderful view of the city at its height, although the city had been founded almost 1,500 years earlier by a Semitic group scholars call the Amorites. The city reached its first peak in the Old Babylonian period around 1750 BCE under the renowned Hammurabi, whose famous law code can be seen in Paris at the Louvre.

Even this far back, there appears to be evidence of contact between Mesopotamia and Canaan. At the site of Mari, a rival of Babylon that was destroyed by Hammurabi, archeologists found a cuneiform tablet mentioning Hazor. Hazor is located in northern Israel and was excavated by the legendary Yigael Yadin in the 1950s. Its final destruction came when the dreaded Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE.

Assyria would itself succumb to the neo-Babylonian king Nabopolassar, and his more famous son, Nebuchadnezzar, under whom Babylon would reach its apogee as a cultural and political power.

Despite their famous lament, the Jews thrived in Babylon. Even after Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered the city in 538 BCE and allowed the exiles to return, a majority of them chose to remain in Mesopotamia. They then made this area a major centre of Jewish culture and learning over the next 1,500 years, culminating in the creation of the great Babylonian Talmud.

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It's still a New Year

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

It's an exciting time in the Jewish annual cycle because all the High Holidays have ended. We have gone through the Days of Awe, the observance of soul-searching, honest self-encounters and family dynamics and politics.

We have eaten our weight in festive meals and disoriented our minds with mid-week holidays. Temporary huts appeared on our lawns, we ate with rain dripping through the sukkah roof and we finished and began reading the Torah without the chance to catch our breath for a moment.

It's the time of year when we crave a return to routines. Basically, I've prepped, apologized, atoned, fasted, eaten, shivered, shaken agricultural objects and danced and danced. I'm ready for normal.

And again, this is where the Torah steps in and reminds us that Judaism is constant movement – normal doesn't last long.

The Torah readings at this time of year plunge us into the narratives of "Lech Lecha," God's command to Abraham to leave his homeland, the beginning of the Jewish vision, the Jewish journey. It is the narrative of endless exploration and discovery as well as growth and redirection, all of which occur with God as Leader and Companion.

As with most journeys that are life-changing, time must become irrelevant or the journey becomes about schedules and deadlines. God stands outside time and, as such, so does the journey of Jewish identity. The 'Lech Lecha' journey begins with Abraham and Sarah, but it cannot be completed by them. The journey of a life takes longer than a lifetime.

Our matriarchs and patriarchs show us that this particular vision they are shaping involves a departure as much as an arrival. When God outlines the journey to Abraham, the only thing that is known for sure is what he must leave behind, not where he will arrive. And what he must leave behind is everything "normal" that he ever knew.

The High Holidays throw us into turmoil so that we can come out of them at the other end ready to begin our Jewish journey this year and excited about where it might take us. We leave behind the negative patterns we challenged as we confronted Yom Kippur and the materialistic priorities we faced during Sukkot.

We begin our journeys with Abraham and Sarah. After all the work we've just been through, both physically and spiritually, we must begin to answer the ultimate challenge of who we will become this year. And the Torah tells us that whoever we define ourselves as in the coming months, God is excited to meet us.

Every year, we become someone new, we reinvent ourselves and recognize the adventure and opportunities that lie ahead. We have left behind the "same old same old" and are no longer moving through life with a normal "comfortably numb" approach.

As the midrash has explained, "Lech" means "Go" – God has commanded us to "go" on our journey, and "lecha" is God's excited utterance of waiting "for you" – whoever the new you has become.

Rachael Turkienicz is the director of Rachaelscentre.org.

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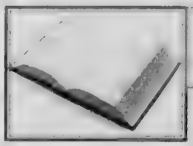
Time to rise to the challenge

Rabbi Ilan Emanuel



Rabbinic Reflections

One of the great questions of history is "Who makes history?" Are there extraordinary people who create historical reality by force of will – the "Great Person" theory? Or are famous people in history merely ordinary people who are swept up in the inevitable sweep of historical forces?

This question arises in Parshat Lech Lecha, in which we are introduced to Abraham in the middle of a conversation with God. This conversation apparently starts midstream with no context for what may or may not have gone before. We are given no background for his relationship with God. We don't know whether this is the first conversation between them or the 100th. And we don't know how Abraham came to understand that there was only one God or how he came to be chosen as the emissary of God.

The rabbis, of course, rush to fill this gap with midrash. They debate whether Abraham had been working up to this moment or was just picked at random. Some suggest that Abraham only became special *because* he was picked. He was the equivalent of the 100th caller to a radio show and had he not happened to be at the right place at the right time, it could well have been someone else entirely who became the first Jew and the father of all monotheistic religions.

Others argue that Abraham had special insight or ethical merit that brought him to God's attention. This, for instance, is the source of the midrash of Abraham smashing the idols in his father's shop, the idea being that he realized, even at a young age, that worshipping idols was ridiculous and God noticed.

Both approaches teach important lessons for our own lives. The first approach reminds us that we are all presented with opportunities and obstacles in life. We will all, at some point, be faced with difficult choices and wonder if we are up to the challenges set before us. Sometimes these situations may be totally unexpected and seemingly unmerited. Like Abraham, we may simply be expected to rise to the challenge, to become what the situation demands us to be. Like Abraham, we may have to "Go forth," leaving what we find comfortable and venturing out to embrace something new.

The second approach reminds us that, like Abraham, we also have merits. It is easy to doubt ourselves, to wonder whether we are worthy of achieving want we want, to play it safe for fear of failing. We so often let opportunities pass us by because we worry that we are somehow not worthy. Abraham inspires us to explore, to search, to try. We will not all discover something as monumental as monotheism, but if we don't try, we will never know what we may achieve, what we may bring to the world and to others.

At the High Holidays, we are told we have the opportunity for new beginnings. Now that the Days of Awe are over, we can learn from Abraham and take the opportunity to rise to the challenges these new beginnings provide and become the person we should be, and can be, in the coming year.

Rabbi Ilan Emanuel is a rabbi at Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto.

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Family speeches at funerals: some tips

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

The greatest change I've witnessed in my rabbinic career has been the role of the rabbi at funerals. In the earlier years of my career, I would deliver the eulogy at a funeral. On very rare occasions in those years, a family member or friend would be invited to speak as well.

Anybody who attends funerals today knows that the reality now is quite different. Rare today is the funeral without family speeches, with the rabbi's role largely confined to ritual.

In many instances, this change is welcome, because there are times when family speeches are beautifully delivered, deeply moving and articulate a vision of the departed family member that brings great honour to all involved.

Having heard at least 1,000 family speeches over the last several years, I offer some unsolicited suggestions regarding them.

First, I respectfully suggest that the number of speakers be limited. The most meaningful services I've attended have usually involved one or two speakers, to a maximum of three. There are alternative venues available for others to offer their memories, including the tribute pages on funeral home websites. Tech-savvy family members could set up memorial pages that would host written recollections, video and audio clips. Not everybody has to speak at the funeral in order for his or her words to contribute meaningfully to the honour bestowed upon the departed.

I would also remind mourners that they are under no obligation to speak, and should not be pressured to deliver a eulogy, especially when they're not accustomed to public speaking. On several occasions, family members have shared their discomfort with me, feeling that by not speaking, they are disrespecting their loved one. I suggest to them that being a mourner is hard enough without adding the burden of public speaking when that is outside of one's comfort zone.

For those outside of the immediate family who are speaking, I offer one caution. Be sure that your subject matter is the deceased. Too often, a well-intentioned speaker spends as much time on him or herself as he or she does on the departed. "He and I used to…" or "she and I often…" should be kept to a minimum, since the room will be filled with many others who've had similar experiences with the departed, and the speaker's personal experiences aren't the subject of the hour. Those preparing eulogies should avoid the word "I" as much as possible, focusing, as fully as possible, on the life being remembered.

Finally, in the absence of family speakers, one shouldn't be wary of rabbis fulfilling their traditional role as eulogizers. Even in cases where rabbis don't know the departed, they're trained to ask the right questions, to listen to family members and to build an appropriate tribute based on the recollections gathered.

I know that some of my best eulogies have been for people I never met, whose family members' accounts of their lives deeply moved me and provided me with all that I needed to deliver an appropriate eulogy.

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Shas founder Rabbi Ovadia Yosef dies at 93

Ben Sales
JTA

TEL AVIV — Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the Israeli sage who founded the Sephardi Orthodox Shas political party and exercised major influence on Jewish law, died Monday in Jerusalem. He was 93.

Born in Egypt, Rabbi Yosef served as Israel's Sephardi chief rabbi from 1973 to 1983, and extended his influence over the ensuing decades as the spiritual leader of Shas, which politically galvanized hundreds of thousands of Sephardi Israelis, though Rabbi Yosef himself never served in the Knesset. At its height in 1999, Shas was the third-largest Knesset party, with 17 seats.

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef

Though he adhered to a haredi Orthodox ideology, Rabbi Yosef, a charismatic speaker, published relatively liberal Jewish legal rulings and drew support from traditional and secular Sephardi Israelis as well. Known to his followers as Maran, "our master," in Hebrew, Rabbi Yosef's main Jewish legal goal was to take diverse Jewish practices from the Middle East and North Africa and mould a "united legal system" for Sephardi Jews.

As his influence grew, Rabbi Yosef presided over a veritable empire of Sephardi religious services. Shas opened a network of schools that now has 40,000 students. Rabbi Yosef managed a kosher certification called "Beit Yosef" that has become the standard for many religious Sephardim. And he was a dominant power broker when it came to electing Sephardi chief rabbis and appointing Sephardi judges in religious courts. This year, Rabbi Yosef's son – and preferred candidate – won the Israeli Sephardi chief rabbi election.

Through his work, Rabbi Yosef hoped to raise the status of Israel's historically disadvantaged Sephardi community, both culturally and socio-economically. He dressed in traditional Sephardi religious garb, including a turban and an embroidered robe, even as most of his close followers adopted the Ashkenazi haredi dress of a black fedora and suit.

As a scholar, Rabbi Yosef was known for his ability to recite long, complex Jewish tracts from memory. His best-known works, *Yabia Omer*, *Yehave Da'at* and *Yalkut Yosef*, cover a wide range of Jewish legal topics.

"He was a character that people capitulated in front of, a man of Jewish law that created a political entity with strong influence on Israeli politics and culture," said Menachem Friedman, an expert on the haredi community at Bar Ilan University. "It raised up Middle Eastern Jewish culture, gave legitimacy to Middle Eastern Jewish traditions."

Outside the religious community, Rabbi Yosef was best known for his sometimes controversial political stances. His authority within Shas was virtually absolute, and even in his ninth decade, he remained closely involved in the party's decisions. While he favoured policies that served the religious community's interests, Rabbi Yosef also supported peace treaties involving Israeli withdrawal from conquered territory. He argued that such deals were allowed under Jewish law because they saved Jewish lives. In the 1990s and 2000s, Shas joined left-wing governing coalitions multiple times, allowing for the advancement of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process – though the rabbi opposed the 2005 Israeli withdrawal from Gaza because it was done unilaterally.

In his later years, Rabbi Yosef also stirred controversy with a number of inflammatory statements, often made at a weekly Saturday night sermon. In 2000, he said that Holocaust victims were reincarnated sinners, while in 2005 he said that the victims of Hurricane Katrina deserved the tragedy "because they have no God." In 2010, Rabbi Yosef said that "the sole purpose of non-Jews is to serve Jews."

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef was born Abdullah Yosef in Baghdad, Iraq, on Sept. 23, 1920. His family moved four years later to Jerusalem in what was then Palestine, where Rabbi Yosef studied at the Porat Yosef yeshiva, a well-regarded Sephardi school. At age 20, he received ordination as a rabbinic judge, and at age 24, married Margalit Fattal, who died in 1994.

He began serving as a rabbinic judge in 1944, and in 1947, moved to Cairo to head the rabbinic court there, returning in 1950. He continued serving as a religious judge until becoming Sephardi chief rabbi of Tel Aviv in 1968, a position he held until he was elected Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel in 1973. During that period, he began publishing his well-known works, beginning with his Passover Haggadah, *Hazon Ovadia*, in 1952. Rabbi Yosef defeated a sitting chief rabbi in the 1973 election, itself a controversial move. In the wake of the Yom Kippur War that year, he ruled that women whose husbands were missing in action could remarry. Later in his term, he endorsed the Ethiopian Jews' claim to Judaism, helping them immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return.

Rabbi Yosef founded Shas in 1984, one year after finishing his term as chief rabbi. The party now holds 11 seats.

Women of the Wall approves prayer space, with conditions

JTA

TEL AVIV — The group Women of the Wall has agreed in principle to pray in a new egalitarian space adjacent to the Western Wall Plaza, provided the new section meets several of its conditions regarding the new section's design and management.

Until those conditions are met, Women of the Wall said in a statement that its members will continue praying at the women's section of the Western Wall, as the group has for 25 years. Before now, though, the group had stated that a new, egalitarian section of the wall would not be "relevant" to its needs.

Monday's policy change brings Women of the Wall in line with other non-Orthodox groups in Israel, such as the Conservative and Reform movements, which saw the new section as an answer to their requests for pluralism at the holy site. Yizhar Hess, CEO of the Conservative movement in Israel, called the change "a very positive step."

The egalitarian section, to be located in an area adjacent to the plaza known as Robinson's Arch, was first proposed in April as part of a plan by Jewish Agency for Israel chairman Natan Sharansky to resolve religious conflict at the wall.

Women of the Wall meets at the beginning of each Jewish month for a women's service at the Western Wall. Women of the Wall's chair Anat Hoffman told *JTA* that the policy change will give the group more influence over how the new section is designed.

In order to pray in the new section, Women of the Wall is demanding that the section be equal to the existing plaza in size, topography, budget and facilities. In addition, the group is demanding a unified entrance and a shared plaza between all of the wall's sections.

The group is also demanding that a body of Jewish leaders, with equal women's representation, run the new section. The existing plaza is managed by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, a haredi organization.

Some of these changes may be difficult to implement. Altering the topography of the plaza would require approval from the Islamic Waqf, a body that controls the Temple Mount and has historically been resistant to any such changes. Israeli Economy Minister Naftali Bennett had a temporary platform erected at Robinson's Arch in August, but Women of the Wall said it doesn't meet their needs. Until Monday, Women of the Wall seemed defiant in its commitment to keep praying in the women's section. The group scored a legal victory in court this year that allowed its members to pray without fear of arrest, but members have faced ongoing opposition and harassment from traditionalist opponents. The group's most recent service on Oct. 4 was the calmest in months, but the women still encountered opponents screaming and – according to some reports – spitting as they prayed.

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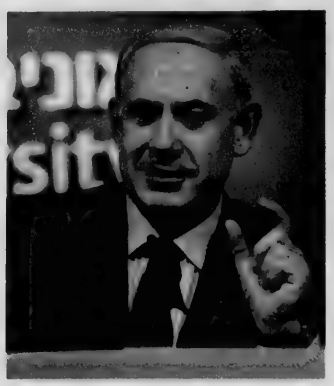
PM says Iran must stop its centrifuges



Benjamin Netanyahu at Bar-Ilan *[Israel Sun photo]*

Continued from page 1

Netanyahu struck a similar chord in Sunday's speech, saying that sanctions on Iran should be lifted only if Iran ceases enriching uranium and plutonium, and stops its centrifuges.

He also said the United States and Israel see "eye to eye" on the need to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

"Ask a simple question to Iran's rulers," Netanyahu said. "If you only want nuclear power for peaceful purposes, why are you enriching uranium and plutonium? You don't need these at all for peaceful nuclear energy, but these are the essential ingredients for nuclear weapons.

"The international community's position needs to be that we are ready to come to a diplomatic solution, but only one that gets rid of Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons."

Israel to seek seat at UN Security Council

JTA

NEW YORK — Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Ron Prosor, said Israel will seek a seat on the UN Security Council for the first time.

Prosor told *Reuters* Oct. 3 that Israel would vie for a seat on the 15-member panel, the United Nations' most powerful forum, for 2019-2020.

"We're going all out to win," Prosor told *Reuters*. "It's about time."

To win one of the 10 two-year rotations on the Security Council, which also has five permanent members with veto power, Israel would need to secure two-thirds of the votes in the General Assembly, made up of 193 member states.

The Security Council has the power to pass binding resolutions backed by force. Prosor said Israel would compete against Germany and Belgium for two seats allocated to the Western European and Others group, to which Israel belongs.

Muslim countries have kept Israel from joining the Asia-Pacific group.

European anti-circumcision motion 'fosters hate,' Israel says

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel called on the Council of Europe to rescind a resolution which it said was "fostering hate" because it equates non-medical circumcision of boys with female genital mutilation.

"This resolution casts a moral stain on the Council of Europe, and fosters hate and racist trends in Europe," Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote in a statement last Friday.

"We call on the Council of Europe to act without delay in order to annul it."

The resolution in question was part of a report that the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe passed on Oct. 2. The Council of Europe is the continent's main human rights co-operative body. Its resolutions are non-binding.

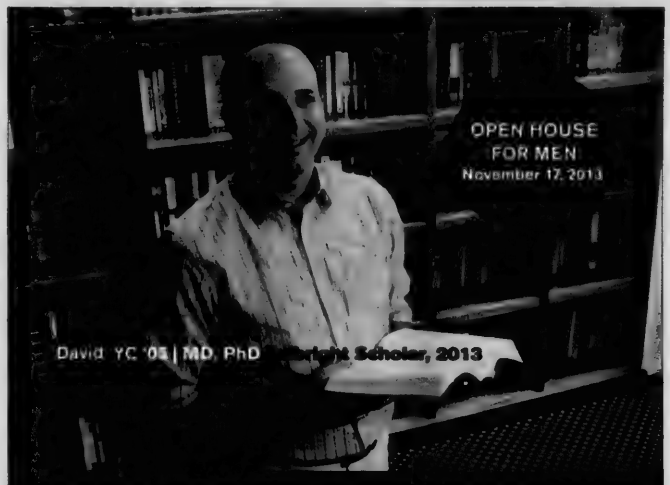
Entitled *Children's Right to Physical Integrity*, the report called non-medical circumcision of boys a "violation of the physical integrity of children" and mentioned it along with female genital mutilation.

"Any comparison of this tradition to the reprehensible and barbaric practice of female genital mutilation is either appalling ignorance, at best, or defamation and anti-religious hatred, at worst," the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote in the statement.

Israel rarely condemns motions by the Council of Europe or other institutions that do not concern it directly.

"Claims that circumcision harms young boys' health and body are false, and do not rest on any scientific evidence," the statement further read.

Several European Jewish groups have condemned the resolution, including Milah UK and the European Jewish Congress.



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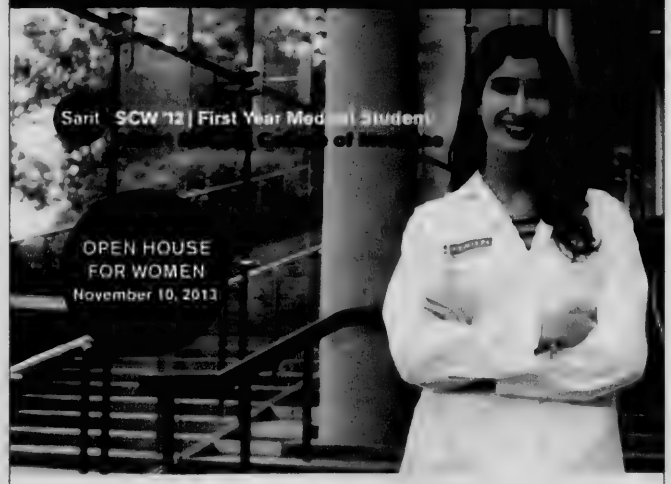

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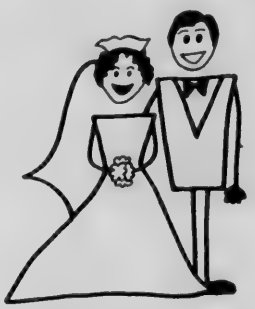
Survey finds high U.S. rates of intermarriage

Uriel Heilman
JTA



NEW YORK — There are a lot more Jews in the United States than you may have thought – an estimated 6.8 million, according to a new study. But a growing proportion of them are unlikely to raise their children Jewish or connect with Jewish institutions.

The proportion of Jews who say they have no religion and are Jewish only on the basis of ancestry, ethnicity or culture is growing rapidly, and two-thirds of them are not raising their children Jewish at all.

Overall, the intermarriage rate is at 58 per cent, up from 43 per cent in 1990 and 17 per cent in 1970. Among non-Orthodox Jews, the intermarriage rate is 71 per cent.

The data on Jewish engagement come from the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews, a telephone survey of 3,475 Jews nation-wide conducted between February and June and released last week.

The population estimate comes from a synthesis of existing survey data conducted by the Steinhardt Social Research Institute and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University.

While the Steinhardt/Brandeis study, called *American Jewish Population Estimates: 2012*, is likely to be a matter of some debate among demographers and social scientists, it's the Pew study that offers an in-depth portrait that may influence Jewish policymaking for years to come.

Among the more notable findings of the Pew survey:

• Overall, 22 per cent of U.S. Jews describe themselves as having no religion, and the survey finds they are much less connected to Jewish organizations and much less likely to be raising their children Jewish. Broken down by age, 32 per cent of Jews born after 1980 – the so-called millennial generation – identify as Jews of no religion, compared to 19 per cent of baby boomers and just seven per cent of Jews born before 1927.

• Emotional attachment to Israel has held steady over the last decade, with 69 per cent of respondents saying they feel attached or very attached to Israel. Forty-three per cent of respondents said they had been to Israel.

• Far more respondents said having a good sense of humour was essential to their Jewish identity than observing Jewish law – 42 per cent compared to 19 per cent.

• Approximately one-quarter of Jews said religion is very important in their lives, compared to 56 per cent among Americans generally.

The Pew study is the first comprehensive national survey of American Jews in more than a decade. The last one, the 2000-01 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS), was conducted by the umbrella organization of North American Jewish federations and counted 5.2 million Jews, including children. But critics said that study's methodology was flawed and undercounted American Jews.

Both the Pew survey and the Steinhardt/Brandeis study put the number of U.S. Jewish adults at about 5.3 million, including Jews who don't identify as Jewish by religion. The Steinhardt/Brandeis study counted an additional 1.6 million Jewish children for a total of 6.8 million Jews in America. The Pew study counted 1.3 million Jewish children.

Overall, Jews make up about 2.2 per cent of Americans, according to Pew. By comparison, 6.06 million Jews live in Israel, according to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics.

Because of the differences in methodologies between the new surveys and the NJPS, the increased number of U.S. Jews likely overstates any actual growth.

Leonard Saxe, one of the authors of the Steinhardt/Brandeis study, told *JTA* there has been some growth during the last decade, but he could not put a number on it. Saxe attributed the growth to the immigration of Russian-speaking Jews, programs to bolster Jewish identity and shifts in attitude that have enabled many children of interfaith marriages to be raised with a Jewish identity.

The Pew study found that about 10 per cent of American Jews are former Soviet Jews or their children.

About 65 per cent of American adults who identify as Jews by religion live in just six states, according to the Steinhardt/Brandeis estimates: New York (20 per cent), California (14 per cent), Florida (12 per cent), New Jersey (eight per cent), Massachusetts (five per cent) and Pennsylvania (five per cent). The other four states in the top 10 — Illinois, Maryland, Texas and Ohio — add another 15 per cent. The three most Jewish metropolitan areas are New York, South Florida and Los Angeles.

Among Jewish denominations, the Reform movement remains the largest: 35 per cent of respondents identified as Reform, according to the Pew study. The second-largest group is Jews of no denomination (30 per cent), followed by Conservative (18 per cent) and Orthodox (10 per cent).

As with other studies, the Pew study found that the Orthodox share of the American Jewish population is likely to grow, because Orthodox Jews tend to be younger and have larger families than Jews generally. In addition, while past surveys showed about half of respondents raised as Orthodox were no longer Orthodox, the Orthodox retention rate appears to be improving, with just a 17 per cent fall off among 18-to 29-year-olds.

Most denominational switching among American Jews, however, remains in the direction of less traditional Judaism.

While most of those surveyed by Pew said they felt a strong connection to Israel, and 23 per cent reported having visited the Jewish state more than once, the respondents expressed significant reservations about the current Israeli government's policies vis-a-vis the Palestinians.

Forty-four per cent said West Bank settlement construction hurts Israel's security interests, and only 17 per cent said continued settlement construction is helpful to Israeli security. Thirty-eight per cent of respondents said the Israeli government is making a sincere peace effort with the Palestinians.

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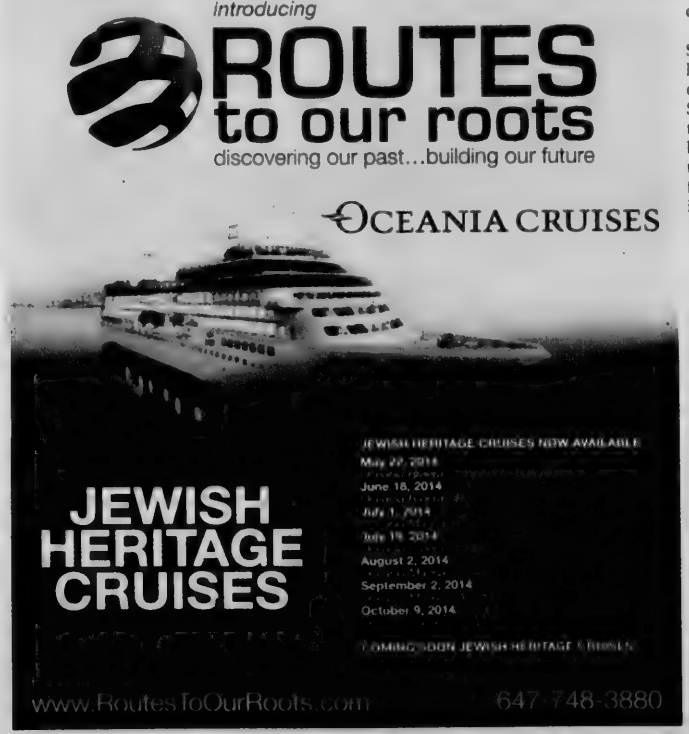

Indonesia's last synagogue destroyed

JTA

JAKARTA — Indonesia's last synagogue has been destroyed, a Dutch news site reported last week.

Unidentified persons demolished the Beith Shalom synagogue in Surabaya on the island of Java to its foundations sometime earlier this year, according to a report on Indoweb.nl.

The synagogue has seen a number of anti-Israel protests staged in front of it and was sealed by Islamic hardliners in 2009, according to the *Jakarta Globe*.

Reports of the synagogue's destruction have appeared in Indonesian media since May and were confirmed last week by the Indoweb.nl, which quoted the director of the Surabaya Heritage Society as saying that he intended to protest the demolition in talks with government officials.

"It is not clear by whom and when exactly the building was demolished," Freddy Instanto told Indoweb.nl.

The City Council of Surabaya was in the process of registering the building as a heritage site. Istanto said that for that reason, the building "should have been protected."

Situated in eastern Java, the small synagogue was built in the 19th century by Dutch Jews when Indonesia was still a Dutch colony. The first Jews arrived in Indonesia in the 17th century with the Dutch East India Company. During the 1930s and 1940s, the community grew due to new arrivals fleeing persecution in Europe.

Currently, about 20 Jews are estimated to be living in Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim nation, according to Beit Hatfutsot, the Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv.

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Canadian chosen for competitive NYC-based fellowship

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A Toronto student was one of 15 people recognized for their involvement in student life with a fellowship at Yeshiva University (YU) this year.

Michali Sturm, who studied marketing at the YU's Sy Syms School of Business, graduated this past spring. Although she was planning to move back to Toronto after graduation, she decided to stay in New York City once she was offered the fellowship position.

She is one of two non-Americans chosen for the fellowship this year – the other, Marganit Rauch, is from London, England.

Now in its 10th year, the program gives graduates the opportunity to work for YU while developing leadership skills and connections through working on projects to improve campus life.

It was created in 2004 to keep some of the school's best students involved in campus life, as well as giving them the opportunity to begin their careers with involvement in Jewish organizational work, said university president Richard Joel.

"It's a group of passionate, very unique individuals who all have very different experiences at YU, but have a similar underlying goal to enhance and give back as much as they can to the institution," Sturm said.

Some of the activities include skill-development workshops, leadership-training seminars, and meetings with various professors. The participants also get the opportunity to learn from people such as philanthropists Michael Steinhardt and Ronald Stanton, author A.J. Jacobs and human rights activist Brooke Goldstein.

Sturm said the fellowship is helping her move toward her goal of working in market research. She said the fact that the fellowship is so people-oriented – she's working in YU's Office of Student Life – makes it similar to working in marketing.

"In market research, you work with the consumer mind to come up with a better product," she said, adding that she's doing exactly that in her fellowship – working with the student body to find ways to improve the school.

She described her experience at the school as very positive. Not only was she able to learn in small classrooms, getting to know the professors, but she also became very involved in several campus groups, including the marketing club, fashion club and a number of business clubs.

Michali Sturm

"The more I became involved in the school throughout my time there, the more I benefited from it," she said.

That's why she decided to accept the fellowship. "I wanted to do it from a different perspective, and have the opportunity to give back."

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Marvin Jerome Brodsky	Sep 20/13	704-5460 Yonge St
Edward Brickman	Sep 20/13	605 Finch Ave. W.
Samuel Fox	Sep 21/13	3270 Bathurst St
Frances Axmith	Sep 21/13	72 Claver Avenue
Manya Rosa Kikoler	Sep 24/13	429 Walmer Rd
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Steeles Memorial Chapel

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Hamu, Isaac	Sept. 17/13	
Zonchain, Issaak	Sept. 18/13	
Orzy, Roze	Sept. 19/13	4 Acton Ave.
Eisen, Albert	Sept. 19/13	
Rosenberg, Rita	Sept. 19/13	
Kirshenblatt, William	Sept. 19/13	7300 Yonge St.
Krasat, Mildred	Sept. 20/13	131 Torresdale Ave.
Rotenberg, William	Sept. 20/13	41 Wild Gingerway
Feldman, Joseph	Sept. 21/13	
Raznick, Michael	Sept. 21/13	
Dee, Alan	Sept. 21/13	
Levytam, Esther	Sept. 22/13	168 Mary St.
Genesove, Dr. Jack (L.J.)	Sept. 22/13	30 Sunnycrest Rd.
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Vivian Maltese	Sep 25/13	
Mortimer Bernstein	Sep 28/13	205 Cummer Ave.

Dr. Sydney Taylor ז"ל

Shimon Ben Yitzchak Ve Ettel

March 5, 1925 to September 13, 2013 (10 Tishrei 5774)

After a courageous, lengthy battle to survive, our Royal Canadian Air Force Veteran of World War 2, esteemed, respected, and adored Dentist and Dental Surgeon, passed away in Toronto at Veterans Centre, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. To the moment of his passing, Syd's hands were held, his forehead was kissed, and words of eternal gratitude and love were whispered in his ears by his loving and devoted wife of 68 years, Ethel, his daughter Shauna, and his son-in-law Jamie. He was pampered by his 24-hour Caregivers, Andrea Reyna and Maricela Altamirano. A most dearly beloved and cherished husband of Ethel Goodman Taylor, adored, respected, and worshiped father of Shauna Leigh Taylor (Oppenheimer) and Jamie Oppenheimer, the late Dean Jordan Taylor, much-loved Grampy of his "GrandDoghter" Jasper (the miniature schnauzer), cherished son of the late Isaac and Jeannie Taylor, beloved son-in-law of the late Benjamin and Jennie Goodman, brother of the late Trevor Taylor, Sybil Taylor, and Dorothy Siderson, and loving Uncle of Mark Cooper, Frank Cohn, Joanne Taylor Hillsdon, Shellie Siderson Rosenberg, and Michael Siderson. Brother-in-law of the late Mary Rapp, Lillian Krevat, Rose Shumacker, Bess Zeleny, and Samuel Goodman. Will also be deeply missed by his many cousins, friends, and patients. The family is grateful to Dr. David Gladstone, the nurses at Sunnybrook Hospital, C Wing 4th floor, and at the Veterans Centre K Wing East, 3rd Floor. Service took place at Benjamin's Park Memorial Chapel, 2401 Steeles Avenue West on Monday, September 16, 2013. Interment Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue section at Dawes Road Cemetery. Shiva was held at 4 Sulgrave Crescent, Toronto, ON, M2L 1W6.

Donations may be made to The Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario, 1-888-473-4636, or to the Toronto Humane Society, 416-392-2273, or the charity of one's choice.

The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of

SAM PASTERNACK ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, Oct. 13 at 12 noon

Mount Sinai Memorial Park

(986 Wilson, east of Keele)

Beth Radom Section

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

BUDLOVSKY, Michael

On Wednesday, October 2, 2013 at Baycrest Hospital, Michael Budlovsky, beloved husband of Alice. Loving father and father-in-law of David and Erin Hawker-Budlovsky, and Daniel and Romy. Dear brother and brother-in-law of Margaret and Richard Kardish. Cherished Papi of Olivia, Samuel, Keaton, and Dennisen.

Memorial donations may be made to the Freeman Centre for the Advancement of Palliative Care at 416-756-6944.

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QUALITY MONUMENTS... FACTORY PRICES

Russian-born entrepreneur a turnaround specialist

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There was a time when newly arrived Soviet Jews found Canada's free enterprise system baffling.

Running a business, turning a profit, what was that all about?

Not so these days. When Marat Ressin arrived from Moscow five years ago, he was already an entrepreneur with an impressive track record of success. Though trained as a mathematician, he had switched careers and become a turnaround specialist, acquiring decrepit old enterprises, installing his own management team and turning them into going concerns.

Moving to Toronto, he applied what he had learned in Russia, investing in small businesses and the real estate they inhabit, renovating them and renting them to tenants who provide each other with a synergy that allows them to feed off each other. Ressin focuses on smaller plazas and commercial buildings, often finding new uses for the space they contain.

"My niche is small business. All my practical and theoretical business knowledge related with it. No big malls. No real estate itself, only as a part of a particular small business project. I never had a project with a budget more than $20 million," he explained.

As in Russia, his success has given him the time and capital to indulge his other great passion, helping others in the community. He is a supporter of the Jewish Russian Community Centre (JRCC) and he's actively involved in trying to assist charities to operate on a more business-like basis.

Recently, he conceived the York Entrepreneurship Development Institute (YEDIntitute), which subsidizes the business education of prospective entrepreneurs, as well as those in the not-for- profit sector. Many of the first cohort of students come from the Russian Jewish community.

Ressin, 44, estimates he devotes about half his time to charitable endeavours. For years he has been involved in PresenTense, a volunteer-run organization that helps Jewish innovators in Russia, the United States and Israel develop their ideas into ventures that support local communities.

Marat Ressin

"I like to do social stuff, something that benefits people," he said.

Still, it's the business side of things that pays the bills.

On the walls of his office, photos display some of the buildings across the GTA that he acquired and later sold off. One was purchased for $7 million, renovated and new tenants brought in. It was sold two years later for $10 million.

Another commercial building cost him $2 million and, after undergoing the Ressin treatment, was appraised at $3 million, only three months later.

"The buildings have to fit the projects," he stated. "If the project needs a single building, it will be a single building. 'How many' also depends on a moment. I buy and sell. I never had more than 14 buildings at a time. Today I have five multi-unit commercial buildings in Moscow, one multi-unit and three single buildings in the GTA. No one building is bigger than 30,000 square feet. Price range may vary from $1.5 million to $20 million, depending of the project needs."

Leverage is an important factor in Ressin's business plan. He doesn't invest his own money in the projects – the acquisitions are financed through loans, mostly from banks, but about 30 per cent comes from private investors, many of them Russians and Russian Jews.

In Russia, investors receive their money back plus 50 per cent of the profit. "In Canada I can use the bank's money and for the rest, the investor gets six per cent per year plus 15-20 per cent of a profit when the company is sold or when the investor's money is replaced with additional bank [funds] after reappraisal," he stated.

Russians have a somewhat different way to look at investments than Canadians, he explained. In Russia, annual reports and financial statements are barely worth the paper they're printed on.

"There are too many fake records," he said. Investors visit the business to see for themselves what it's all about. And they particularly value the individual running it. Personal credibility is paramount, and that has transferred to his affairs in Canada, Ressin said.

"You have to do everything properly because it's your name, your reputation," he said.

Back in Russia, Ressin wrote a PhD thesis on small business crisis management. "I used my own results, my own statistics, because I did 30 companies," he said.

His knowledge of math played a key role in his early success. "Business is about structure and understanding how things work. Math makes you think systematically and that is the most important thing."

In the 1990s, not long after the Soviet Union collapsed, "there was no interesting work in Russia. There was chaos there. I decided working in a small business was more interesting than sitting in a scientific institute with nothing to do."

There were a lot of Soviet-era enterprises around, but nobody around who could run them on a profitable basis. At the end of 1993, "I had a serious car accident and spent a lot of time in hospital. I had a lot of time to think. I thought of operations that could succeed in different areas of business."

When he recovered, he found investors to support his acquisition of various small businesses. "People had money at the time from different Soviet organization, but all the systems were destroyed and they had no idea what to do with the money."

He used borrowed funds to get into businesses in the construction field, in a bakery chain, a china factory along with its retail outlets.

"I buy something when I have an idea of how to improve it dramatically," he said.

He also found that diversifying hedged his risk. "I understood it was not possible to survive if you had only one company."

One acquisition in particular brings a smile to his face. It was a factory that assembled computers. There was no computer market in Russia at the time, and the company quickly filled a much-needed niche. It also "was a good way to improve the lives of people," he said.

In Toronto, he's particularly proud of a commercial building that's been turned over to cultural uses, including a theatre and ballet studio, as well as a small plaza whose basement was given to the JRCC for use as a furniture bank.

"I really believe we are here to make the world better," he said.

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The immigrant experience still resonates today

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

Literary critics sometimes use hallowed words to describe writers who have contributed brilliant works to English literature but whose first language was not English.

Two supreme examples come to mind. Polish-born Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) did not learn English until he was in his 20s, yet he became one of the language's great novelists and storytellers (*Heart of Darkness, Lord Jim, The Secret Agent*). And Russian-born Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977) began his literary career writing in Russian but switched to a masterful and playful English in which he wrote the remarkable *Lolita* and other esteemed works.

Numerous Jewish writers probably also belong on this list, especially since Jewish literature is one of few world literatures carried out in a host of languages including Hebrew, Yiddish, French, Spanish and English. For me, American writer Abraham Cahan deserves special praise for the high quality of the English prose he composed, even while immersed in his native Yiddish milieu in New York.

Born in Vilna in 1860, Cahan did not begin to learn English until after arriving in America in 1882. He applied himself diligently to the task, always keeping a dictionary handy and transcribing newly encountered words, phrases and idioms in a notebook. To increase his vocabulary he read scores of works by Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope and other novelists, as well as poets, philosophers and historians. All this industriousness began to reap rewards in the late 1880s, when he began selling pieces to major American magazines such as *McClure's, Cosmopolitan* and the *Commercial Advertiser.*

Cahan is perhaps best known as the editor of the *Forverts*, New York's most popular Yiddish newspaper, which he helmed from 1902 until shortly before his death in 1951; he also penned its popular advice column, *A Bintel Brief.* The paper was politically socialist, but Cahan watered down the political ideology in favour of more populist and friendly content that would better reach the masses – he preferred to help his vast "green" Yiddish-speaking readership better understand their new homeland with logical explanations of everything from the American banking system to baseball. Under his legendary tenure, the paper's weekly circulation rose spectacularly from a few thousand to about 250,000 by the early 1920s.

Between newspaper deadlines, Cahan managed to pen short stories and a couple of novels in English, including one of the great classics of Jewish immigration fiction *The Rise of David Levinsky* – a book that gave non-Jewish New Yorkers an exclusive insider's view of the insular Yiddish-speaking Jewish society in their midst.

It was while convalescing from abdominal surgery in 1913 that Cahan began writing this important novel. After the first segments were published that year in *McClure's*, the editors clamoured for more. Cahan obliged them by churning out several additional parts, all of which he revised and expanded upon in preparation for the novel's publication by Harper and Brothers in 1917.

One hundred years later, *The Rise of David Levinsky* still stands as a robust and vivid portrait of Jewish life on the East Side of New York between the 1880s and the post-World War I era. "Abraham Cahan's epic masterpiece is the American novel of immigration par excellence, as it should be: no one knew the millions of eastern European Jews who arrived in America between 1881 and 1924 better than Cahan did," writes literary critic Josh Lambert.

Cahan modelled the semi-autobiographical book in part after *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, a popular 1885 novel written by his mentor and literary idol, William Dean Howells, pioneer of a new modern style of social realism. Breaking with a longstanding romantic tradition, writers of social realism embraced the commonplace in American society, sought to demonstrate the dignity of the common man, focused on the class system and other defining social factors, and described characters and their surroundings with an almost photographic verisimilitude.

Unlike most literary depictions of Jews at that time, his Jewish characters are not derogatory stereotypes and they do not speak a comically degraded form of English or Yinglish – Cahan had an excellent ear for realistic dialogue. Cahan's novel delves into topical attitudes and issues involving capitalism and socialism, the merchant class and the labouring masses, unionized and non-unionized labour, and morality and ethics within America's garment industry, all carefully expressed through character.

Levinsky's fictionalized autobiography, which the title character narrates in the first person, begins with an account of his impoverished childhood and youth in Russia that, above all, has the ring of authenticity. Levinsky is raised by his widowed mother, who sacrifices and slaves so that he may study Talmud. After she is tragically killed by anti-Semitic thugs, he decides to go to America. But before leaving, he acquires a first taste of romantic love – a diversion from the "straight and narrow" path he had intended for himself. Many more diversions follow.

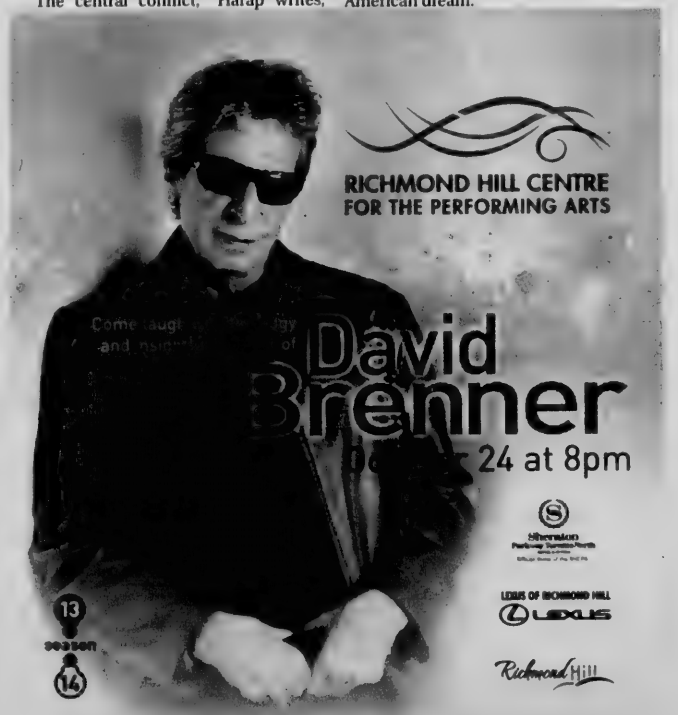
In America, Levinsky loses his beard and religious ways and gains fluency in English as he transforms himself into an American. Ambitious, industrious and willing to take risks, he rises by degrees from hungry tailor to wealthy magnate. As Levinsky explains at the top of the first chapter: "I was born and reared in the lowest depths of poverty and I arrived in America – in 1885 – with four cents in my pocket. I am now worth more than two million dollars and recognized as one of the two or three leading men in the cloak-and-suit trade in the United States."

The secret of Levinsky's success is that he compromises on his socialist values and makes an end-run around the unions: as a factory boss he runs a non-union shop, pays religious Jews lower wages and exempts them from the usual requirement of having to work on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays. While he prospers economically, his romantic life is problematic. Unable to find a marriage partner, he has an affair with a married woman and then, years later, falls in love with a younger girl who disdains his air of self-made capitalistic arrogance. At the end of the story, he lacks for no material thing but cannot quell the yearning in his soul. He admits he was probably most satisfied as a poor lad poring over the Talmud in the Antomir synagogue.

After a century, *The Rise of David Levinsky* is still a vibrant and accessible read that brings the period elegantly back to life and preserves the life of a charming American-Jewish capitalist in a literary time capsule. But it also begs the question: did Cahan have any themes or morals in mind? As Louis Harap observes in his wonderful and perceptive study, *The Image of the Jew in American Literature* (1974), Cahan used the exercise to articulate his own internal contradictions and conflicts – a set of feelings that likely seemed more relevant to readers of his own era.

"The central conflict," Harap writes, "was between fidelity to his intellectual, social and esthetic convictions and his capitulation to expedience and the lure of success."

Today few people, except perhaps fervent followers of the Occupy movement, would have any such pangs of conscience about succeeding in business in accordance with the glittering promise of the American dream.



Actor has 21 roles in postwar-Germany play

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Toronto actor Brendan McMurtry-Howlett plays 21 characters in the multi-award winning, one-man show... *And Stockings for Ladies*, a play set in postwar Germany.

The play revolves around its writer Attila Clemann's step-grandfather Ted Aplin who was an RCAF officer stationed in Germany after the war. He wrote the play based on a series of letters Aplin wrote to his wife back in Canada.

"Their main objective was to make sure the German air force program was completely dismantled but when they got there the retreating Nazis had mostly done their work for them," McMurtry-Howlett says. "So, Ted was finding they were just twiddling their thumbs with nothing to do."

The Bergen-Belsen concentration camp was close to his unit's base so Aplin ended up defying RCAF orders and visiting the thousands of displaced people still living in the camps.

"The British Army, the Red Cross and the UN were all there helping to bring some normalization and Ted ended up getting quite deeply involved using all sorts of RCAF resources like trucks, fuel and food. He would also take the orphans out for picnics," McMurtry-Howlett says.

"One of the biggest things he did was establish a postal service circumventing the resources of the RCAF—getting all the airmen to write home requesting things from friends and family like clothing and getting it sent to the camp through the RCAF."

These actions got Aplin in trouble because the displaced persons issue was a sticky political situation at the time, which no one wanted to touch. According to McMurtry-Howlett, Aplin thought that was nonsense, and made things happen of his own will.

McMurtry-Howlett originated the role over six years ago while studying at the National Theatre School in Montreal. He says every time they have come back to it, it's been re-honed. Wherever he's performed it, someone has come out of the woodwork, to say they knew Ted Aplin or have a personal connection to this story or the people in it.

So for this production, there will be projections throughout the show of all the photographs the production company has accumulated over the years, whether through the Aplin family or audience members who later shared their resources.

McMurtry-Howlett says it is a story that doesn't get told a lot. "I know when I was at school learning about World War II and the Holocaust, the information I was given ended at liberation. The story of what happened afterwards was so complicated and equally devastating and it doesn't get told, especially the Canadian involvement," he says.

Brendan McMurtry-Howlett stars as Ted Aplin, and 20 other characters, in *...And Stockings For Ladies.*

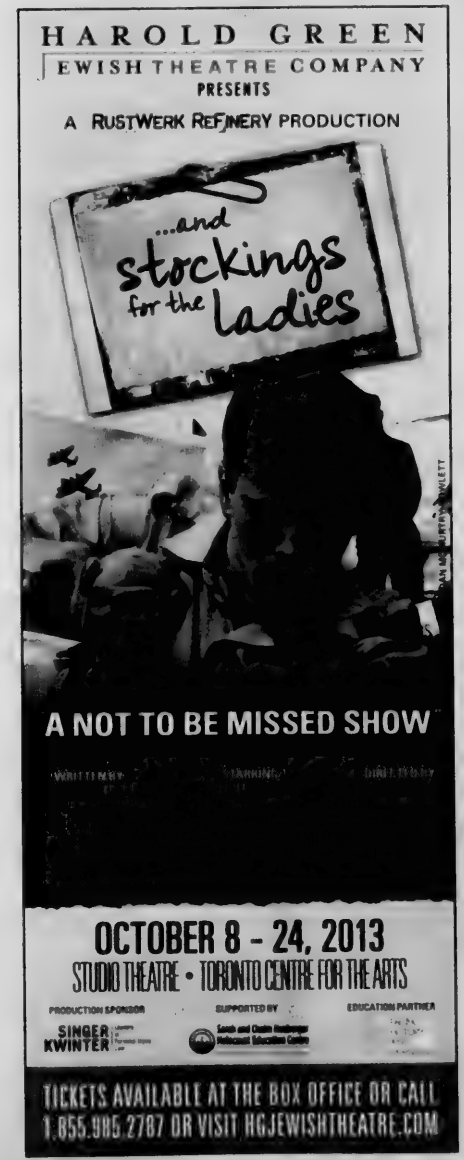
"The show gives Canadians an opportunity to recognize an unsung hero that had a huge impact on so many peoples' lives, in fact an international impact that up until this play came along, has been completely untold. I think there is a lot of pride that our country can take in our involvement and our history of getting involved in human rights issues."

The actor says playing so many characters is interesting, but can get a bit schizophrenic at times because there are so many different voices that echo around in his head all at the same time.

McMurtry-Howlett has performed and directed nationally and internationally. His theatrical credits include *Richard III, Pride & Prejudice, Innocence Lost, Bea, The Winter's Tale, The Overwhelming* and *The Apology*, for which he garnered a Dora nomination.

McMurtry-Howlett is also the founding artistic director of Shakespeare in the Ruff. He was recently listed in *Now* magazine as one of Toronto's artists to watch for.

...And Stocking for the Ladies is presented by the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company and is directed by Zach Fraser. It runs at the Studio Theatre at the Toronto Centre for the Arts until Oct. 24.For tickets : 1-855-985-2787 or www.hgjewishtheatre.com.



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3 lucky readers will win
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Thursday, October 24th, 8PM

To be eligible to win click on "Contests" at www.cjarvs.com and email us your name, address and daytime phone number or mail/fax us the information.

All entries received by 3 p.m. on **Wednesday, October 15th** are eligible. The winning entries will be randomly selected at The CJN offices on **Thursday, October 16th**. The winners will be notified the same day. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. One entry per person.

The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants.

Email your information to contest@thecjn.ca Re: **"DAVID BRENNER" Contest.**

Employees and family members of The CJN and Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts are not eligible to enter.

Message to CJN Snowbirds

Spending all or part of the winter outside of Canada?
There are two options available to you regarding delivery of your Canadian Jewish News.

1) Advise our Circulation Department to suspend delivery until you return to Canada with your expiry automatically extended. You can still access the eCJN while away.

2) Arrange for our Circulation Department to redirect The CJN to your winter U.S. or foreign address at a cost of $10.00 per month.

This charge – payable by cheque, Visa, Mastercard or American Express before departure covers the cost of additional postage incurred for out of country mailings.

Waterloo exhibit devoted to the Holocaust

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

A long row of footprints made from sand-cast glass and cement, wiped over with black paint and earth, leads from the main area at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo, Ont. into a dark, cave-like room. The black footprints walk toward a circle of shiny, silver glass footprints piled on top of each other.

The feet represent the death marches from Auschwitz to Birkenau. Since the cavernous room recalls a kiln or oven, the effect is haunting. The shiny footprints are a tribute to members of artist Laura Donefer's father's family who the Nazis murdered during the Holocaust.

Laura Donefer's installation ends on a note of hope, the artist says.

"I wanted to honour all of the victims, but at the same time I wanted it to end on a note of hope," says Laura Donefer, an artist from Harrowsmith, Ont. "I was thinking of the circle of life and the pathway to resurrection and hope."

The installation is part of a new exhibit at the gallery, entitled WAR: Light Within/After the Darkness. It is Waterloo's first art exhibit devoted to the Holocaust.

The art pieces deal with resistance, survival and the potential for hope in cataclysmic circumstances.

"You must have hope in order to resist, and then you can see and create beauty if you have hope," says gallery curator Christian Bernard Singer. "The idea of hope is really integral to being able to get through anything. It's the idea of someone not forgetting their own humanity."

The exhibit was inspired from Singer's grandmother, who told him stories about when her mother would receive letters from Jews in Europe begging to come over to Canada during the 1930s.

"After the war, the letters stopped coming and everybody found out what really happened. My great-grandmother was wracked with guilt about that... and that guilt transferred to my grandmother," Singer says. "She would tell the story about it and she would cry. It had a real impact on me."

Another section of the gallery features works from their permanent collection by Jewish and gay artists. The Nazis would have considered these works to be degenerate.

Several of the featured artists in this exhibit have a connection to the Holocaust or were inspired by stories from the war.

Toronto artist Mary McKenzie's piece, called *Departed*, features a living room with half of the surface destroyed and turned to ash. Some of the details from this space were inspired by the home of her husband's family, who lived in a Dutch village during the war.

The setting recalls what homes that were bombed looked like after an attack, frozen in a moment in time. In *Departed*, the living room has a sofa, carpet and piles of folded laundry. To create these ghosts of the past, McKenzie dipped the articles of clothing into clay and fired them so that the item burned but a clay molding remained.

Toronto artist Mary McKenzie's piece *Departed* features a living room with half of the surface destroyed and turned to ash. The exhibit runs until March 16.

"What I wanted to convey by the laundry was that it was not just a room. It was a room that was lived in," McKenzie says. "When we see laundry, the details of you as a person are embedded in that. That becomes very intimate and very universal."

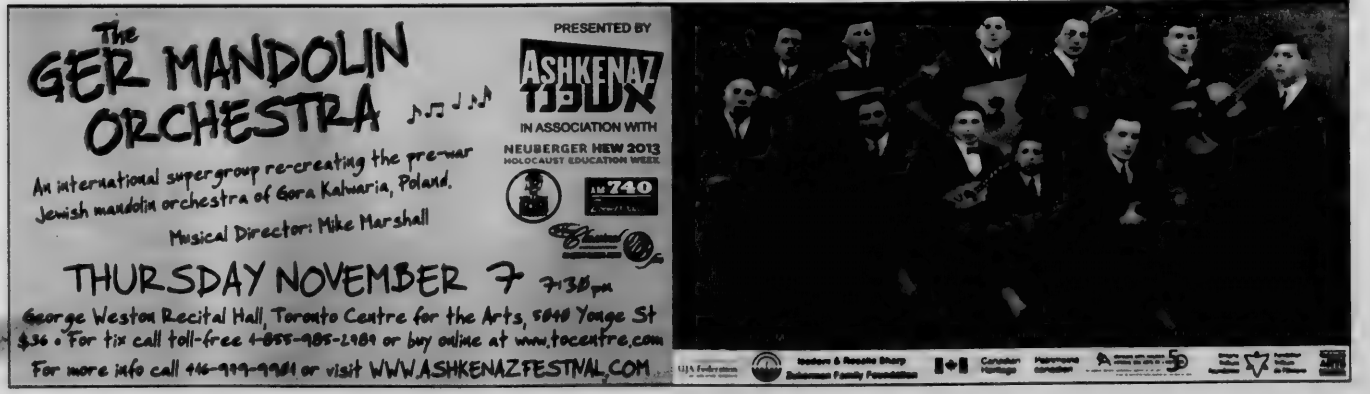
Meanwhile, in a memorial from Ottawa husband and wife artists Oded and Pamela Ravek pay tribute to the six million Jews murdered, as well as to Oded's mother and her two sisters who survived Auschwitz.

"It's a miracle that she survived," Oded explains. "She actually told me not long ago that every night before she goes to sleep, she sees the camp. It never leaves her. Her mother was taken to the gas chamber in the last few days before [the Jews] were liberated."

Oded and his son had his mother's number emblazoned on their arms as a sign of remembrance.

In another installation, *Hanging Forest*, from Toronto artist Chari Cohen, suspended porcelain trees dangle over a cracked earth surface on the ground. The hope lies in the grass that spikes up from the bottom of the platform.

The grass has been planted there and will grow right into the trees as the exhibit continues. WAR: Light Within/After the Darkness will run in Waterloo until March 16.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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

THE SEASON FOR CD RELEASE CONCERTS

A number of CD release concerts are scheduled in the following weeks:

Leaves Will Speak, a new CD from guitarist-composer **Brian Katz,** features his solo guitar, original works and improvisations. A CD release celebration takes place at the Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave., Oct. 26, 8 p.m. $15 concert and reception, $25 with CD. Cash bar. Reservations, josephlandau@hotmail.com, 647-216-5519. www.briankatz.com

Jazz musician **Ron Davis** launches his new *Symphronica* CD in a series of three Sunday concerts at Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. Oct. 27, Nov. 3 and Nov. 10, with shows at 8 and 9:30 p.m. The concerts feature Davis on piano and keyboards as well as a guitarist, bassist, drummer and string quartet. $20. http://rondavismusic.bandcamp.com

Singer-lawyer **Jordana Talsky** launches her new jazz-pop CD, *Standard Deviation*, at Jazz Bistro, 251 Victoria St. Oct. 29, 8 p.m. $20, includes CD. www.jordanatalsky.com

• • •

A Musical Memorial: The Ger Mandolin Orchestra is the brainchild of Israeli-American **Avner Yonai,** who was inspired to found the group after seeing a tattered photograph of his grandfather playing in a prewar Jewish mandolin orchestra in the Polish town of Gora Kalwaria (Ger in Yiddish). The musical group was conceived as a memorial project for his own family and the orchestra members, most of whom perished in the Holocaust.

The Ashkenaz Foundation presents the 11-member Ger Mandolin Orchestra in concert as part of Holocaust Education Week. George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. $36. www.tocentre.com, 1-855-985-2787.

• • •

Toronto Jewish Film Society: The Society's latest offering is *Seven Minutes in Heaven*, an Israeli-made film from 2008 in which a woman struggles to reclaim her fragmented memories after a suicide-homicide bombing takes the life of her boyfriend and leaves her physically and emotionally scarred. "This deceptively simple thriller mixes romance, psychology and mysticism to tell a powerful story of love and survival."

With guest speaker **Mark Clamen.** Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Oct. 20, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at the door only, 15 minutes before screenings. $15, $10. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• • •

UJPO Celebration: The United Jewish People's Order (UJPO) marks its 85th anniversary with a cultural program that includes historic photo displays, an exhibit of political cartoons, and musical performances from **Alarm Her Majesty**, **the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir** and Camp Naivelt klezmer musicians led by **Martin Van de Ven.** Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Saturday Oct. 19, 7 p.m. Free admission; refreshments. Please RSVP to 416-789-5502 or info@winchevskycentre.org

• • •

Names in the News: The International Visitors Programme, in association with the International Festival of Authors, has named Canadian publisher **Louise Dennys** the recipient of its Ivy Award, presented annually to a person who has made a substantial contribution to Canadian publishing. Dennys pioneered the practice of publishing separate Canadian editions for noteworthy international writers, first as publisher of Lester & Orpen Dennys and subsequently at Knopf Canada, Knopf-Random and Vintage Canada, and is also known for tirelessly promoting her Canadian authors abroad.

The award jury consists of **Joe Kertes,** author and dean of the School of Creative and Performing Art at Humber College; **Linda McKnight** of Westwood Creative Artists; and **Ben McNally** of Ben McNally Books. The award is to be presented to Dennys onstage by author **Salman Rushdie** at the International Festival of Authors on Monday, Oct. 28. ifoa.org

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Film critic **Keven Courrier** presents a series of eight talks with film clips on "The Enigmatic Genius of Robert Altman." Miles Nadal JCC, Oct. 21 to Dec. 9, Mondays, 7 to 9 p.m. $90 for series, $11.25 drop-in. Registration, 416-924-6211 ext. 606, esthera@mnjcc.org

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents two illustrated art appreciation lectures with art educator **Osna Lippa** – "the Power and Symbolism in the Art of Georgia O'Keeffe" on Oct. 29, 1:30 p.m., and the "Power and Symbolism in the Art of Henri Matisse" on Nov. 5, 1:30 p.m. Miles Nadal JCC. $20 series, $12 drop-in. Register at 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *The Art of Josh Silburt (1914-1991)* includes landscape paintings, original line drawings of political cartoons and more pieces from this accomplished artist whose work was in the Group of Seven tradition. Art-Square Gallery, 334 Dundas St. W. (opposite the Art Gallery of Ontario). Until Nov. 4. www.joshsilburt.com

• *Migration*, an exhibit of paintings by **Shaoul Smira**, continues at the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until Oct. 24.

• **David Goldstein** launches his new poetry collection, *Laws of Rest*. Miles Nadal JCC, Oct. 29, 7:30 to 9 p.m. Free admission, everyone welcome.

***Seven Minutes in Heaven* is screened at Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre on Oct.20 at 4 and 7:30 p.m.**

Miami makes the perfect winter getaway

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Miami, this sub-tropical city of over two million people attracts tourists all year round. If working on a tan is your first priority then head over to Key Biscayne Beach or the very popular South Beach where beautiful bodies dot the pristine landscape. There are a host of activities offered on these beaches including swimming, jet skiing, paddle boarding, kayaking and parasailing. scooters, roller blades, bikes and Segways are available to rent.

A great way to see Biscayne Bay is from the water on one of Island Queen Cruises tours or a personalized two-hour sightseeing tour aboard a Zodiac boat from Ocean Force Adventures. The more adventurous can catch a sightseeing flight from Key Biscayne on a Cessna 172 Seahawk Seaplane.

Attractions include the Jewish Museum, Coral Castle Museum & Sculpture Garden, Airboat Tours Gator Park, Flamingo Gardens, Viscaya Museum Gardens, and the Miami Seaquarium. A highlight at this world-class marine-life entertainment park is the Dolphin Odyssey Experience at Dolphin Harbour which includes a deep water swim pulled by a dolphin as well as a handshake and a very wet kiss.

After dinner enjoy a night of music at the Frank Gehry designed, New World Symphony Center or theatre at the Ziff Ballet Opera House at Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts. Upcoming shows include *We Will Rock You, Elf, Once* and *War Horse*. The Flat is an intimate lounge catering to the after-dinner crowd. Cozy couches surround a baby-grand piano with a colourful sketch of Ray Charles on the lid. The place just invites one to sit back and relax.

After midnight and it is time to party! At the time most Canadian bars serve last call, Miami's bars and clubs begin to rev up. The latest offering on the Miami Beach late-night scene and the nightclub to be seen in, is Mokai Ultra Lounge. You might even catch a celebrity or two dancing the night away.

Speaking of celebrities, you can sleep like one at one of Miami's beautiful hotels. Arguably, the grandest is the Four Seasons Hotel Miami, an AAA Five Diamond Award property. The sleek, 70-storey building on downtown Miami's Brickell Avenue was built in 2003 with 221 guest rooms and suites. This urban retreat underwent a multi-million dollar renovation in 2011. Designed with Miami-flair and European-style elegance all rooms have a lovely city or Biscayne Bay view.

Four Seasons' guests are also invited to the Hilton Bentley in South Beach at 1st and Ocean where they have complimentary access to beach amenities including umbrellas and chaise loungers.

Off the seventh-floor lobby is the Edge Steak and Bar in the Four Seasons Hotel Miami. Kosher meals can be ordered from outside the hotel in advance.

For more Miami information online go to: www.MiamiAndBeaches.com.

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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Artist gets personal in graphic novels

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Andy Stanleigh always knew he wanted to work in the arts.

"Drawing and painting have been my first loves," said the 36-year-old Toronto-born artist.

But Art Spiegelman's 1992 Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel *Maus* – a story about the author's father's experiences in the Holocaust, told using mice as Jews and cats as Nazis – was one of the key texts that inspired him to delve into graphic novels.

Stanleigh now runs an independent publishing company called AH Comics with high school friend Michael Tymczyszyn. Together, they have released three graphic novels, including *Titan: An Alternate History*, their biggest release to date, available from major retailers such as Indigo Books.

That accomplishment was a result of Stanleigh's chutzpah. He walked into the head office in Toronto and asked them to stock his book. Luckily for him, one of the directors in charge of buying new books happened to be there, and the company was interested in expanding its graphic novels section at the time.

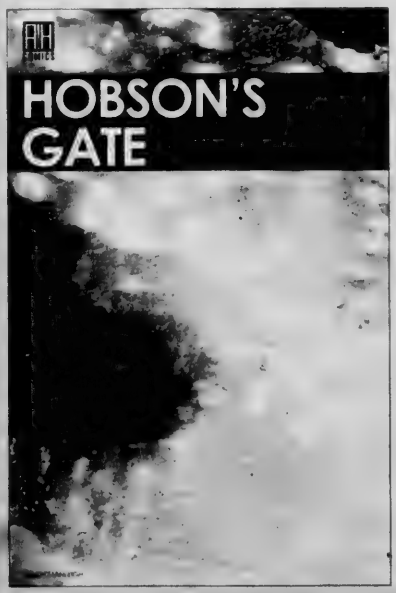
"I just did the old school thing and decided to pound the pavement," he said, adding that he often shares that advice with people. "It doesn't matter if people say, 'Send us an email.' You've got to do the legwork."

Titan tells the story of a "megalomaniac badass" who is reincarnated several times throughout history, and each time, he tries to take over the world. It's told in four different time periods, each with its own distinct drawing style.

Stanleigh called the 96-page project a daunting task.

"It's not something you can do in your spare time and get done in a reasonable amount of time. Life gets in the way," he said.

So, although he had a steady job as a graphic designer, when a client offered to support him while he worked on the graphic novel, he jumped at the chance.



The risk was made scarier by the fact that it was the second time he had taken that route. The first time didn't pay off – he ended up spending six months looking for work. But this time was different. He was working with Tymczyszyn, who wrote the script for *Titan*.

"We just seem to click. I seem to get exactly what he's going for. His notes to me are always like, 'Dude, this is better than what I had imagined when I was writing it,'" he said.

Not all of the projects are collaborations between Tymczyszyn and Stanleigh. One book, *Delta*, is a collection of drawings that are meant as a visual companion to local band The River Pilots' most recent album of the same name. As listeners go through the album, they're meant to open the page and experience the images.

AH Comics' most recent release is a graphic novel called *Hobson's Gate*, which is a story that Stanleigh both wrote and illustrated. It tells the story of detective Joseph Hobson, who is facing his own personal demons in the form of anxiety and panic attacks, while at the same time, facing what may be real demons out in the world.

Much of the story takes the form of journal entries, with Hobson sharing his thoughts about his anxiety. For example, near the beginning of the book, he writes, "You're convinced that you can't trust your spouse, your partner, your best friend. Other people, they don't see what you see. What you see is dangerous, and they're letting the danger in. Maybe it would be better if I was alone. I need to feel safe."

This story is one that's quite personal for Stanleigh. He took a lot of the journal entries right out of his own journals from a time when he was going through his own struggles with anxiety and panic attacks.

The novel is filled with dark drawings in very muted colours. Most pages are entirely black and white except for some muted tones, red blood, or as on one page, a bright police caution sign. Stanleigh said the idea was to convey the way he felt in those days, and the way the character is currently feeling.

"Life isn't good, and it's just muted colours," he said. "You're walking outside and it could be a beautiful fall day with beautiful leaves and you just don't see it."

Thankfully, he said he was lucky enough to have people to help him overcome the obstacles, but he described writing the comic as being very cathartic.

"It was a really good process to see what my mindset was during that time and see where I am now," he said.

Stanleigh plans to continue the story with two sequels, the first of which he hopes will be ready for a December release. The second will be released at Toronto ComiCon, which will take place the weekend of March 7, 2014.

For more information about AH Comics, visit ahcomics.com.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Oct. 14 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 24. Oct. 21 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 31. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 10

SAVING & INVESTING

Elaine Knotek-Holmes discusses "Save, Invest, Prosper at Every Age," 8 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL

Israeli Consul General DJ Schneeweiss discusses "What we talk about when we talk about Israel," 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

ETHICS AND HALACHAH

The Cecilia Ross Memorial Lecture in Ethics presents **Rabbi Martin Lockshin** discussing "Ethics and Halachah," 7:30 p.m. at Adath Israel.

MORASHA CLASSES

Shayna Kravetz teaches "Ten Tough Torah Questions – Part One," Oct. 10-Nov. 7, 7:15 p.m. **Bracha Feder** teaches "Leaders and the People," Oct. 16-Nov. 20. **Jerry Fink** teaches "Western Art Music from a Jewish Perspective," Oct. 15-Nov. 19. Classes at Beth Emeth Synagogue. To register, call **Loretta,** 416-789-7400.

Friday, Oct. 11

COMMUNITY HUB

Beth Emeth Synagogue dedicates its community hub project (emergency generator and Shelley's elevator), 11 a.m.

DAVID ROVICS IN CONCERT

David Rovics performs at the Winchevsky Centre, 8 p.m. For tickets, 416-789-5502.

Saturday, Oct. 12

INTERNSHIP INFO

Learn about Tazpit News Agency's summer internship program in Israel, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 11 a.m.

Sunday, Oct. 13

WALKING TOUR

Pardes Shalom holds a walking tour, led by Toronto Hebrew Memorial Parks' arborist and landscape architect, 3 p.m. To register, call 416-635-5595 or email info@thmp.ca.

Tuesday, Oct. 15

TAZPIT NEWS

Amotz Eyal speaks about ending anti-Israel bias in the media through the actions of Tazpit News, Bais Yaacov School, 15 Saranac Blvd., 7:30 p.m. 416-783-6569.

GALA CANTORIAL CONCERT

Toronto Council of Hazzanim presents a gala cantorial concert, 7:30 p.m., Beth Emeth Synagogue. $36. For tickets or sponsorships, call 416-635-5340, ext. 304.

AUDITION

Medina Theatre Ensemble is holding an audition for *Angel in the Night,* 7 p.m., 2 Neptune Dr. RSVP **Fran** 416-638-2716.

JORDAN KLAPMAN

Jordan Klapman performs for National Council of Jewish Women, 4700 Bathurst St., noon. RSVP 416-633-5100.

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Jews for Judaism presents six lectures in its counter-missionary survival seminar. **Rabbi Michael Skobac** discusses "Understanding Today's Missionary Threat to the Jewish Community," Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., 8 p.m. 416-789-0020 or toronto@jewsforjudaism.ca.

PETE SEEGER'S MUSIC

Mike Daley discusses the music of **Pete Seeger,** Temple Har Zion, noon. (Bring your lunch.)

LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Norman Smith leads a workshop on life after high school, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. RSVP 416-783-6103, ext. 231, or email Naomi@bethsholom.net.

LOOKING AT PARENTING

Goldie Piotkin discusses parenting, tonight and Oct. 29, 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

FEMALE EYES ON THE TORAH

Loretta Tanenbaum discusses "Torah Through Female Eyes," in six sessions, 10 a.m. Beth Tzedec. To register, 416-781-3514, ext. 234, or mlaba@beth-tzedec.org.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Adam Chapnick discusses "Ten Events that Shaped our National Character," Beth Tikvah's Lunch and Learn series. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Wednesday, Oct. 16

FAMILY FEUDS IN THE BIBLE

Hana Werner discusses "The Strategy of Appeasement: Jacob and Esau," dessert, 1:30 p.m., lecture at 2 p.m., Beth Tzedec

Continued on page 41

In the Sands of Sinai: Yom Kippur + 40

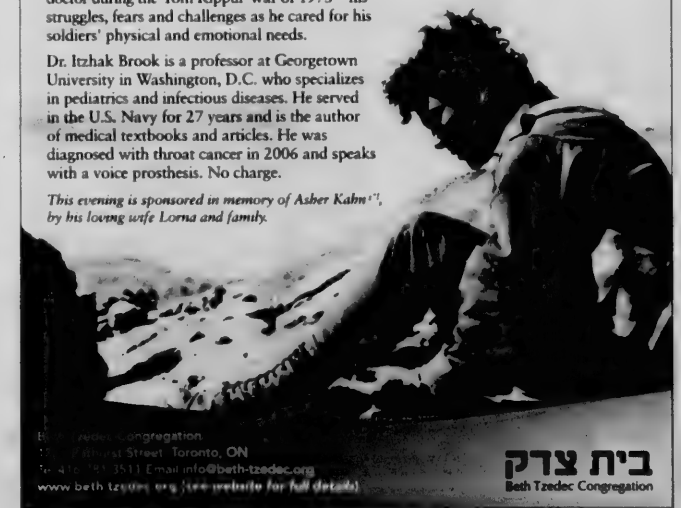
with *Dr. Itzhak Brook*

Wednesday, October 16 at 7:30 PM

Itzhak Brook will discuss his experiences as an Army doctor during the Yom Kippur War of 1973—his struggles, fears and challenges as he cared for his soldiers' physical and emotional needs.

Dr. Itzhak Brook is a professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. who specializes in pediatrics and infectious diseases. He served in the U.S. Navy for 27 years and is the author of medical textbooks and articles. He was diagnosed with throat cancer in 2006 and speaks with a voice prosthesis. No charge.

This evening is sponsored in memory of Asher Kahn z"l, by his loving wife Lorna and family.



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Continued from page 40

Congregation. $10. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles meets 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai. Program: "People of the Book." www.pomegranateguild.ca.

EATING DISORDERS

National Council of Jewish Women hosts a panel discussion on "Understanding Eating Disorders," 7 p.m., 4700 Bathurst St. Call 416-633-5100.

YOM KIPPUR WAR

Itzhak Brook discusses his personal experiences as a doctor during the 1973 Israel war, Beth Tzedec, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 17

JEWS AND GENES

Legal, ethical and Jewish perspectives on genetic testing are discussed, Temple Sinai, 7 p.m. Call 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net

PHILOSOPHER VS MYSTIC

Rabbi Daniel Korobkin examines the philosophies of Maimonides and Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi in a 5-week session starting today, 9:45 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $55. Call 416-877-2050 or info@mekorot.ca.

Other News

BAYT YOUTH PROGRAMS

Registration is now open for all youth programs at Beth Avraham Yoseph Congregation of Toronto. Classes include floor hockey, music, computer classes and girls' sports night. Call **Rich Winkler** 905-886-3810, ext. 135, or email rich@bayt.ca.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS

Circle of Care, in partnership with Jewish Family and Child, is looking for volunteers to attend hospice training. Call **Lysa** 416-635-2900, ext. 496, or lspringer@circleofcare.com.

PEER SUPPORT

Baycrest is starting a peer support program for people who have been through the mental health system. Call **Janis Sternhill,** 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

A basic course in American Sign Language is being offered Sundays, Nov. 3-24, at DANI Centre, 501 Clark Ave., Thornhill. Register by Oct. 11. Call 905-889-3264, ext. 227, or email ssokol@dani-toronto.com

HEBREW CLASSES

Conversational Ulpan method with **Yael Lev,** intermediate level 1, meets Thursdays 1:30 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. for 10 weeks. $150. Call Pride of Israel Synagogue, 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

Beth Tikvah Synagogue runs a bereavement support program, starting Oct. 20, 10 a.m. Call **Rosalie** 416-221-3433, ext. 301, or rosalie@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

MAH-JONG MADNESS

Chaverot chapter of Hadassah presents Mah-Jong Madness, Oct. 20, 2:15 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre. $36. Call 416-630-8373 to reserve.

ORGAN DONATION

Rabbis, doctors, organ recipients and donors discuss Jewish perspectives on organ donation, Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. Register at beadonor.ca or ncjwc-ts.org

UJPO ANNIVERSARY

The United Jewish People's Order marks its 85th anniversary, Oct. 19, 7 p.m. at the Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave., with an art exhibit and concert. **Alarm Her Majesty**, **Martin Van de Ven** and the **Toronto Jewish Folk Choir** will perform. Call 416-789-5502 or email info@winchevskycentre.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes held at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Oct. 16 at 35 Madison Ave., 2:30 p.m. or Oct. 17, Lipa Green, 7 p.m.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement Group: A 6-session group for those under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage preparation group. Offered with the Rabbinical Assembly of Ontario. Starts Oct. 22, Adath Israel Synagogue, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers 60+: A 6-session group for men and women over 60 who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts Oct. 23, 1 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

When You're About to Separate, What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Topics include time and stress management, building self-esteem, communication skills. Starts Oct. 29, 1 p.m., 35 Madison Ave.

Adult Child Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Functioning in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals on higher-order thinking skills and how to support children with difficulties. Oct. 30, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups for bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors. MPP David Zimmer speaks Oct. 17, 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. Call **Tammy** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Refreshments $2. Call **Sheila** 416-665-3333 or **Marcia** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian Seniors Club. Kosher food, card games. 416-256-1892.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine Oct. 23. Dance with live music Oct. 27. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Oct. 10, 1:30 p.m., **Dr. Kerry Bowman** discusses "Healthcare, homecare, maintaining your quality of life and independence." Oct. 17, 1:30 p.m., **Avrum Rosenzweig** discusses the work of his organization, Ve'ahavta.

Active 55+ Miles Nadal JCC. Ongoing fitness classes, call **Colin Blayney** 416-924-6211, ext. 526, or email colinb@mnjcc.org.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Women's only fitness classes start this month. Sundays, Spin and Abs 11 a.m.; Mondays, Power Hour 10:30 a.m.; Tuesdays, Yoga 10:30 a.m., Spin 7:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, Core Conditioning 10:30 a.m.; Thursdays, Spin 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 4000.

Amnon Zohar discusses social and political change in the Middle East, Tuesdays starting Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

A beginner bridge class runs Nov. 4-Dec. 23, 10 a.m. or 7 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Sing at the JCC: Adult choir meets Tuesdays 1 p.m.; Women's chorus meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m.; Jewish chanting circle meets bi-weekly Tuesday evenings, 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 133 or email music@mnjcc.org.

Paintings by **Shaoul Smira** are on display in the gallery until Oct. 24.

Theatre Lab with **LJ Nelles** starts Oct. 10. Learn skills in voice, character building, movement. No experience needed. Ext. 606.

Toronto Jewish Film Society screens the Israeli film *Seven Minutes in Heaven*, Oct. 20 at 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. $15/10. Guest speaker is critic **Mark Clamen**. Call ext. 606.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, Oct. 21-Dec. 9., 7 p.m. Ext. 606.

Learn more about making Shabbat with **Belinda Keshen**, **Sharoni Sibony.** Oct. 27, 11:45 a.m. Email: principal@djcs.org.

Family Fun Fair Oct. 27, 1-3 p.m. Crafts, games and prizes for kids, while adults can learn more about community resources. Ext. 388.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to David and Elana Ochs (nee Syrtash) on the birth of Ella Rose on July 5, 2013.

Mazel Tov on the engagement of Ashley and Shawn from the proud Farberman Ederman families

Mazel tov to Ella Burakowski and Marshall Cohen on celebrating your 30th wedding anniversary.

Mazel Tov to Julie Pagliaro and Adam Leinwand on your engagement party celebration. It was amazing! Love your friends and family.

Jack Steiner is turning 1. Happy birthday mon Amour de Mamie Claude Oiknine. Je t'adore.

Congratulations Maya Epstein on her 12th birthday Oct. 23. Excited are Mom, Dad, brother Lewis, Bubby Naomi, Guillaume, Bubby Carol, Zaida Stephen & Grandma Bess

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Parenting the parent

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

Some days I'm in the mood for a good pity party. It's usually times when the housework is overwhelming, the kids are fighting, the weather is downright lousy and all I really want is to head over to my mom's for a good dinner.

I want the burden of that one extra chore lifted from my shoulders by her caring spirit, the comfort of commiserating with her and the reminder, just by being around her, that in many ways, I'm still a child in an adult's body, a 41-year-old who needs looking after.

There's no question, there are times in your adult life when you just want to be a kid again. You want to feel a comforting hand on your head, a warm, enveloping hug and soothing words from your mom or dad, reminding you how well you're coping with your responsibilities and how proud they are of the adult you've grown into. It's words and actions like these that sooth the hard edges of raising a family, balancing a budget and trying to be a dutiful, doting child, sibling, parent and friend to those in your life. Which is sometimes a hard act for any of us to keep up consistently, no?

To those readers who still have the luxury of able-bodied parents who love and cherish them, count your blessings. The rest of us know only too well how quickly that luxury can be wrenched from you, how sudden is the transformation from an adult who is still parented to an adult who has to become a parent to their own aging parents.

It's a transition from being cared for to being the one doing the caregiving, and it's a one-way street with no possibility of a U-turn. Once that transition has occurred, worry becomes a constant feature of your life. That warm, mellow feeling of being loved and cared for by your parents is replaced by a hovering anxiety that flips around in your belly like a wet fish. You worry about whether your parents are making sound decisions, whether they're eating three healthy meals a day and whether they are still sufficiently capable of taking care of themselves.

Often the answers aren't easy to fathom, while heartfelt, honest discussions with a parent who refuses to recognize the extent to which they've aged are even harder.

Over the past decade, I've watched that transition happen in my life. It turned me from a guest at my parent's table to the hostess issuing the dinner invitations, making the chicken soup and keeping the mealtime conversations flowing. I know I'm lucky to have a parent at my table, privileged to have the time, energy, good health and money to make a nice meal.

But every now and then, my inner brat starts whining about how it's not fair.

"Why can't I still be the kid?" the brat laments. "How come I have to do everything?"

It's a journey, this road to parenting your parents, and it gets harder before it gets easier – with complex, heart-wrenching decisions we have to make for our own parents at some indeterminate point in the future.

Ideally, along the way, we become fully formed grown-ups who face up to all the responsibilities of life with stoicism, strength and courage. That means permanently banishing the childish brat who lives within us, eliminating the pity parties and accepting that life is just not fair.

Helping kids cope with failure

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Tamara Levitt's goal is to help people find calm within chaos.

She's the founder of Begin Within, a production company that creates and develops books, apps, videos and film properties, and her first book, *Happiness Doesn't Come from Headstands*, teaches that happiness doesn't come from external achievement.

"Even in the face of failure, peace can be found," Levitt said.

In a epilogue to her 38-page picture book, which she wrote and illustrated, she said that it's the first of what she hopes will be a series.

"I wrote this story to offer an alternative to *The Little Engine that Could*, which claims that practice makes perfect," she said in the epilogue.

"In my experience, no matter how hard we try, there are times we are unable to achieve a goal, and it is difficult to find peace in those times. By letting go of the idea that happiness depends on achieving a single, external goal, we free ourselves to discover joy from within."

Levitt told *The CJN* that she can relate to the book's protagonist, a little girl who couldn't learn how to do headstands.

"If I relate, then others do as well," she said. "We have to teach kids alternatives to equating happiness with success and give them a new framework to view the world."

She said unhappiness is an epidemic in North America, and failure often leads to self-hatred or defeat.

"We are too hard on ourselves, and we don't allow room for happiness," Levitt said.

The book is relevant to readers ages six to 60, she said. "Parents need to pay attention, because their kids model their behaviour after them."

Happiness Doesn't Come from Headstands, is available on Amazon and on Levitt's website, beginwithin.ca.

Theme Dessert Night

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Theme restaurants are all the rage in Asia. My daughter Carly has been teaching English for the last three summers in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. She has sent me the most interesting and colourful pictures from restaurants like the Hello Kitty Cafe where all the food is shaped like Hello Kitty, the Barbie Cafe, The Ninja Restaurant, A380 an airplane restaurant, and yikes, the Modern Toilet Restaurant, where they, well I won't tell you.

Over the years I have made murder mystery dinners, Japanese and Pan Asian themed dinners and many dress-up tea parties. But the favourite and most well received theme party is my Italian dessert night. The desserts aren't actually Italian, but when my guests sit down at a table that is decked out with a red and white checkered tablecloth, they think that they are going to be fed an actual Italian dinner.

SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS CAKE

Pasta desserts are not such a weird concept, actually there are many desserts made of pasta. The Italians are known for Torta di Tagliatelle, fresh pasta cake, while the Jews of Eastern Europe have been creating kugels, sweet pasta puddings with cottage cheese, raisins and cinnamon, for centuries. Of course the pasta in this cake is really just icing!

Base of Cake

Banana Cake With Chocolate Chips

9 in. spring form pan lined with a circle of parchment paper and sprayed with canola oil.
3/4 cup canola oil
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
2 tsp. pure vanilla
6 large ripe to overripe bananas
2 cups flour
1 tsp.baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350. In food processor, mix oil, sugar, eggs and vanilla. Add bananas and combine well.

Add dry ingredients and pulse until combined. Add chocolate chips and run machine until chips have been combined and some chips are chopped into smaller pieces.

Pour into pan and tap on counter to remove any bubbles. Bake for 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes and run an offset spatula around the outside of the cake. Remove cake from pan and remove the parchment paper. Transfer cake to a large pasta bowl or platter. Set aside until completely cooled.

Spaghetti

1 can of white frosting
4 drops yellow food colour

Mix frosting with food colouring until well blended. Fill a piping bag, with a plain circle tip, with frosting. Pipe spaghetti strands starting at the bottom of the cake up the sides to about 2-3 inches in from top edge. Leave the middle area of the cake empty. Continue circling and overlapping with the piping bag over already piped strands until it resembles spaghetti on a plate.

Tomato Sauce

1-2 jars low sugar strawberry jam

Heat jam for 1 minute in the microwave. Spoon some jam to cover open space in middle of the cake

Meatballs

1 box of Ferrero Rocher, about 16 pieces

Place chocolates in a bowl and cover with jam and toss. Place over jam covered area of cake, some "meatballs" on top of others.

Parmesan Cheese

Shaved white chocolate, using a vegetable peeler or grater or flaked coconut

Sprinkle chocolate or coconut "cheese" over meatballs.

When cake is all assembled keep refrigerated until 1 hour before serving. May be prepared one day ahead.

ICE CREAM PIZZA

Make this amazing dessert in advance, and then freeze it until party time. Use a metal pizza pan to get the best effect. Use your imagination to come up with additional interesting toppings.

Pizza Crust

1/2 cup butter
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 tsp. pure vanilla
1 cup flour

Preheat oven to 475. In food processor, combine butter, sugar and vanilla. Add flour and pulse until combined. Remove from processor and form into a ball. Flatten and pat into the bottom of a 16- in. pizza pan, thicken the crust around edge of the pan to resemble an ordinary pizza crust. Bake for 8 minutes. Cool. When cool, cover and place in freezer.

Pizza Toppings

- 1 litre french vanilla ice cream = Mozzarella cheese
- 1 jar strawberry jam= tomato sauce
- dried banana chips = sliced zucchini
- cashew nuts, unsalted = mushrooms
- green and red candied cherries, diced = red and green peppers
- flaked coconut = shredded Parmesan cheese
- green candied cherries, whole = olives

When the pizza crust is frozen, warm strawberry jam for 1 minute in microwave.

Slice whole green cherries in half and place a piece of red cherry in hole to resemble olives with pimento.

Spoon about 1/4 of the jam around outside edge of crust up to thicker edge. Then spoon 1/4 more of the jam over the entire crust. Soften the ice cream and spread it over the crust to thicker edge. Spoon more jam over the ice cream to resemble tomato sauce showing through cheese.

Sprinkle banana chips, cashew nuts, diced cherries, sliced cherry "olives" and coconut over pizza. Place in freezer until frozen. Remove from freezer and wrap well in plastic wrap, return to freezer until ready to serve.

Cut pizza into wedges with a pizza wheel (cutter.)

OLD-FASHIONED APPLE CRISP

5 lbs. McIntosh apples
Grated zest of 1 orange & 1 lemon
2 tbls orange juice
2 tbls lemon juice
1/2 c sugar
2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg

TOPPING:
1 1/2 c flour
3/4 c sugar
3/4 c brown sugar
1/2 tsp kosher salt
1 c oatmeal
1/2 lb. cold butter, diced

Preheat the oven to 350°. Grease a 9" x 14" baking dish. Peel, core, cut apples into large wedges. Combine with zests, juices, sugar, spices. Pour into baking dish. To make topping, combine flour, sugars, salt, oatmeal, cold butter in bowl of electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment. Mix low speed until mixture is crumbly and butter is the size of peas. Scatter evenly over apples. Bake 1 hour until top is brown and apples are bubbly. Serve warm.

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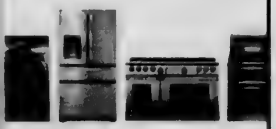
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Wed., Oct. 23 (9:15am)..... Viewmount Branch
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The Canadian Jewish news

Brides

It's the marriage that counts

Ella Burakowski-Cohen

Just a few more days and all the plans for the big wedding will come together – 120 people, food, music, all the rentals for the perfect wedding under the stars in my backyard. Even the weather was co-operating. My aunt and uncle came all the way from Israel. Even though my Uncle Lipman was not in the best of health, it was important for him to be at his niece's wedding. Lipman and my father were the only members of their family who survived the Holocaust, and although they lived thousands of miles apart, their bond was strong.

Rabbi [Moshe] Stern insisted I go to the mikvah, not something I had planned to do, so my Aunt Sonia, my sister Sarah and I all made an evening of it. It was a very foreign ritual for me, but somehow I felt a little purer when it was over, maybe even a little more worthy of such a special occasion when I was committing myself to the man who had been such a huge part of my life since I was 15 years old.

We met just a year after my mom died, Marshall's mother had a massive stroke around the same time I went through my trauma. We were both pretty broken teenagers when we met.

Fast forward 12 years, and we were about to get married. Then it happened. The phone rang: my father was downtown at Simpsons with his brother Lipman, and he took ill. They rushed him to Mount Sinai Hospital, where they told us he had a myocardial infarction. "English, speak English!" I said, but I couldn't hear anything anyway. My head was spinning and my dad was dying.

Sarah, Marshall and I spent days at the hospital, and when we weren't there, we were cancelling all the wedding plans. We only had a few days left. Every single person had to be called and I had to relive it over and over. Most of the services I had booked were gracious and returned deposits.

A couple of days before the wedding was supposed to happen, I went to see my dad in the intensive care unit. Rabbi Stern was standing beside his bed. My dad was hooked up to tubes and monitors and the room was filled with those awful beeping noises. I looked at him lying there, pale and weak. He heard me say hi to the rabbi and opened his eyes.

"You're not cancelling your wedding," he said to me in Yiddish.

"Okay, Abba," I said, trying not to upset him.

Then Rabbi Stern spoke and said that in our religion you don't cancel a simchah. He explained that I didn't have to have the elaborate event I had planned, but that the wedding should indeed take place.

Ella and Marshall sit with Ella's dad, Fishl Burakowski

My head was reeling, and I thought these two had lost their minds. In a million years, I was not having a wedding. But alas, Marshall and I relented for the sake of my dad. Neither of us wanted to upset him any further.

So the wedding was back on – not the one we had planned, but nonetheless a wedding. Marshall had cancelled his tuxedo, and the food, the photographer, videographer, tent, and music were also cancelled. I still had my wedding dress, because it was a gift from my sister.

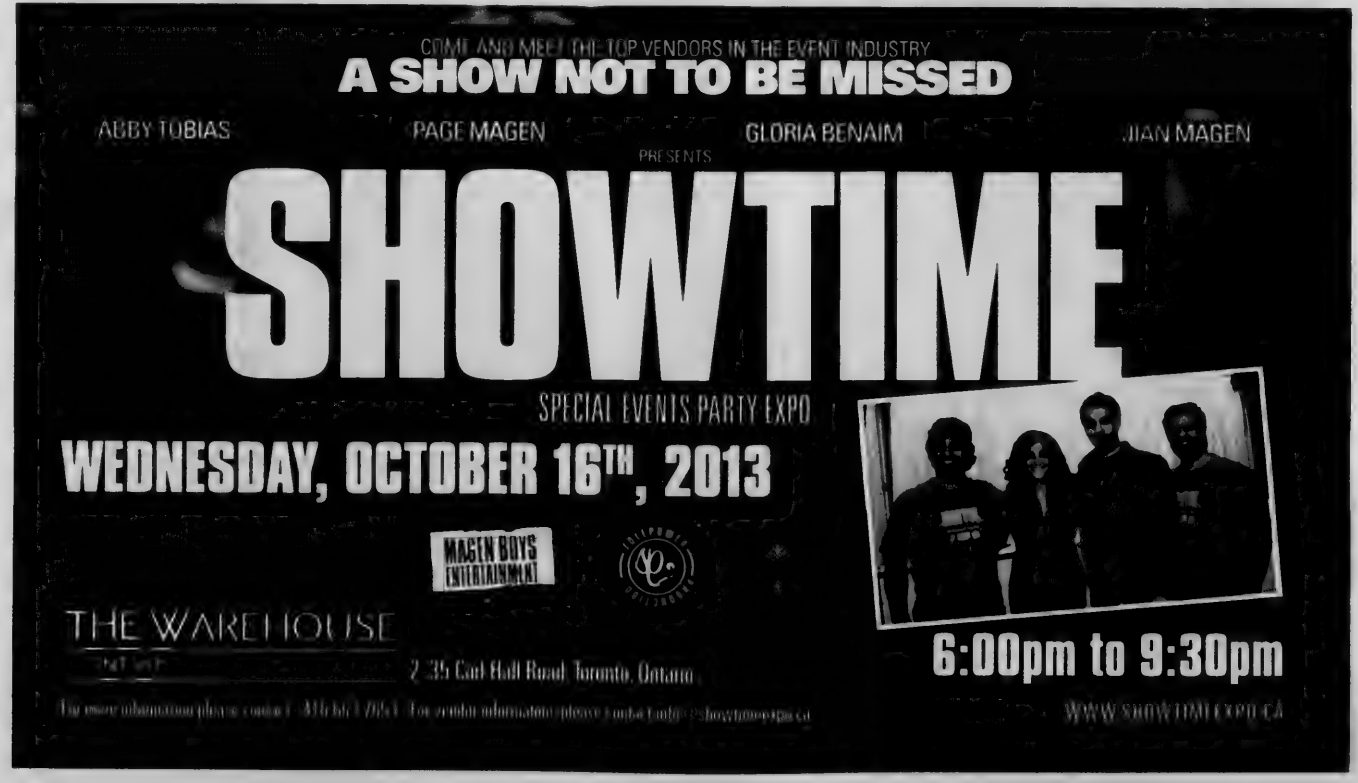
Sarah went to the Open Window Bakery on Bathurst Street and the "Double Dip" was now my wedding cake. She made tuna and egg salad sandwiches, and that became the food we served at my home after the wedding.

We called only close friends and immediate family, and the ceremony did indeed take place on Oct. 2, 1983 at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation with Rabbi Stern officiating. The chazzan hummed a morose tune as my sister walked me down the aisle, both of us fighting back tears.

Marshall, Sarah and I went down to the hospital to spend the rest of the day with my dad. None of us had changed out of our wedding clothes. When we walked into his room, he was sitting up, tubes removed, a big smile on his face and tears streaming down his cheeks, at the sight of me in my wedding dress. He came home a week later and lived another 12 years.

This month, Marshall and I are celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary. If only I knew then what I know today, I would not have fought marrying this incredible man who stood strong by my side that day and who continues to walk beside me through all of life's journeys. It was never about the wedding. It's all about the marriage and all about family.

Sometimes I watch young people making elaborate productions when they plan their weddings, with every detail in place, every flower accounted for and every bow perfectly tied. If something goes wrong, it's like the world has come to an end. I think to myself, if they put that same effort into their marriage, they'll be as happy as we are.



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Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites great honeymoon spot

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

Photos courtesy of Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites

Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites, a 28-storey, 252-room, four-star hotel in Montreal, boasts a new look after receiving a fabulous facelift this past summer. Everything from décor to furnishings and new pillow-top beds add additional charm to the beautiful boutique hotel.

Situated in Montreal's prime downtown location at 1110 Sherbrooke Street W., the edifice was built by the Cohen family in 1963 and adapted to a hotel in 1989.

The facility has always evolved to meet the needs of the times. Moreover, the spacious rooms are considered a luxury by today's standards.

"Even our smallest guest rooms are large at 430-500 square feet and others run as high as 530-1,250 square feet," said Joanne Cohen, who along with her husband Douglas, is the hands-on director of operations.

The guest rooms used to be apartments, which accounts for the enormous square footage, she said. The rooms include the king studio with sofa bed; studio with two queen beds; junior suite with king bed and sofa bed; executive king suite with sofa bed; executive suite with two double beds; and premier one-bedroom suites. In some instances, french doors separate bedrooms from other sitting, dining and kitchen areas.

European kitchenettes or full kitchens enhance units, and the rooms are tastefully decorated in soft earth tones. Besides a full complement of furnishings, paintings, mirrors, and flat screen LCD TV sets, other items are included. Bathroom supplies include eco-friendly sundries.

"Guests can arrange a lengthy stay or book for a night or two. We're flexible," Cohen said. The owners take pride in providing good value for the dollar and giving efficient, courteous service. "Our staff is experienced and well trained."

Today, family members, friends and career people reside all over the world. Hence, from the moment they receive an invitation to attend an event in Montreal, they begin planning the trip. Whether the occasion involves a wedding, bar mitzvah, anniversary, or corporate meeting, people often extend their stay to explore the sights, enjoy shopping, attend sports events, conventions or concerts. Consequently, Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites offers the best of both worlds.

Hosts have a choice of banquet halls and facilities at Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites. They can arrange parties and gatherings. "We don't have a kosher kitchen but we can supply kosher meals," Cohen said.

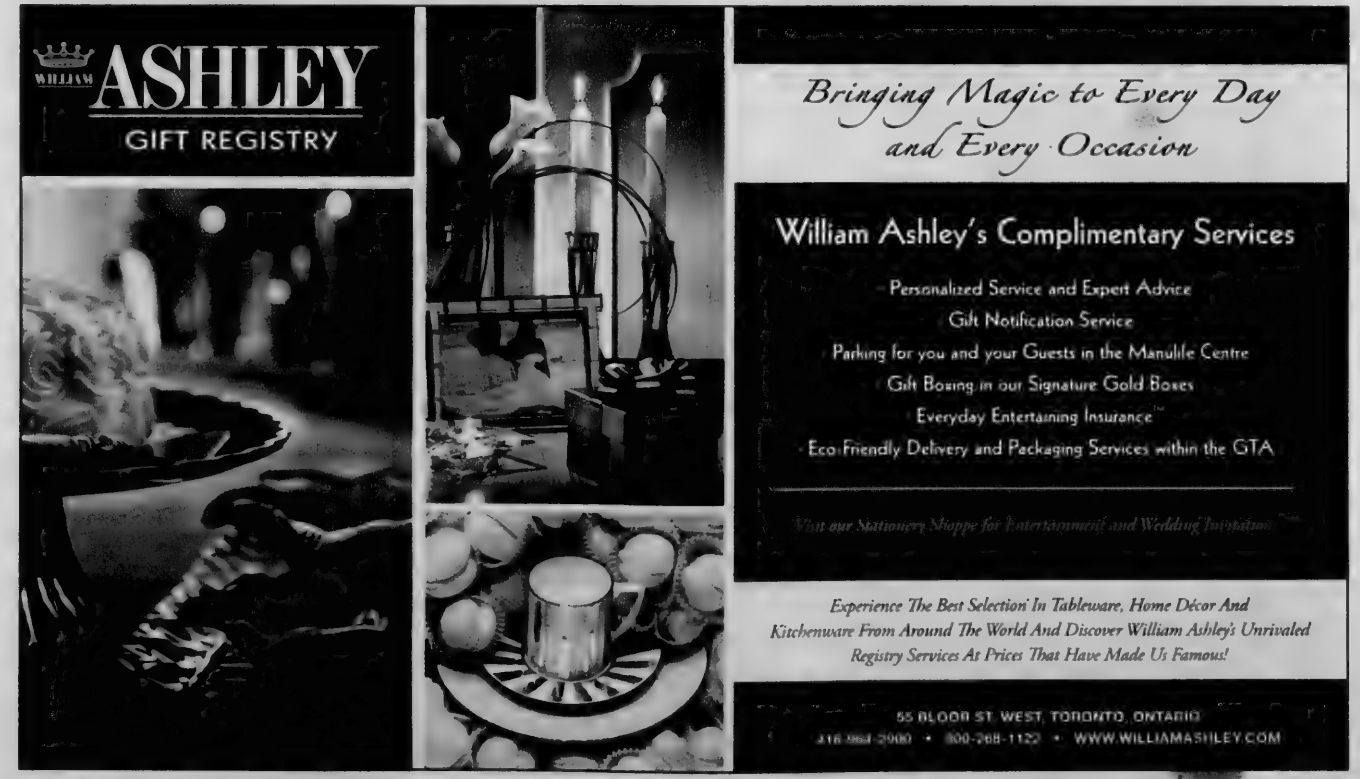
In addition, hosts can request special rates for a group booking that applies to guests staying at the hotel. One need only peer out the expansive guest room windows to catch captivating views of the St. Lawrence River and/or Mount Royal. Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites is one block away from Peel Metro.

The hotel is close to upscale boutiques, stores, restaurants, sports and cultural centres, museums, universities, movie theatres, taxis and public transit. Numerous places are within walking distance, and valet parking is available.

Among the hotel's numerous attractive facilities are a seasonal rooftop pool, a wireless network throughout the hotel, restaurants on the premises, 24-hour front desk service, and fitness and business centres.

The Mezannine Bar and Mez Café look out on Sherbrooke Street. Guests can order light meals at the Mez Café, a full-service restaurant complete with a glowing fireplace. Homemade cookies and fresh home baked muffins are a sampling of sweet endings on hand. Guests seeking Asian specialties can visit Fusion, a restaurant on the premises.

The knowledgeable concierge at Hôtel Le Cantlie Suites assists guests seeking information regarding sites and events. For details, phone 514-842-2000, ext. 2806.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He shoots, they score

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

My fiancée Cassie pretty much lives on the ice.

Between work and play, she wears her skates just about every day and she loves it.

She's even suggested, on multiple occasions, that we get married on the ice (you're joking about that right? Right?).

So when the thought process came about on where I should propose to her, I knew right away what to do.

The only problem was, she had an idea that a proposal was coming up, so I really had to throw her scent off.

Whenever we would pass Putting Edge, the site of our first date close to four years ago, I would comment on it, and that it was an important spot for our relationship and such. I even told her that I had bought a coupon to use there.

It wasn't before long that she unhappily figured that I would propose there.

That, of course, freed me up for our proposal on the ice.

I booked a rink in Richmond Hill for an hour one evening and let her know that we could go out and play hockey, just the two of us, and she was immediately on board.

Her only concern was that I had picked a time where my brother and his wife

couldn't join us, to which my brother (who was privy to my plan) convinced her that it was okay to go without them.

Since eating right before playing hockey is not ideal, I had special food waiting at my house for afterwards – General Tao's chicken, breaded veggies and potato salad from Ely's.

Although we had never eaten anything from there together, I had heard Cassie say before that those were her favourite foods (and it is now tangible proof that I do listen to her!).

When the time came, as was the case on our first date, I insisted on picking her up.

We got dressed and went on the ice. I intentionally wore a t-shirt from a hockey tournament I'd played in with her, both because of its meaning and that it required me to wear a light jacket, where, zipped up in my pocket, was her ring.

Intentionally, there was nothing around to create the mood or feeling that there would be a proposal that night. We took shots, practised a few breakout drills, and worked on skating.

After about a half-hour on the ice, I suggested we do one-on-one drills. I tried to get around her to score a few times and then offered to switch.

As she went out to the blue line with the puck, I unzipped my jacket pocket. I knew this would make it easier to pull out the ring later.

On the third try, she got around me and scored. After that, we skated out to the blue line, which was where I had planned to propose to my defenceman-girlfriend.

But anyone who knows Cassie is aware that she doesn't stay still for long, especially on the ice. She started skating away with the puck while I took off my helmet.

I got her back briefly, and then needed something to keep her from skating away again.

"Can you check my helmet? I think there's something wrong with it," I said.

"It looks fine," said Cassie, glancing over briefly before skating away.

"No! It really isn't," I said. "Can you hold it and check it, please?"

"Fine," said Cassie, who wasn't too pleased about having to slow down for a moment.

With Cassie's back to me and her eyes focused on my helmet, I had my chance. I slipped around her, dropped to one knee, pulled out the ring box and opened it. I did everything smoothly and perfectly.

Except Cassie wasn't looking.

"Cassie?" I asked.

"What?" she said, still having not turned around.

"Maybe you should look here now," I said with a smile.

Cassie turned around and saw me on one knee, with the ring.

"Oh my God," said Cassie, dropping to her knees.

I barely got the right words out in time, but it didn't matter. I knew the answer was yes.

We hugged and went onto the bench, where I phoned my parents, and she called her parents and grandparents to let them know.

Cassie was beaming and speaking excitedly, looking at her new ring.

Until, the inevitable moment happened.

"Can we go back on the ice and play a little more now?" Cassie asked.

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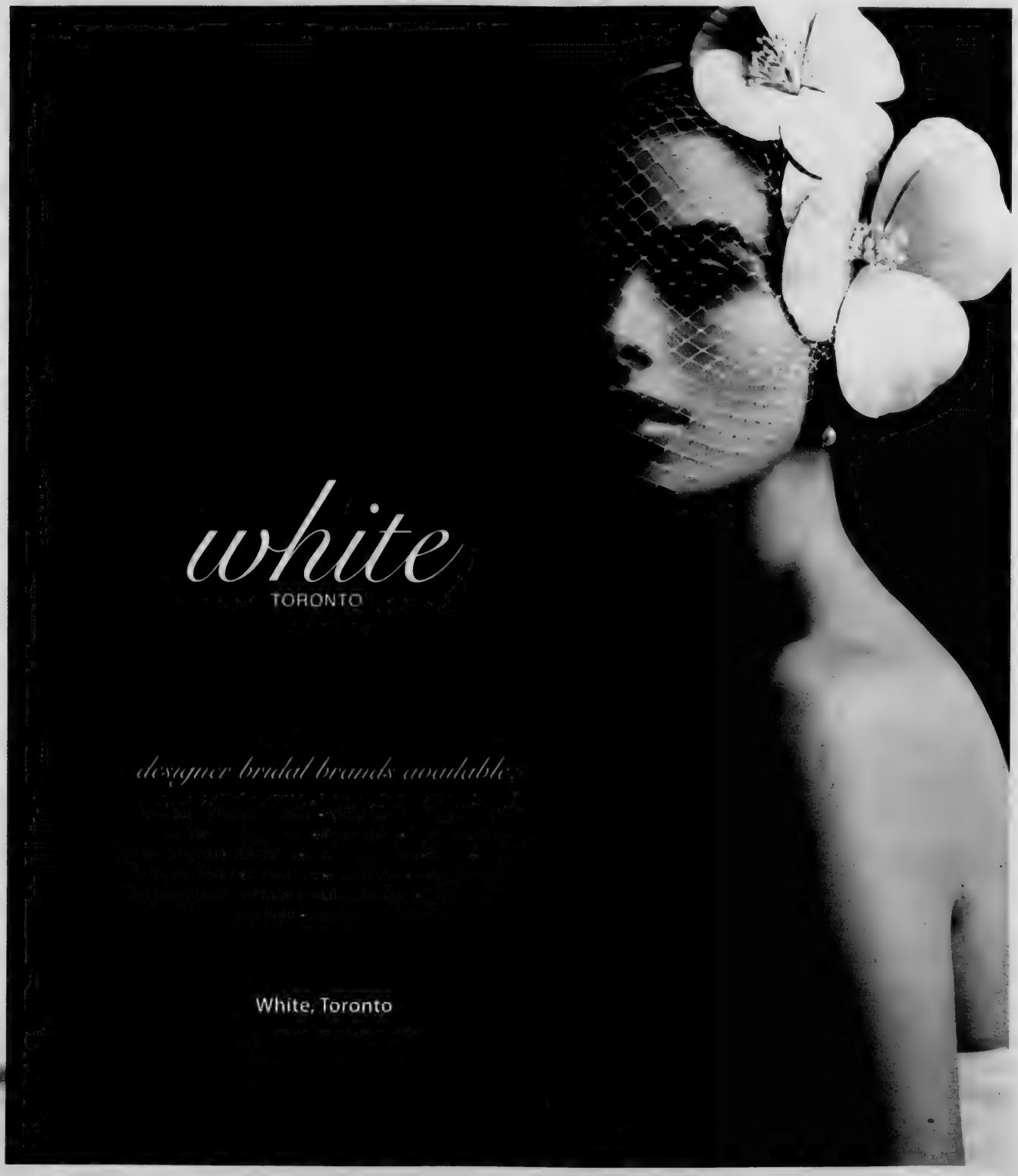
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So what's it gonna be?

Rita Poliakov
Special to The CJN

There was no majestic sunset when I got engaged. There were no babbling brooks, no graceful doves, no blimps spelling out a lovesick plea.

Instead, my fiance and I had a fight on the way to our anniversary dinner. Then he left me in a bar. All in all, it was a perfect night.

I say that without a hint of sarcasm. And here's why:

Dima isn't what you would call a cookie-cutter kind of guy. With freckles, a slight Russian accent and a penchant for bathroom humour, he's kind of like Mork, from *Mork & Mindy*. He's sweet, he's lovable and he may or may not be from another planet.

The night he decided to pop the question was the night we were celebrating our three-year anniversary. We had moved in together the week before and we were just sorting through the co-habitation thing. To say that I wasn't expecting to come home with a ring would be an understatement. Dima was still in school and we spent the majority of our relationship living in different cities. So when Dima asked me to cancel my plans for the next day (so that we could celebrate with our families ... duh) I got angry. Here we were, only a week into co-habitation and he was already stopping me from seeing my friends. I said no, but he was adamant. So we fought, and then sat in silence as he drove us to a bar.

"OK, I'll leave you here for a bit," Dima said. Not angrily, but nervously.

So he bought me a beer, sat me down and left me to fume at the downward spiral that was, in my mind, our anniversary dinner. After putting our names down on a reservation list at a restaurant he insisted on keeping secret (it was the Keg. It's always the Keg), he came back and we settled in to watch a UFC fight playing at the bar. Well, I settled in. Dima fidgeted and endlessly checked the time. Then, just as the fight was getting good, he announced it was time to leave. The main event, it seemed, would take place elsewhere.

Not much for convention, Dima didn't bother waiting for dessert. Just as the main course was coming out, he told me to close my eyes and turn around. He'd bought me a small anniversary gift, it seemed. And honestly, I expected to see a pair of earrings. So when I opened my eyes and saw a ring, I was confused. And Dima was silent. Dead silent. He stood next to me, holding the ring, and I kept thinking "Where are the earrings?"

Dima, who has never run out of things to say, was rendered speechless. Finally, just as I realized the shiny diamond in my face might be more than an anniversary gift, he spoke.

"So," he said, a nervous grin on his face, "What's it gonna be?"

Not "will you marry me." Not "I love you." So what's it gonna be?

"Yes. Of course yes."

The restaurant burst into applause, we kissed, and I sat in stunned silence. A waitress materialized out of thin air with some complimentary champagne and the table next to us – a group celebrating the birth of their eighth grandchild – told us on which finger the ring goes.

Ten months later, two months before our wedding, I've had a lot of time to think about that night. And I wouldn't change anything. Not the fight, not the bar, not the silence. Our engagement story may not be a YouTube phenomenon, but it's exactly what I wanted. Even if I didn't know it at the time.

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Blind date number 3 is a keeper

Shirley Kellerstein
Special to The CJN

Joe was my blind date number 3. I was his blind date number 10. His four-year troubled relationship had come to an abrupt end one month before the planned wedding and he was now having a wonderful time with his new bachelorhood.

I had been living in Israel for two years and was now home for the summer holidays to visit my family and friends. I was making arrangements to have what I would need shipped to Israel. That's where I planned to spend the rest of my life.

It was July of 1980. My mother, may she rest in peace, had missed me terribly while I was gone and got it into her head that if I fell in love, I would stay in Toronto.

She used to play cards with all the other "greenes" at Earl Bales Park and she let everyone there know the situation. She asked their help to find a man for me. I chuckled at the idea of "being peddled in the park" and indulged her. I had no intention of staying here, but I couldn't be with my friends every evening and had no problem with the idea of a pleasant evening out.

Before Joe was supposed to pick me up, blind date number 4 had called. He was so obnoxious on the phone that I refused to go out with him. When Joe called to say he was delayed and if I preferred, we could go out another time, my answer was, "No, let's get this done and over with." I let Mom know that I would not go out on any more blind dates.

Shirley and Joe on their wedding day

From the very beginning there was an ease – a level of comfort I had never experienced with another man. Joe didn't have a car, and we walked to a local restaurant for coffee. It was like we had known each other all our lives. We met at the end of July and we spent as much time together as possible. Joe, of course, met my family and all my friends that summer. We had a wonderful time.

The day before I was scheduled to leave, Joe and I were at the Fire Pit on Yonge Street, a local burger favourite, where he told me he loved me and would wait for me to come back. He gave me a lovely bracelet. He also gave me a letter to read after I left. I was shocked, and answered that he was a good guy but my life was in Israel and I wasn't going to change my plans for a man.

That evening, at my going away party, all I could think about was Joe's declaration. On the plane, I opened his letter which I almost couldn't read, his handwriting was so bad. But I did manage to make most of it out and he reiterated what he had told me. Joe was, and is, the romantic in our relationship.

Back in Israel, I realized how much I missed Joe. When I confided in my dear friend, Sonya, she told me, "You're crazy. Israel will always be here for you. Joe won't always be waiting." Two weeks after my return to Israel, I phoned Joe and asked him if he wanted me to come home. His answer was, "Go for it."

We were engaged on Remembrance Day, about a month after my return.

We have celebrated our 32nd anniversary and to this day I thank Sonya for her wise advice, and Mom for "peddling me in the park". I still chuckle with the belated knowledge that mothers are always right.

The Wedding

The wedding date was July 1, 1981.

During the two years I was in Israel, I lived a very simple and pared down life. The thought of a formal wedding did not appeal to me at all. I wanted a party – a celebration that included our closest friends and family. When Sara, my older and wonderful sister, offered her home for a backyard wedding, it seemed perfect.

My parents vetoed the idea, feeling that they could not have a small wedding and exclude some of their friends and "landsmen". After quite a bit of conflict, Sara once again came through for me. She somehow convinced my parents that a backyard wedding could be beautiful and elegant.

Continued on page B11

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Our wedding was perfect

Continued from page B10

Looking back, I am shocked at how uninvolved I was in the planning. I had an idea of what I wanted, and it didn't really occur to me until my own sons' bar mitzvahs how much effort was involved. My father chose the invitations. Sara, knowing what I wanted, planned the whole wedding, insisting on my approval of all the details.

The day dawned dark and gloomy. Joe had to go up to Sara's house twice to help move the tables and chairs: The first time, downstairs to the basement because it was raining, the second time, back out to the backyard because it seemed the sun had come out to stay. Including ourselves, there would be 100 people there that night. Sara had accounted for the bad weather and figured that between the living room, dining room and basement there would be enough space.

Our wedding was perfect. The chupah, on the backyard patio was held by Joe's brother, my brother and Joe's two closest friends. Sara was my matron of honour. Daphna, my youngest niece was my flower girl. There was no colour scheme and I didn't care if the attendants wore matching dresses or suits. The guests were either standing around the chupah or seated at the tables which had been rented for the older people.

My parents led me to the chupah through the crowd. We had a violinist and accordionist play at the wedding and party. I chuckle at some of the things I remember. The only guests I didn't recognize were a close friend of Joe's who had come in from Ottawa with his fiancée, and the backyard neighbours who were standing on their deck, drinking beer and watching the ceremony. For me, the ceremony was perfect.

After our required time alone, Joe and I returned to the crowd. The three speeches were made while everyone was still in the backyard – my father's, my brother who gave the toast to the bride, and of course, Joe's.

After that, the party began. The chupah had been called for 7:30 p.m. It was going to be a cocktail party. The caterer, realizing that "greenes" would be there, said that hors d'oeuvres alone would not be enough, so we also had two carving stations. We later had a beautiful dessert table set up in the dining room and, of course, unlimited booze.

The party was intimate, wonderful, totally spontaneous and fun. The musicians roamed, playing different music depending on the crowd. My friends broke into dance on the patio. Later in the evening when my parents and their friends went down to the basement they sang Yiddish songs accompanied by the musicians.

There were people in every room of the house and our guests moved easily from room to room, from outside to in, mingling, talking and laughing. The last guests left after 2 a.m.

I love simchas – big weddings, small weddings, big and small bar mitzvahs. To share a simchah with family and friends is a joy.

But at that stage in my life on that special day, my wedding was perfect. If I had to do it over again, I still would not change a thing.

Shirley and Joe today

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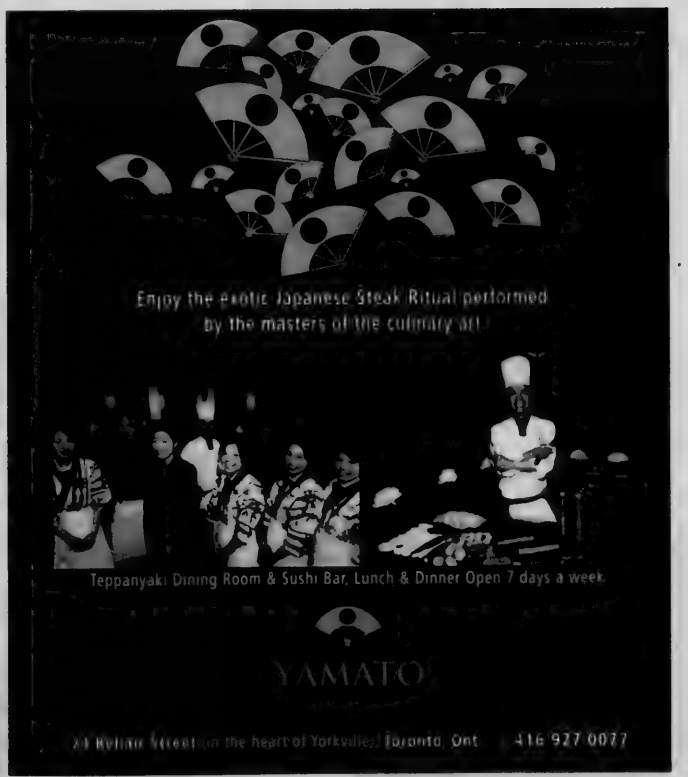
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Rabbis celebrate 20 years of marriage

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

When Jennifer Gorman was 17, she was voted the girl in her youth group most likely to marry a rabbi.

Well, the prediction came true. She is the wife of Rabbi Sean Gorman, spiritual leader of the Pride of Israel Congregation.

She also ended up becoming a rabbi. Back in high school she had no inkling about her future ordination, because there were no female rabbis yet in the Conservative movement. But Rabbi Jennifer, 45, says she always knew she would work in the Jewish community.

This year, Toronto's first and only rabbinical couple are marking their 20th wedding anniversary. They moved here with their three children (Jesse, 16, Gavriel, 13, and Keren, 11) eight years ago when Rabbi Sean, 44, became an assistant rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Rabbi Jennifer was offered a position at the United Synagogue Day School, now known as Robbins Hebrew Academy. Today she's the executive director of Mercaz Canada and the Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism, the arm of Conservative Judaism in Israel.

She jokes that she is both a rabbi and the rebbetzin. She's also a military wife. Rabbi Sean is a U.S. navy reservist. For the first five years following his ordination he was on active duty as a chaplain.

The couple met in rabbinical school, but they come from very different backgrounds. From age 10 to 18, Rabbi Sean lived on a military base in Norfolk, Va. "I'm a navy brat," he quips.

His father, who is now retired, worked as a boiler technician for naval ships. The rabbi describes the small Jewish community on the base as an "open and friendly" group that would celebrate holidays together. "You would see all different ranks at a holiday meal."

He says the chaplain there inspired him to become a rabbi. "If I had not gone to rabbinical school, I don't think I would have joined the navy."

Rabbi Jennifer grew up in Merrick, N.Y., a town with a very large Jewish population on the south shore of Long Island. She attended Brandeis University, where she studied sociology with a focus on the Jewish community.

Rabbi Sean, a native of New York, was a student at the state university in Buffalo. He met his future wife at the University of Judaism in California where they were both doing the preparatory studies required by the Jewish Theological Seminary. They married while they were still students.

When Rabbi Sean did his military stint, Rabbi Jennifer could not take on permanent work because they never knew how long they would stay in one place. "I was the rabbi at large," she laughs. "When you become a rabbi, Ha Rav, it's always a part of who you are no matter what work you do. You always have the title."

The family was initially stationed at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, which was a wonderful experience, says the couple. There were a substantial number of Jewish military families, as well as an active community in Honolulu.

But they say the transfer three years later to Lejeune, a major training base on the coast of North Carolina, or "yechupitzville," as Rabbi Jennifer puts it, proved to be a more challenging experience, because they were quite isolated.

There were few young families and many people left the base on weekends so Shabbat was much more of a family affair, she says. "We were lonely." It was at this time that the couple began to look at other career options.

Rabbis Sean and Jennifer Gorman just before their wedding day.

When Rabbi Sean left the navy he took a position in Bellmore, N.Y., a town near Merrick so that they could be closer to their families. By that time his parents were living in New Jersey. Rabbi Jennifer worked at a local Jewish day school.

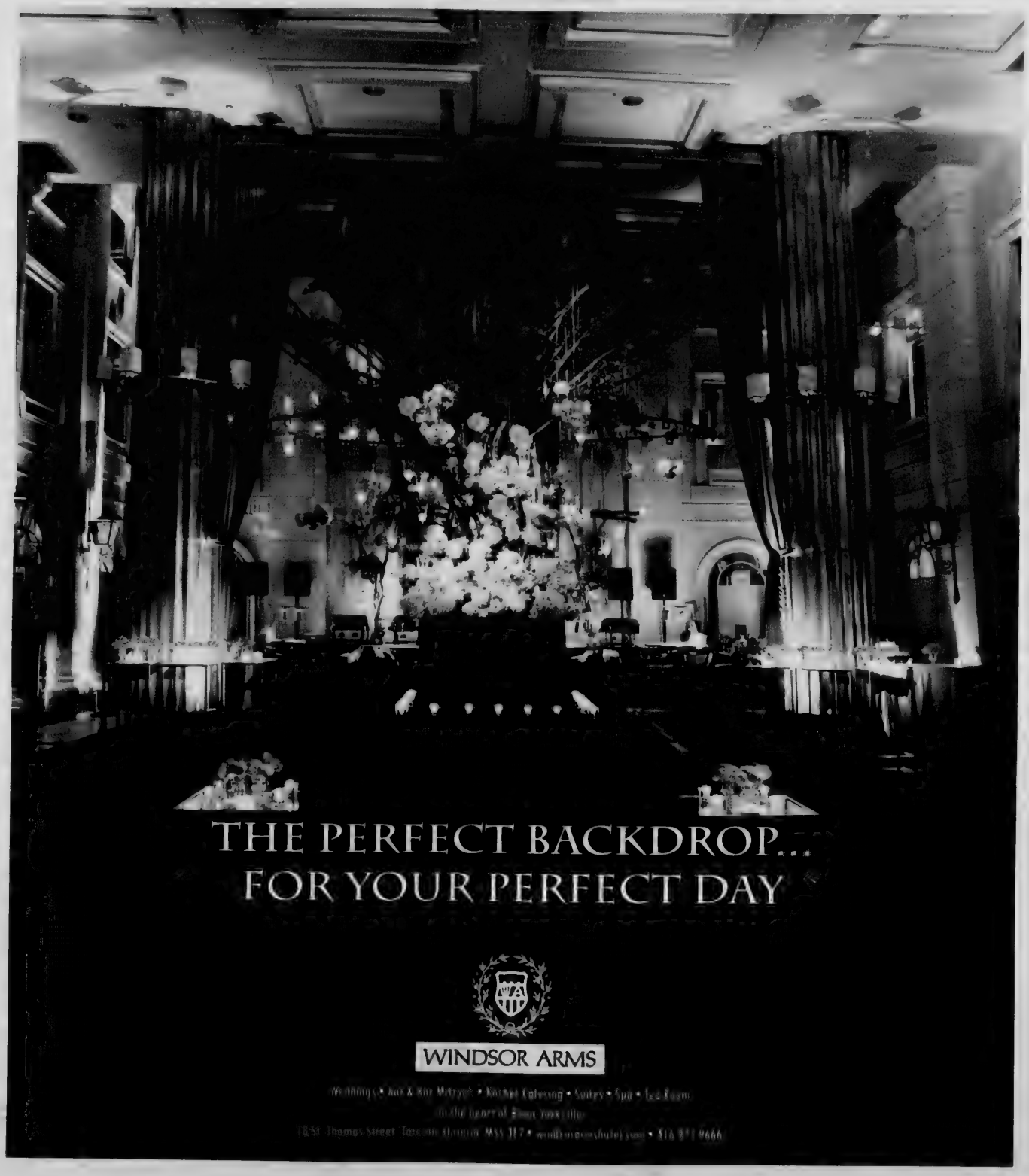
Rabbi Sean recounts an embarrassing incident on the drive from North Carolina to Bellmore. The family had stopped at a kosher restaurant en route and he happened to have a conversation with a man from Long Island. "He said, 'We heard they got a new rabbi in Bellmore.' And there I was, the new rabbi, in shorts and a T-shirt, unshaven, shlepping all our belongings."

The couple says that being a rabbi or the rebbetzin means you're always on. "When I go to places like the supermarket or the school, I can't run around in sweatpants like other moms," says Rabbi Jennifer. "People do notice."

Bellmore was a transitional home before the couple made a permanent move to Toronto, says Rabbi Sean. He's been at the Pride of Israel since 2009.

Rabbi Jennifer says she and her husband are each other's best friend. "Often we're each other's only sounding board. My strength is the Bible and history. If I have a question about the Law or Talmud, I ask Sean.

"Together we have all the material covered. That's what makes us partners, not just in marriage, but as rabbis as well."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The Wedding Party: Etiquette 101

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

The people you choose to surround you on your wedding day can have a significant impact on your enjoyment of the day, the memories you will take with you and the level of anxiety you will carry on your shoulders until the moment you say "I do."

If you choose wisely and communicate effectively you can reduce some of the wedding stress, and keep your relationships intact. As you select the members of your wedding party, opt for individuals that know you well, who are current and active participants in your lives, and ones you truly care about, says Geneve McNally, a wedding planner with DreamGroup Productions in Vancouver.

"Stay true to yourself, and involve those people who you know are going to support you, not just on your wedding day, but in your marriage and life journey. It makes for a far more authentic and loving wedding experience from start to end."

Brides are often concerned that those who aren't asked to participate in the wedding party will be offended, but that's not necessarily true, says McNally.

"Many times, friends are relieved not to be asked. Often women in their mid-to-late 20s are less concerned about being in a wedding party and more concerned about having a good time at the wedding and ensuring their friend, the bride, is happy," she says. And any potential conflict can easily be resolved with an honest, one-on-one discussion.

It's prudent to get your partner involved in wedding party decision-making, says Alicia Keats, principal planner with Alicia Keats Weddings + Events in Vancouver. "Find out if it's important to him that you both have the same number of attendants, and discuss who you were thinking of asking."

It's not a bad idea to discuss wedding party participants with your family, too, she cautions, particularly if the families are participating in wedding planning or contributing financially.

"By sharing your ideas you can prevent any unanticipated disappointments," she says. "Some parents may have strong feelings about having your sibling(s) in the wedding party and what role they should have."

Whoever you end up selecting, remember that these individuals will charge the atmosphere as you prepare for your wedding day. Keats cautions couples to think about how their wedding party members will affect that atmosphere. "Are they calm and peaceful or loud and energized?"

Continued on page B15

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Our Parisian Engagement Story

Rachel Caplan
Special to The CJN

Rich Lax and I began dating in July, 2004, shortly after meeting at a summer backyard barbeque party, hosted by friends.

Our first date included dinner and a movie, and our relationship blossomed from there.

In December 2010, with Rich working on completing two degrees concurrently in university, mentoring high school students, and coaching a minor hockey league team to the city championship finals, we began planning a trip to meet our Australian friends in Paris. With Rich's busy schedule, it just seemed that there wasn't enough time for him to plan an engagement in 'The City of Love'.

We landed at Charles de Gaulle Airport on Dec. 21 and connected with our good friends whom I had not seen since volunteering together for the Magen David Adom program in Israel over three years earlier.

A few days into our trip, Rich planned for us to visit the Eiffel Tower. When we arrived at the top, our friends oddly began taking an unusual amount of pictures of Rich and me. When I turned to ask Rich why they were photographing us, I found him down on one knee. I was so shocked that I continued to ask him, "Are you serious?" and even exclaimed, "If this is a joke, it's not a funny one."

When Rich pulled out the ring, I knew the proposal was sincere. I immediately burst into a tearful and very expressive, "Yes! Of course I will!" Moments later, as if out of a scene from a movie, the Eiffel Tower's lights began to sparkle as bright as the beautiful diamond ring he had just placed on my finger. It was truly magical.

Rich and I got married on Aug.4 at the Park Hyatt Toronto. We shared our special day with our friends and family from near and far!

Respect your bridal party

Continued from page B14

While participating in a wedding party is not always time consuming, it can be costly. It's prudent to inform potential participants about that cost up front, so they can decide if it's something they can afford to do.

"Brides need to be open and honest about why they are asking a particular person to be involved and about what the attendant is expected to do over the course of the coming months," McNally says.

"In the same conversation, openly offer the invited person an opportunity to opt out should they feel they don't have the time or money to properly commit. Tell them it's fine if they prefer to support the team from the sidelines instead.

Bridesmaids and groomsmen often agree to participate simply because they didn't know how to say no thank you.

Sometimes the costs involved with the wedding party are borne by the couple, in which case you need to discuss how those costs will impact your budget, Keats advises.

"Are you going to be paying for their outfits, hair and makeup, shoes, spa treatments or golf the morning of the wedding? Be sure to account for the cost of thank you gifts for your bridal party in your wedding budget as well. These costs may end up impacting the size of your wedding party you choose."

McNally has been shocked by the many complaints from frustrated, disappointed bridesmaids over the years, women who are unimpressed with how cavalier and demanding their bride had been. "Remember that bridesmaids and groomsmen are not a right, but a privilege," she cautions. "Don't take them for granted. People are busy, and for some money can be tight. A bride should always be wary of how much she is asking of her wedding party and be respectful and accommodating of schedules."

It's also smart to be aware of the strengths and weakness of your bridesmaids and groomsmen during the wedding planning process, says Keats.

If your wedding party is made up of busy professionals, consider dividing up the planning of the shower and the bachelorette party among the bridesmaids instead of delegating it to the maid of honour alone.

Finally, remember that those who stand beside you on your wedding day are doing so because they love and care for you. Show them you appreciate that, and keep it front of mind. Says Keats:

"I like to think that the group of people standing beside my couples on their wedding day are the people that have supported them throughout their lives, have supported their relationship and will continue to support them in their married life for many years to come."

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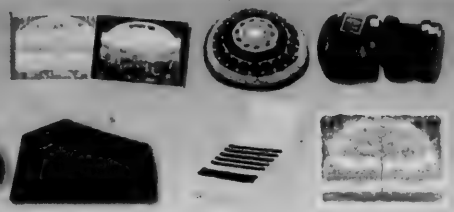

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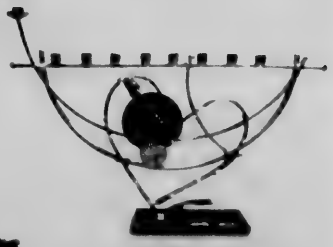

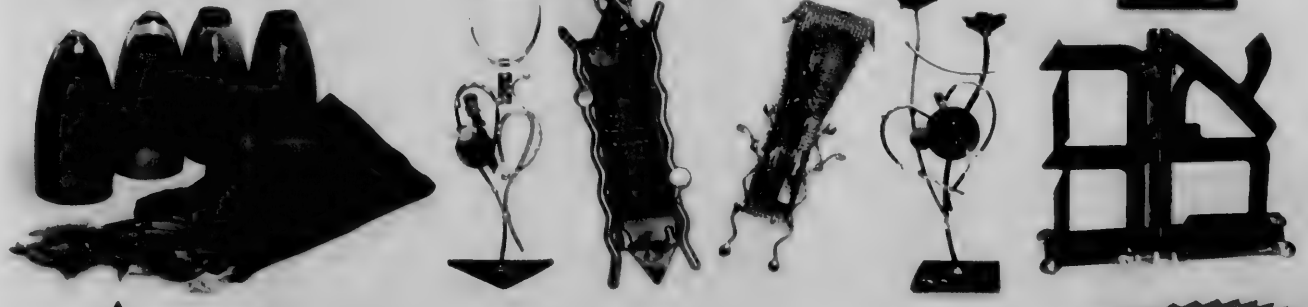

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Young adults from Canada take part in a Taglit-Birthright rally in Jerusalem in 2010. [*Flash90Photo*]

Intermarriage data from U.S. poll cause stir here

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Canadian Jewish sociologists and religious leaders are challenging the widely held assumption that Jewish demographic trends here trail the United States by a generation in the wake of a major new poll that found growing rates of intermarriage and assimilation south of the border.

The Pew Research Centre survey of 3,475 U.S. Jews, released Sept. 30, caused a stir among North American Jewish leaders when it was widely reported that it found an intermarriage rate of 58 per cent among American Jews.

American and Canadian communities are different, experts caution

However, the actual Pew finding was 44 per cent, up from 31 per cent in 2001, while the 58 per cent figure referred to Jews who were married between 2000 and 2013. The latter statistic has nevertheless left many worried about what North American Jewry will look like in years to come.

Charles Shahar, chief demographer at Federation CJA in Montreal, said Canadian intermarriage data from the 2011 census won't be available until next month, but projections from the 1991 and 2001 census put the current number at about 27 per cent.

Both he and York University sociologist Randal Schnoor said the common view that it's just a matter of time until Canadian intermarriage rate catches up to the American one is too simplistic, mostly because the Canadian Jewish community is more traditional than its U.S. counterpart.

"In general we are showing similar trends, but I'm not convinced they are going to reach the same levels," Schnoor said.

The 2011 census puts Canada's Jewish population at 391,665, comprising 1.2 per cent of the Canadian population, Shahar said, noting that studies comparable to the Pew findings don't exist in this country and that Canadian Jewish population figures are drawn from census data.

"The intermarriage rate for Canada in 1991... was 16.6 per cent, and in 2001, it was 20.7 per cent. Anything after that is a projection, so for 2011, it was 26.5 per cent, and for 2021, we're projecting that it will be 33.5 per cent," Shahar said.

Shahar said the Toronto and Montreal Jewish communities – which account for 71.4 per cent of the Canadian Jewish population – are unique.

Continued on page 16

Demand softens for Birthright trips

Amanda Borschel-Dan
Times of Israel

What university student would possibly turn down a chance at a 10-day, most-expense paid vacation to Israel?

Apparently in the United States, they are.

"We know every provider is struggling," says Charlotte Shitrit, trip co-ordinator at Taglit-Birthright Israel provider Sachlav in Jerusalem.

Birthright registration, once a frenzied few-day event with a mile-long waiting list, has been open for more than a month, and U.S. providers such as Sachlav say they are "working hard" to get enough participants for this year's winter tours.

"We're getting there, but across the board, it is quiet, lower than normal.

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Vayera
Candlelighting: 6:11
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Greater Toronto Area

Anne Frank's stepsister visits Toronto
Please see page 9

How much say should we have in Israel's affairs? — please see page 7

CANADA

Air Route Agreement

TORONTO — Canada and Israel have signed an agreement permitting each country to select more scheduled airlines to operate between them. Air Canada currently offers daily flights between the countries, while El Al Israel Airlines operates four weekly flights. Currently, traffic on the Toronto-Tel Aviv route is 130,000 people a year. The deal is expected to boost tourism to Israel, said Israeli Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz.

WORLD

Rabbis Arrested

NEW YORK — Two Orthodox rabbis and two others were arrested for allegedly kidnapping and beating men in order to force them to grant their wives Jewish divorces. The men were arrested Oct. 9 after a month-long sting operation in which a female FBI agent posed as an Orthodox woman trying to get a *get* from her husband. Rabbis Mendel Epstein and Martin Wolmark were arrested along with two alleged accomplices. The arrests were reportedly accompanied by a series of FBI searches, including one at a Monsey, N.Y., yeshiva, as well as in Lakewood, N.J., Brooklyn, N.Y., and elsewhere. The rabbis allegedly charged $10,000 to persuade a beit din to approve a kidnapping, and up to $60,000 to pay for others to handle the kidnapping, beating and other physical torture. Rabbi Epstein is reportedly a divorce mediator in the Orthodox community.

Yellen To Head Fed

WASHINGTON — Janet Yellen, vice-chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, was named the central bank's chair, the first woman to be nominated for the post, President Barack Obama announced Oct. 9. If confirmed by the Senate, Yellen would succeed Ben Bernanke and be the third straight Jewish economist to head the Federal Reserve. Bernanke, who steps down in January after serving since February 2006, succeeded Alan Greenspan. Yellen is married to George Akerlof, a 2001 Nobel economics laureate.

YU Hires Pedophile

NEW YORK — Yeshiva University hired a new faculty member who was convicted of inappropriate sexual behaviour with boys, the *Forward* reported. The university, which is facing a major lawsuit concerning its handling of allegations of sexual abuse over several decades, has hired Akiva Roth, who pleaded guilty in 1997 to four counts of lewdness against several boys he tutored. Roth, 42, began teaching Hebrew at YU this fall. A spokesperson told the paper that YU "has policies and procedures in place that require background checks for new hires" and is "currently in the process of thoroughly exploring the matter you brought to our attention."After pleading guilty, Roth got 10 years probation.

Seminary Chooses New Head

PHILADELPHIA — The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College has selected Rabbi Deborah Waxman, a historian of American Judaism, as its new president.

Rabbi Deborah Waxman

Rabbi Waxman, vice-president of governance at the Philadelphia-area seminary, will head the school and the movement's congregational union, an umbrella for some 100 shuls. She's believed to be the first woman and first lesbian to lead a congregational union or seminary affiliated with one of the Jewish denominations.

She'll replace Rabbi Dan Ehrenkrantz, who has served as president since 2002. Rabbi Waxman, who holds a PhD in American Jewish history from Temple University, starts her new post Jan. 1.

Her partner, Christine Ager, is a convert to Judaism.

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Guide dog fundraiser an eye-opening experience

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

As I was led into the pitch-black dining room to take my seat for lunch, I began feeling a bit uneasy. I had never before eaten a meal in complete darkness, with no idea of the menu, and I was anxious about the experience.

I was one of 50 people who attended Lunching in the Dark on Oct. 6 at O'Noir restaurant in downtown Toronto. The event raised $10,000 for the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind (IGDCB), a non-profit organization supported almost entirely by donations.

"We wanted people to experience for one hour the feeling of eating in the dark and put themselves in the position of a visually impaired or blind person while they eat," said Sara Gabriel, executive director of the Canadian Friends of IGDCB.

"It is very difficult for a person who is blessed with sight to grasp what a blind person has to go through in order to live as normal a life as possible."

After I accidentally knocked over my glass of water and the woman sitting across from me spilled her drink on me, I quickly realized how easy it is to take our senses for granted. Being deprived of sight is uncomfortable and challenging, especially when no assistance is available.

Natalie Urbach, left, and Sara Gabriel

While I nibbled on my salad, afraid to attempt to pour dressing on my plate, I began to really appreciate the work that the IGDCB does to help blind people in Israel achieve independence and mobility.

The IGDCB is the only accredited centre in the Middle East that breeds, raises and trains dogs to become guides and creates a partnership with visually impaired or blind Israelis.

Training costs for a guide dog, from the moment of birth until it leaves the centre with a blind Israeli, are approximately $25,000. The blind person receives the guide dog, instruction and regular home visits during the working life of the dog at no charge.

"When we started here in Canada eight years ago, thanks to our founding chairman, Dr. Morris Samson, we were practically unknown," Gabriel said. "Today, we have grown exponentially thanks to the community. Its generosity and support have made it possible for us to sponsor, in the last five years, 36 partnerships. As well, we have provided the funds for six blind people and their guide dogs to participate in last year's March of the Living."

Aside from individual donations, Gabriel said the IGDCB offers students an opportunity to sponsor puppies for their bar and bat mitzvah projects or class tzedakah campaigns.

Continued on page 12

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Can the world trust Iran's 'confidence-building' moves?

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

This column went to press approximately one week before the nuclear talks between the P5+1 (the permanent United Nations Security Council members plus Germany) and Iran were scheduled to get underway in Geneva on Oct. 15.

There has been a great deal of discussion in media and policy circles about what will be required to ensure that Iran doesn't use the talks merely as a pretext to drag out a process to allow it to continue illicitly enriching nuclear fuel as it moves ahead to what most experts agree is the pursuit of a nuclear bomb.

Deception is nothing new to Iranian nuclear negotiators. As noted in last week's column, when current Iranian President Hassan Rouhani was in charge of negotiations between 2003 and 2005, he bragged to his own leadership about advancing nuclear enrichment at Isfahan while talks went on with the Europeans who believed, by agreement, that all enrichment activity had ceased. On Oct. 6, the *Times of Israel* reported that in May – just weeks before being elected president – Rouhani gave an interview to Iran's state TV in which he boasted about this same deception.

According to the *Times*, Rouhani detailed how, in 2003, Iran flagrantly violated what was known as the "Tehran Declaration" which, Rouhani said, "was supposed to outline how everything should be suspended."

The *Times* continued: "Rouhani told the interviewer that all Iran did was merely suspend '10 centrifuges' in the Natanz enrichment facility. 'And not a total suspension. Just reduced the yield'" while keeping the Isfahan facility running (as noted above). Rouhani then pushed ahead the following year with a heavy-water reactor at Arak.

In short, the Europeans were systematically misled.

Yet there was Rouhani, speaking at the UN last month promising "to engage immediately in time-bound and result-oriented talks" over the nuclear program, "to build mutual confidence and removal of mutual uncertainties with full transparency."

An Oct. 7 *AFP* story drew attention to the last round of talks held (in April) in Almaty, Kazakhstan. At the time, the P5+1 "proposed Iran suspend uranium enrichment at the 20 per cent level it says it needs for a medical research reactor, and to halt enrichment at its underground plant at Fordo. In return, they would ease some sanctions on trade in gold and petrochemicals."

Although it indicated a willingness to pursue future talks, Iran in effect rejected the Almaty offer even though it would have meant some sanctions relief.

Yet, in Indonesia on Oct. 7, as if to preserve some optimism, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said: "The group of six put a proposal on the table at Almaty and I don't believe as of yet Iran has fully responded to that particular proposal. So I think we are waiting for the fullness of the Iranian difference in their approach now."

Even stranger is the fact that, on Oct. 6, Iran's foreign minister declared that the Almaty offers are "history" and that the major powers "should come to the negotiating table with a new approach."

Kerry now insists that "what we need are a set of proposals from Iran that will fully disclose how they will show the world that their program is peaceful." To many analysts, that means that Iran would not be able to enrich beyond 3.5 per cent. (Israel would like to see no enrichment allowed at all, but it stands alone with that demand.)

The Washington Institute's managing director, Michael Singh, wrote in *Foreign Policy* that, despite crippling economic sanctions, "Rouhani will surely seek to alleviate Iran's suffering at the minimum price to its nuclear options, offering transparency and confidence-building rather than far-reaching limits on Iran's nuclear activities. The United States is susceptible to such arguments, as Washington wants not just to reach a nuclear agreement, but to ease hostilities with Iran, and it is worried that the chance to do so may be fleeting.

"But a limited nuclear agreement that leaves Iranian capabilities in place, even if subject to enhanced inspections, will not build confidence or stability," Singh added.

We may soon find out.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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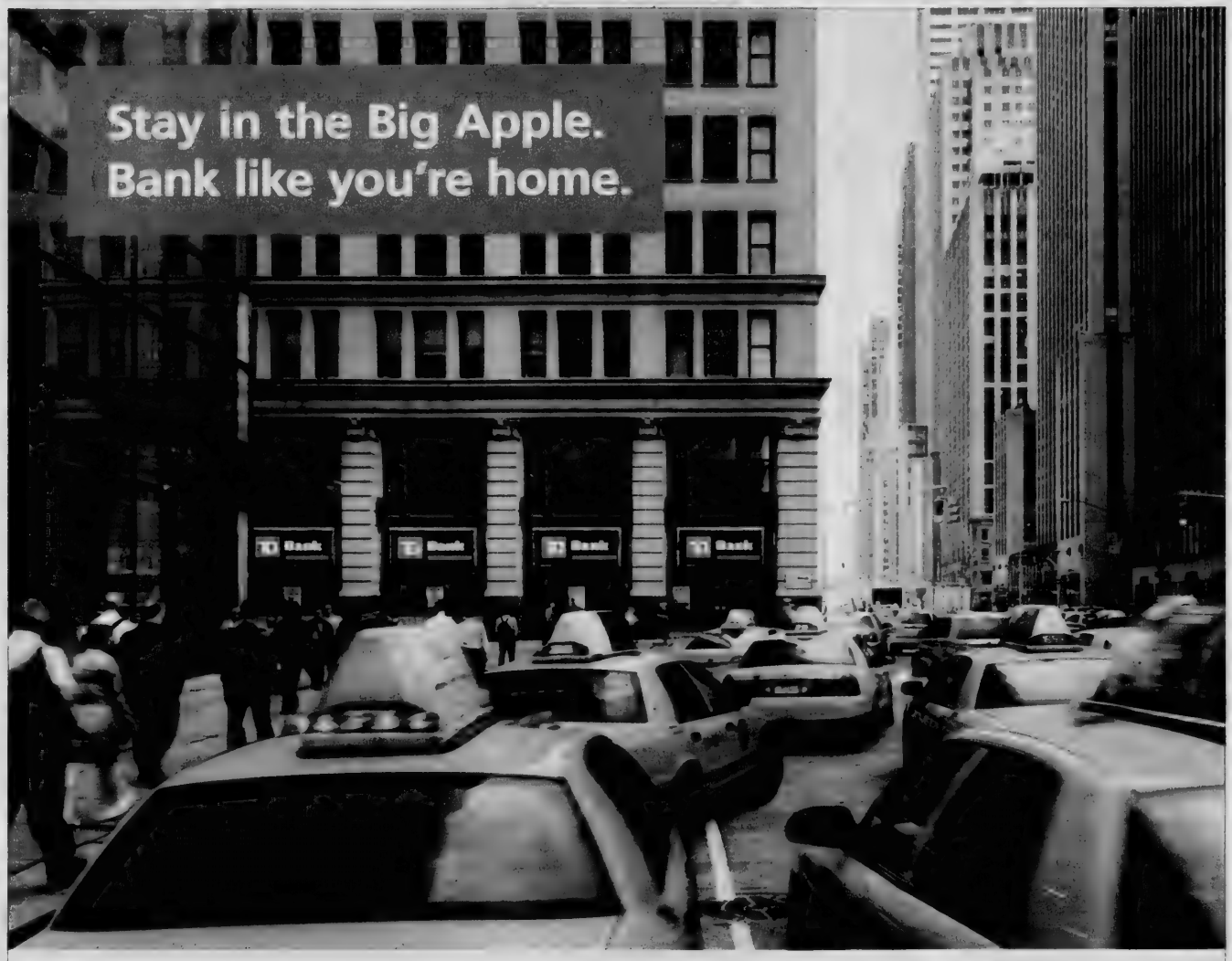
GRASSROOTS TZEDAKAH

A group of Robbins Hebrew Academy Grade 3 boys recently decided to hold a fundraiser for the school. They created their own signs, made all the arrangements and set up their RHA Café in front of one of their homes. The boys, seen here with some of their siblings, served a variety of goodies and raised $150 for the school.



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A clear message to the world

Guest Editorial

Regardless of one's political predilections, one's attitude toward the policies of Israel's current government, or one's view of Benjamin Netanyahu's strengths and weaknesses as a retail politician, one has to admire the Israeli prime minister's ability to make his point.

His speech before the United Nations General Assembly in 2012 will long be remembered for his drawing of a bomb that appeared to come straight out of a Roadrunner cartoon. He was trying to stress that Iran was, and is, edging ever closer to being able to produce a nuclear weapon – a clear existential threat to the world's only Jewish state.

This year, as the newly elected, ostensibly "moderate" and apparently charm-laden Iranian president, Hassan Rouhani, embarked on a public relations blitz aimed at western media and western leaders, Netanyahu came to New York and gave an equally memorable, if slightly less flamboyant, speech.

He warned the global community in no uncertain terms that Israel cannot stomach a nuclear Iran.

"Israel will not allow Iran to get nuclear weapons," Netanyahu said in his Oct. 1 address, the last by a world leader at this year's opening of the General Assembly. "If Israel is forced to stand alone, Israel will stand alone, but in standing alone, Israel will know we are defending many, many others."

He also warned against trusting Rouhani to keep his word when he promises full transparency on the nuclear file.

"When it comes to Iran's nuclear weapons program, here's my advice: distrust, dismantle and verify," Netanyahu said.

Given Iran's and Rouhani's intertwined and obfuscatory track records on the issue, this is wise counsel.

As Paul Michaels details in his According to Reports column this week, Rouhani boasted to Iranian TV as recently as last May about how, in 2003, Iran misled the international community on the activities of its nuclear program.

While it may be possible that Netanyahu was doing U.S. President Barack Obama a favour by playing the bad cop to Obama's more benevolent persona, Israel can't afford to take Rouhani at his word, nor can it rely on the United States or the global community to defend it.

And lest anyone think otherwise, it's not warmongering to inform the world that Israel can't afford to trust the extremist Islamic Republic to act rationally, never mind responsibly, with a stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Israel cannot sit idly by and wait, even if an attack on Iran carries heavy risks. One nuclear strike could – and most likely would – be devastating to a small country with a highly concentrated population.

And even if one's politics – domestically or in relation to the Middle East – don't lean to the right, it's hard not to admire the Harper government's strong and consistent stand in support of Israel.

This was fully in evidence when Foreign Minister John Baird expressed his own skepticism about Iran's nuclear ambitions to the General Assembly Sept. 30.

Such a stand in support of Israel doesn't appear to buy the Canadian government much political capital, and in fact may come at a cost. But its attitude seems to be that the truth isn't a popularity contest. And like Netanyahu's own chutzpadik speech, it was a brave stand to take.

Daniel Wolgelerenter

Dry Bones NOW WHAT?

THE AMERICAN ZIG ZAG ON IRAN HAS HAD A BIZARRE
AND UNEXPECTED SIDE EFFECT IN THE MIDDLE EAST
IT HAS DRIVEN THE SAUDIS AND THE ISRAELIS
INTO EACH OTHER'S ARMS!

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Exhibit caused too much damage

Last year, the downtown Hamilton Public Library ran an exhibit in its main lobby called "A Child's View From Gaza." It featured drawings, supposedly by children, of Israeli planes bombing Palestinian homes. An accompanying written commentary described in graphic detail how Israelis allegedly abuse Palestinians.

After thousands of library patrons had passed the exhibit, the Hamilton Jewish Federation's public relations committee persuaded the library to move the exhibit to the less visible fourth floor. Recently the library CEO offered an apology for "the hurt [the exhibit] caused the Jewish community." He offered no apology for authorizing this repugnant exhibition.

The library has agreed to allow the committee to sponsor an exhibit, Oct 1 to 15, showing how Israel does humanitarian work throughout the world. Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely that the positive message of the Israel-aid display will erase the intensely negative impact generated by the Gaza "art" exhibit, one reason being that the Israel-aid display is on library's virtually deserted fourth floor.

The committee was remiss in not taking stronger action against the Gaza art exhibit when it was first featured last year. Its questionable "compromise deal" with the library is not a satisfactory resolution to this distressing issue.

Ronald Berenbaum
Hamilton, Ont.

• • •

Diaspora Jews are not inferior

In his column "Mitzvot mean more in Israel" (*The CJN*, Oct. 3), Rabbi Ilan Acoca discusses the religious importance for Jews to live in Israel. To stress his point, he refers to the Torah and the sages from which he draws the conclusion that "only in Israel is the worship of God pure without any barriers or impurities." He concludes with the statement, "In the land of Israel, we're a living people. In the Diaspora, we're like bodies lacking spirit – the physical shell of a people without inner life."

This is insulting to all Jews, religious or otherwise. Neither I, my family, friends nor the vast majority of Jews who don't live in Israel share this sense of inferiority. If the good rabbi feels so empty inside, I suggest he make aliyah as soon as possible.

Asher Sadeh
Richmond Hill, Ont.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Deuteronomy isn't dreary or boring

In her column ("What we've got that robots don't" *The CJN*, Aug. 29), Jean Gerber writes that Deuteronomy is "dreary," "boring" and has "too many admonitions."

No, Deuteronomy is the most absorbing book of the Pentateuch. Many of the ethical mitzvot are found in Deuteronomy. There are resonant teachings such as "justice, justice you shall pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20) and, "See, I have set before you this day life and death, and good and evil... therefore choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:15 and Deuteronomy 30:19).

Indeed, Deuteronomy (31:19) describes the Torah (Pentateuch) as a *shirah* (a poem or song). The book portrays the great leader Moses' love of the Jewish nation. Gerber is right that there are too many rebukes, especially the curses that outnumber the blessings in Deuteronomy chapters 27 and 28. But is this not true to life, where we are swamped today with warnings about hazards that will affect our environment and health if we don't obey the rules?

Jacob Mendlovic
Toronto

• • •

Rouhani and Putin share PR strategy

So, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani thrills U.S. President Barack Obama and others by condemning the Holocaust ("Rouhani PR blitz masks lies" *The CJN*, Oct. 3). Wow! Next he might even shock the world by saying that Hitler was an evil monster. What really matters is whether he condemns President Bashar Assad of Syria for murdering more than 100,000 Syrian civilians and for gassing hundreds, including more than 400 children? Will he stop funding terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, or are they not quite as bad as the Nazis? When he renounces the current evils that his government supports, then he will be worth listening to. I think he retained the same public relations firm as did Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

Bert Raphael
Thornhill, Ont.

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Should the Diaspora get a say in Israeli affairs?

Not on life-and-death issues

David Koschitzky

What does it mean for mainstream Diaspora community organizations to support Israel today? To blindly defend every policy decision of the Israeli government? Of course not. It means understanding the distinction between "advocating" for Israel and "engaging" with Israel.

Advocating for Israel means enhancing the understanding and support for Israel with a wide range of audiences – government, media, the Jewish community, other ethno-cultural communities, business and academic centres. This means explaining to all parties Israel's long-sought goals of achieving peace with its Arab neighbours and with the Palestinians, along with acceptance and security for the Jewish state.

Explaining these goals is not a politically partisan act. It's an accurate reflection – against persistent denials or distortions by Israel's many detractors – of what successive Israeli governments and the overwhelming majority of Israelis want to see.

Engaging with Israel is entirely different and perhaps more ambiguous. It invites the question: what, if any, are the proper limits of the Diaspora engagement with Israel? On issues such as religious pluralism and tolerance, rabbinic authority, Jewish identity – subjects that indeed significantly affect Jewish communities in the Diaspora – engagement is entirely appropriate for all Jews.

However, on matters concerning life-and-death decisions that mostly directly affect only Israelis and are already part of Israelis' daily internal debate, there are valid reasons to ask to what degree do Jews in the Diaspora have the right to weigh in, especially when their own lives are not on the line.

Prominent Los Angeles Rabbi David Wolpe addressed this issue in response to U.S. academic and journalist Peter Beinart's critique of the American Jewish establishment when he wrote: "My children do not patrol [Israel's] borders. They do not dismantle unexploded rockets. They do not walk gingerly into cafes, always wondering, always fearful, even in quiet times. There aren't too many bomb shelters in Westwood [Calif.]. When I express my opinions about Israel's conduct, which I do, this reality is foremost in my mind. There is a penalty for choosing not to live in Israel: a certain diffidence, a willingness to listen and appreciate the result of a democratic process, even when one disagrees with the result."

Speaking out in support of the principle of a two-state vision that preserves Israel as a Jewish and democratic country, and is the stated policy of successive elected Israeli democratic governments,

Continued on page 26

All Jews should have a voice

Arie Ralf

Last June, the heads of the Jewish People Policy Institute, an Israeli-based think-tank whose analysts include veteran U.S. diplomat Dennis Ross and former U.S. undersecretary of state Stuart Eizenstat, presented their annual report to the Israeli government. In it, they called on the government to engage Diaspora Jews, since "Diaspora Jews deserve a say in Israeli decision-making and should be heard and consulted on matters that could affect Jewish communities worldwide."

Missing in the report is one word – "all" – since virtually all Diaspora Jews love Israel and can help right its wrongs. It is, therefore, in Israel's interest to hear *all* voices in the Diaspora.

For the majority of Jews in the Diaspora, the current reality in Israel presents a significant challenge to the image of the Jewish state they grew up with and to the relationship they would like to maintain with Israel. Many feel it's the duty and responsibility of the Israeli government to hear all views in the Diaspora, and that since we have Israel's back, we also need to have Israel's ear in order to tell it the hard truths that it needs to hear. Self-appointed Diaspora Jewish organizations, representing a vocal, right-wing minority, claim to express all views, but they do not.

Support for Israel doesn't mean blanket approval of its government's actions. If you say that in order to be a supporter of Israel you must agree with all of its policies, you're going to alienate millions of people who think of themselves as active Israel supporters.

It's not easy for all Diaspora Jews to automatically support, lobby for and defend misguided policies of the Israeli government. There must be a reciprocal arrangement. A one-way street isn't going to work with the younger generation. Israel needs to secure the support of the next Jewish generation through continued political advocacy, donations, human capital and enthusiasm. All are critical. Make no mistake: the future of the Diaspora Jewish community and the State of Israel are contingent on securing the involvement and support of Jews who can engage in critical conversations about Israel with confidence and conviction.

Israel will endure and remain relevant to both Israelis and to Jews around the world if it can be defended not only militarily, but also morally – by our generation and by future generations. The attempt to silence leftists and human rights groups with the claim that we are harmful to Israel's good name and are "damaging Israel's legitimacy" or that we are "anti-Zionist" is both insulting and dangerous.

Continued on page 26

Jews of all ages show their colours at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Walk With Israel in 2006. *[CJN file photo]*

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A positive sign from the Zionist left

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Ameinu, a Jewish organization that supports "progressive causes in Israel," has taken a refreshing and long-overdue step in naming, shaming and pushing back against hard-core anti-Zionists. In a publication titled *The Third Narrative: Progressive Answers to the Far Left's Critiques of Israel*, Ameinu condemns the "relentless barrage of accusations against Israel on the web, on campus and in other settings."

This notably harsh language is fully justified. For many years, liberal values and moral causes have been exploited for immoral political warfare against Israel, including boycott campaigns and false accusations of "apartheid." Fundamental principles such as human rights, peace, and democracy are cynically abused in distinctly anti-progressive and anti-liberal attacks that demonize Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish People.

Ameinu's counter-offensive is particularly important for Jewish students who are naturally sympathetic to the language and appeal of social justice, but have little knowledge of the history and facts, and are easily brainwashed. Many well-intentioned liberals are taken in by a well-financed network of self-proclaimed human rights groups obsessed with hatred of Israel, and by marginal individuals who misappropriate the Jewish framework of "tikkun olam" (repairing the world). The discredited Goldstone report, published in 2009, whose false claims caused major damage, demonstrated the destructive influence of this network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The radical anti-Zionist left also promotes what is euphemistically referred to as a "bi-national solution," and invents legal arguments, such as a "right of return" for millions of Palestinians who claim refugee status. Both concepts have no substantive foundation and are the equivalent of wiping Israel off the map.

This political warfare goes far beyond criticism of occupation and settlements, and debates on Israel's policies on the complexities of borders, Palestinian terrorism, and security. In launching their campaign to counter the radical left, Ameinu's leaders recognize that the use of terms such as apartheid, accompanied by systematic discrimination against the Jewish homeland, and boycott campaigns are designed to roll back the clock to 1948 and delegitimize Israel, regardless of borders. As many Israelis have long known, this means that even with a peace agreement, the hatred and mass terror would continue, nullifying benefits from concessions required for a two-state solution.

In what it calls "The Third Narrative initiative," Ameinu seeks "to engage people on the left who appreciate informed and passionate objections to Israeli policies and behaviour... but also suspect that it is wrong to lay all blame for the conflict at the feet of Israelis." On this basis, Ameinu is providing tools "to combat unfair or inaccurate attacks on Israel."

This is an agenda that goes beyond the simple-minded ideological barriers that have been created within the Zionist movement and highly destructive attacks from the left on the right, and visa versa. Internal ideological warfare, which is also (and in some cases, primarily) a power struggle involving individuals seeking to expand their own importance, has severely impeded the counter-attack against demonization. Instead of co-operating against a common threat, officials from other "progressive" organizations claiming to "love Israel" have been silent in the face of loathing, hatred and intolerance.

While repeating the slogans of human rights, these organizations do not organize protests in front of United Nations meetings that ignore Syrian war crimes, and instead continue to promote blood libels against Israel. In contrast, Ameinu has joined other groups in fighting the exhaustive battles over "Israeli apartheid week" on campus, as well as boycotts, divestment and sanctions, and other ugly expressions of modern anti-Semitism.

In its initiative, Ameinu asks, "Do you know a student who could use our support when confronted with charges of 'Israel is an apartheid state' or that 'Israel has committed ethnic cleansing?' Do you have neighbours or coworkers asking difficult questions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?" The same questions are asked by Zionists on the right, as well as the majority of rational centrists – on this issue, there are no political divisions.

If the more powerful groups on the Jewish left would follow this lead and act on their own liberal principles, these attacks could be defeated.

Remembering Rabin becomes less partisan

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

Eighteen years have passed since that dreadful Saturday evening in November 1995, when Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was murdered while leaving Tel Aviv's Malchei Yisrael Square (now Rabin Square). Three shots in the back – just moments after a rally in support of the Israeli–Palestinian peace process. Rabin had been the main speaker and bashfully sang a stanza of Yankele Rotblit's *Shir HaShalom* (Song of Peace), together with the song's most famous performer, Miri Aloni.

The tremors of that historic event were felt not only in Israel, but across the globe, but they were short-lived. Just over 1-1/2 years later, in May 1996, Shimon Peres, Rabin's partner in leading Israel's efforts toward peace with the Palestinians and his replacement as prime minister, was, astonishingly, defeated by Benjamin Netanyahu in national elections, with over 60 per cent of the Jewish population voting for the latter.

For those in the peace camp, that result was painfully disturbing. Many believed Netanyahu had an at least indirect hand in inciting hatred toward Rabin. They remembered his speech at a different rally, at Zion Square in downtown Jerusalem, in October 1995, where some of the demonstrators held posters of Rabin dressed in an SS uniform, while others shouted "Death to Rabin" and condemned him as a traitor.

Ever since, a debate has been ongoing about how we should observe the yearly anniversary of Rabin's assassination. For more than a decade, those on the left couldn't stomach a commemoration of the tragedy at which Rabin's erstwhile political rivals and their supporters would also take part. They believed, and some still believe, that their rivals were at least partly responsible for Rabin's murder. And they wanted these commemorations to make a statement of continued support for the peace process in which Rabin had been so central.

Those on the right have felt excluded and unwanted at these events. In 1997, Natan Sharansky, then a minister in Netanyahu's government, spoke at the remembrance and was loudly booed. Half the nation felt they were being accused of Rabin's murder because they didn't support his policies. And more than anything else, they felt Rabin's murder and its commemoration were being exploited by the left for political purposes – that instead of emphasizing the need to protect and fortify Israel's democracy to ensure nothing like Rabin's murder could ever happen again, the yearly event was glorifying the peace process, which they could not identify with.

The last couple of years have seen a change, with attempts to make the annual event more inclusive. Youth movements and other groups from across the spectrum have been taking part. Left and right. Religious and secular. Jewish and Arab. Organizers call upon those who take part "to remember the murder" and "to struggle for our democracy."

Last year, organizers were criticized from both the right and the left. Rightist extremists complained that people who took part were, in fact, supporting Rabin's left-leaning policies. Those on the left continued to believe that not enough was being said to promote and advance the peace process.

For many years, I, too, felt the yearly event should be used to memorialize Rabin's legacy of peace. But as with so many other things in life, time is a great equalizer. Things change. Netanyahu's government is presently engaged in talks with the Palestinians. In the wake of the Arab Spring, or whatever one might call it, our neck of the woods has become even more complex. And extremists, mostly on the right, are increasingly turning to undemocratic means, such as "price tag" attacks on Arabs and others with whom they disagree.

In this milieu, an inclusive commemoration of Rabin's murder where a large swath of Israeli society is represented – and supporting only democratic means for bringing about change, even difficult change – is a positive step forward and something Rabin himself would have welcomed.

There's another thing I'm quite certain about: Rabin's murder changed the course of our history. He was the only leader of our times with the political and military credentials and the personal courage necessary to move the peace process forward. Had he not been murdered, the Middle East would look quite different today. Unfortunately, Rabin's murderer achieved what he set out to do.

May Rabin be of blessed memory, and may we be blessed with another leader of his stature – soon.

Anne Frank's stepsister recalls a 'very lively girl'

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss was in Toronto last week to share stories about her two-year friendship with Holocaust icon Anne Frank, who later became her stepsister posthumously.

"I was born in Vienna, and when the Nazis came in 1938, we were lucky enough to get out of the country," said Schloss, the keynote speaker for Uptown Chabad's annual gala fundraiser that honoured Jewish community leaders and Uptown Chabad founders Alan and Sheila Mostyn.

Eva Schloss

Sitting across from CHIN radio host Zelda Young, who interviewed her about her experiences, Schloss captivated about 300 people at the Ontario Science Centre with her stories.

Following the Nazi invasion, Schloss, nee Geiringer, and her family moved to Belgium before settling in Amsterdam in 1940 in an apartment opposite the Frank's home.

"All the children would play in the street, and one day a little girl introduced herself as Anne Frank and she took me up to her apartment to meet her family, her sister, Margot, her mother, Edith, and father, Otto – not realizing of course that he would later become my stepfather," Schloss said.

Schloss' mother, Elfreide Geiringer, and Anne's father, Otto Frank, both of whom lost their spouses in the Holocaust, reconnected after the war and fell in love. They married in 1953, a year after Schloss wed an Israeli man named Zvi and settled in London to raise a family.

Recalling the precocious girl who was just one month older than her, Schloss revealed details about Anne that painted her as a boy-crazy attention-seeker with a huge personality.

"She was a big, big chatterbox. At school she was called Mrs. Quack-Quack. She never stopped talking," she said.

"We had steps outside our apartment and she often sat on top of them and always wanted a whole crowd of children around her. She had a shoulder that she could get out of joint and she would demonstrate like a circus artist… She was quite funny," Schloss recalled.

"At 11 she was already interested in boys… She was a very lively girl, a real girl-girl, she said.

Shortly after the Nazis invaded the Netherlands in 1942, Anne's older sister, Margot, and Schloss' older brother, Heinz, received deportation orders to Germany.

Both families decided separately to go into hiding and both families managed to stay hidden for two years before being betrayed and sent to Auschwitz.

"When we arrived, the men and women were separated, and after that I never saw [my brother]," she said.

She did, however, have chance meetings with her father, which "was really amazing, because after the selection, we had no idea what happened to them."

In the nine months Schloss and her mother were imprisoned in the death camp, they managed to stick together for all but three of them.

"One day, we went into the showers and when we came out, we saw Dr. Mengele – or as he was called, Dr. Death, because he decided who was going to live and who was going to die – and a selection was taking place. And as every mother would do, she was giving me part of her bread rations and she had become very, very weak."

Mengele noticed her mother's fragile state and selected her and about 40 other women to be gassed. "For three months I thought I had lost her."

Although she didn't elaborate, in another interview last April with a Dublin radio station, she said that her mother and other "condemned women" were sent to another barrack, where she ran into her cousin from Prague who was working in the camp hospital.

"After my mother was selected, she asked Mengele to look her over again [and convinced him that] she could still work."

Three months later, they were reunited and stayed together until Auschwitz was liberated by the Russians in January 1945.

Schloss' father and brother didn't survive. Neither did Otto Frank's family.

When Miep Gies – an employee and friend of the Franks who helped them while they were hiding – learned about Anne's fate, she contacted Otto Frank.

"After [the Franks] were arrested, [Gies] went upstairs to clear the attic, and she found all the loose pages on the ground. She knew that Anne was writing a diary and she picked it up and put it in her desk… When she learned that Anne was not coming back, she gave it to Otto," Schloss said.

Since *The Diary of Anne Frank* was published in 1947, it's been translated into more than 70 languages, adapted into plays and films, and read by millions.

"Anne wrote in her diary, 'When I die, I would like to live on,' and she does, because everyone knows about her," Schloss said.

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BETTER

Ambassador concerned over online anti-Semitism

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

In a meeting with a couple of reporters from the Jewish press, Israeli diplomat Gideon Behar posed a challenge: Google the word "Jew" and search in YouTube. See what you find.

Well, a Google search turned up a series of pretty benign websites about Jews, but the opening list on YouTube revealed a host of videos that were hostile to Jews in varying degrees. There was a scene from the 1990 film *Europa Europa* in which a lecturer standing in front of a swastika flag explains to a group of young Nazis how to spot a Jew. You can imagine how complimentary that was.

Gideon Behar

Then there's a scene from the movie *Borat*, titled "Throw a Jew down the well." Comedy, yes, but on its own and if you didn't know any better...

Another video is of "ex-Jew Benjamin Freedman" who exposes the so-called Zionist agenda while in the background, film of Nazi leaders runs. Another video purports to describe the Jewish treatment of Christians in Israel. At the top of the list is a game-show spoof hosted by Howard Stern called "Guess who's a Jew," that includes an SS contestant as well as a KKK member spewing racist vitriol.

Not a neutral or complimentary search result among them.

And that's Behar's point. The Internet and other media have become forums where anti-Jewish content can easily be found.

"It's the real world today," he said. "Kids live on the Internet."

"There is a rise in anti-Semitism and hate speech on the Internet."

Behar is director of the department for combating anti-Semitism at Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was in Toronto last week as head of the country's delegation to the semi-annual plenary meeting of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The IHRA consists of 31 member countries and is mandated to keep alive the memory of the Holocaust and promote anti-racist education.

That's important in the face of Holocaust-denial, Behar stated. Denial of the Holocaust is increasingly widespread in the Arab and Muslim world, in European countries and on the Internet.

There's data to back him up. A report published earlier this year by Tel Aviv University's Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry found that incidents of anti-Semitism jumped by 30 per cent in 2012 over the year before.

The study found there were 686 acts of violence and vandalism, with the largest single number, 200, recorded in France. The attack on a Toulouse Jewish school and the murder of a rabbi and four children emboldened extremist elements, said European Jewish Congress President Moshe Kantor.

The work of anti-racist activists is far from done, Behar suggested. Europe is experiencing a resurgence of anti-Semitism, much of it home-grown, but "many are coming to Europe from the Middle East and North Africa. They come with propaganda and ideas about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and they don't differentiate between Israel and Jews." In Europe, he added, they see Jews as the enemy.

The Internet contains a lot of anti-Semitic material in languages that are spoken in the Middle East, said Behar, who speaks eight languages, including several Arabic dialects.

"[They] put the seeds of hatred in the hearts of millions of people around the world without accurate information to contradict it," he stated.

"The radicals and anti-Semites behind it [hope] to create such a huge rift between Jews and Muslims that you will never be able to budge it."

As for the Holocaust, Behar said it was a unique event, but with lessons for the entire world. While acknowledging it didn't prompt nations to stop subsequent genocides in Cambodia and Africa, it did lead "to an agenda to give asylum to persecuted peoples."

Today, Iran stands at the forefront of efforts to minimize the Holocaust's significance. "Iran is the only country with a government policy of Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism," Behar said.

Not only did it host an international conference in 2006 to deny the Holocaust, it has held online contests soliciting Holocaust-denying cartoons, and an international book fair in Tehran features hundreds of Holocaust-denial and anti-Semitic titles.

That's something western governments must be made aware of, and Iranians must be confronted with whenever they deny the Holocaust, he said.

Despite his rather gloomy assessment, Behar believes most people have no preconceived ideas about Jews one way or the other, but are influenced by what they read in the media. Jews must get involved in community life and present an alternative picture to the stereotypes they've read, he said.

In circumstances where anti-Semitism is found online, Behar said, "Don't leave it." Complain to the web host, cite their own terms of use to get it removed.

"Things can be done. Students can be very active in this field," he said.

"The message is that each one of us has power today, and we have to be active."

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Peter Beinart speaks to left-wing Zionist group

JSpaceCanada holds inaugural conference

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

Israel's creation has been a blessing and sometimes people on the left don't make that explicit enough, says Peter Beinart, associate professor of journalism and political science at the City University of New York and the author of *The Crisis of Zionism*

"Democracy is not the whole of the Zionist dream. Israel is not and, in my opinion should not, be a secular democracy like Canada and the United States," Beinart said at the inaugural conference of the new progressive Zionist group JSpaceCanada, held Oct. 6 at the University of Toronto.

"But if democracy is not the entirety of the Zionist dream, it is necessary to the Zionist dream."

The controversial Beinart – who advocates what he calls a "Zionist BDS," a boycott of goods made in the West Bank – explained that some of Israel's policies, such as its control of the West Bank, are contrary to the democratic vision of Israel's founders and place its democracy and security in peril.

Peter Beinart

He noted that that the portion of Israel's budget going toward settlements has doubled during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's time in office.

While he admitted that Palestinians must share some of the blame for the failure of the peace process, calling terrorism "unforgivable," he put the onus on the Israeli government, which he said is "paying Israelis to move into the West Bank."

"It's not enough to say Israel will get a handle on settlement growth when the Palestinians finally decide to live in peace in a two-state solution," Beinart said. "Because by supporting settlement growth, you're pushing Palestinians in exactly the direction we don't want them to go."

JSpaceCanada was launched officially in 2011, although the idea for it was conceived three years ago. The goal of its founders was to support Israel while also supporting a two-state solution for two peoples and encourage open dialogue about the state, its actions and its future.

They say they also wanted to fill a gap in the Canadian Jewish community by providing a pro-Israel, pro-peace voice that's an alternative to the extremes often found on both sides of the debate.

"It is out of a love for Israel and our genuine concern for its long term security and survival that JSpaceCanada was founded, and why we are gathered here today," said conference co-chair Karen Mock a former CEO of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and a former national director of B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights.

"But we are here to reaffirm that it's appropriate to ask difficult questions and to have the courageous conversations both within our Jewish community and between us and the wider communities."

The conference, held at U of T's Multi-Faith Centre, brought together a variety of provocative speakers and panelists.

The aim, Mock said, was to "broaden the conversation" about Israel and its policies and discuss what can be done to ignite activism in today's youth and offer a voice that falls between the "extreme left" and "staunch right."

"[It's about] building bridges and dialogue spaces," said Jenny Isaacs, an active member of All That's Left, an Israeli collective devoted to "building a just society in Israel and Palestine."

Mock said there's a strong desire in the Canadian pro-Israel community to have a more open dialogue on Israel's policies without fear of being labelled anti-Israel.

"JSpace is for those who love Israel and want her to thrive and survive in safety and security and peace as a Jewish homeland, with human rights and social justice for all her residents," Mock said.

"There is a space in JSpace for everyone."

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Dutch families honoured for rescuing Jews

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem honoured two Dutch families posthumously Oct. 8 for rescuing and sheltering Jews during the Holocaust.

The descendents of Gert Jan Kottelenberg, his brother, Jan, and his wife, Hermina, and the children and grandchildren of Bob and Maria de Jongh received a Righteous Among the Nations medal and certificate on behalf of their families at a dinner in Toronto.

The Kottelenberg and de Jongh families also united with the descendants of the Jews who their parents and grandparents rescued.

Vera Hartog, who found refuge in the de Jongh household when she was just 12, was at the dinner. She recalled living with the family and their children from April 1944 to the end of the war.

"It was the first time I was alone," Hartog said, after her mother died of cancer and another family took in her sister, Fenna. "During a short time, I was brought to different addresses and all friendly people. I was crying most of the time."

"[Bob de Jongh] was looking for a more permanent address for me. And he asked me if I wanted to be in a family with children. I jumped and shouted, 'Oh yes! A family with children!'"

The Kottelenberg children were united with the first- and second-generation descendants of Julius Zion, whom the Kottelenbergs hid on their farm.

In the fall of 1942, the Kottelenbergs, who were members of the Dutch Underground, took in Julius, his sister Johanna and her fiancé, Istvan.

Vera Hartog speaks to dinner guests as, from left, Bob de Jongh, Anne Van Zyl, and Peggy de Jongh, the children of Bob and Maria de Jongh, look on.

Although the Nazis apprehended Johanna, Istvan and their baby – who were later murdered at the Sobibor extermination camp – Julius fled the home before the Germans arrived.

He hid under a nearby bridge until it was dark and then walked back to his hometown, Eibergen. He lived there until his death in 1990, at age 85.

"As families, we value Yad Vashem's award on their work performed 70 years ago because it has tremendous teaching value for the generations to come," Bernie Kottelenberg said. "We didn't all have a chance to know our grandfathers [Gert Jan and Jan], but their faith and convictions have been passed on."

The Kottelenbergs and de Jonghs are among 24,811 individuals from 47 countries who have been awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations.

The dinner was co-sponsored by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Canada is chairing the IHRA this year.

Keynote speaker Jason Kenney, the federal minister for multiculturalism, said he hopes Canada's investment in Holocaust education and research will blot out the stain of the country's "ignoble history" of not accepting Jewish refugees who fled Europe before and during the war.

"It was not until our projects to join IHRA that we began to come to terms... with that history of wartime and immigration restriction measures on the victims of European anti-Semitism," Kenney said.

"These and other projects have helped us to face our own history honestly and have provided a platform through which [the government] could express our regret for the government of Canada's policy of exclusion in the 1930s and '40s."

At the dinner, Kenney also named the winner and runner-up of an international poster competition with the theme "Keeping the Memory Alive - Journeys through the Holocaust." The winner, Caitlin McGinn, and runner-up Carling Hind are both Canadian students at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver.

McGinn and Hind worked on their posters in one six-hour block during exam time.

"A lot of people found it very challenging, due to the nature of such a complex issue," Hind said. "For whatever reason, we were able to find a personal connection to it, and trust that."

Posters from the winner, runner-up and Canadian finalists can be found on the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website.

Toronto teen used bat mitzvah to help raise funds for group

Continued from page 3

"It costs $1,000 to raise a puppy during the first year, and many students have found creative ways to not only raise funds, but more importantly to help raise awareness of the growing needs of the visually impaired."

Natalie Urbach, a 15-year-old student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, spoke at the event about her efforts at the time of her bat mitzvah to bring attention to the cause and raise funds for the organization. When she and her family travelled to Israel this past summer, they visited the IGDCB and she was thrilled that she chose to support the centre.

The IGDCB's next event, Evening of Miracles, will be held at the Toronto Centre for the Arts on May 22, featuring international guitarist, singer and composer Jose Feliciano.

For more information on the IGDCB, visit www.ca.israelguidedog.org.

Italian cyclist named Righteous Among the Nations

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Champion cyclist Gino Bartali, who used his sporting reputation to help Italian Jews evade the Holocaust, has been named Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

The Israel-based organization posthumously recognized Bartali, a two-time winner of the Tour de France, for acting as a courier in a wartime resistance network, delivering forged documents hidden in the stem of his bicycle, while in the guise of training.

"Knowingly risking his life to rescue Jews, Bartali transferred falsified documents to various contacts," Yad Vashem stated in announcing the honour.

Bartali's story was told in *Road to Valour*, a bestseller released last year by the Canadian brother-and-sister team of Aili and Andres McConnon.

Earlier this summer, *Road to Valour* won the Canadian Jewish Book Award. It had previously won the Mazzei Award from the National Italian American Foundation and a Christopher Award.

The Yad Vashem honour "highlights the most important legacy of this two-time Tour de France-winning cyclist," Andres said.

"We are thrilled that this award will bring the news of Bartali's heroism to people around the world. It's wonderful to think that so many new people will learn about an Italian cyclist and humanitarian and discover the story that captivated us over so many years," he added.

Gino Bartali in a photo taken around 1936

According to Yad Vashem, Bartali became a "widely admired national hero" in prewar Italy after winning the Tour de France in 1938 and the Giro d'Italia, the Italian equivalent, twice.

A devout Roman Catholic, Bartali joined a church-based resistance organization following the Nazi occupation of Italy in 1943. The resistance was led by Archbishop Elia Angelo Dalla Costa, himself recognized in 2012 as Righteous Among the Nations, along with Rabbi Nathan Cassuto.

Hundreds of Jews were saved by the network.

Bartali delivered documents hidden in his bicycle over a wide area. "When Bartali was stopped and searched, he specifically asked that his bicycle not be touched since the different parts were very carefully calibrated to achieve maximum speed," Yad Vashem stated.

While researching their book, the McConnons shared their findings with Yad Vashem, which was already examining Bartali's wartime efforts.

"We were happy to help and in the process inquired whether they had recognized Cardinal Dalla Costa, one of the leaders of the Tuscan counterfeiting network. Yad Vashem then also continued to do its own rigorous research according to its own specifications," Andres said.

"With Bartali's recognition…all of the key members of this heroic Tuscan and Umbrian counterfeiting network have been honoured," the McConnons stated.

The McConnons have lectured widely about Bartali since their book came out.

"The fascinating thing is that Jewish and gentile audiences seem drawn to the same elements of Bartali's story – overcoming an impoverished childhood, the excitement of professional racing and the hardship and courage of the war years," they stated.

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UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that the Annual Meeting of the Council Members of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto will be held at

Lipa Green Centre for Jewish Community Services

(4600 Bathurst Street,Toronto)

November 25, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

for the following purposes:

- To receive the report of the Directors, the financial statements and the report of the Public Accountant;
- To elect the Directors, the Chair and Senior Vice-Chair;
- To appoint the Public Accountant.

Prior to the Annual Meeting, Community Individuals shall meet for the purpose of electing half of the number of Individual Council Members from among the qualified candidates duly nominated. Individuals nominated by the Nominating Committee appear in this issue of the CJN.

To be considered for election as an Individual Council Member, please contact Séverine Biderman at sbiderman@ujafed.org

DATED at Toronto the 17th day of October, 2013
BY ORDER OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

UJA Federation

TAKE NOTE

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Pictured with their grandson Matthew Howard are, from left, Lawrence Polon, Gloria Howard, Maxine Polon and Hersh Howard. *[Susan Minuk photo]*

Grandparents go back to school at CHAT

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel Family Education Centre in Vaughan celebrated students of another era at its inaugural Grandparents" Day last week.

"There will be no tests, no assignments being graded, and we have asked teachers to refrain from giving out detentions to any of our grandparents – so you are safe today," TanenbaumCHAT president Les Fluxgold joked with the 190 visiting "students" Oct. 9.

The seniors were welcomed by the campus choir, which sang an arrangement of melodies as the visitors made their way through a morning assembly and breakfast.

Erica Lipworth, president of the campus student council, greeted the guests.

"Grandparents are our [students'] biggest fans. They are our walking resumes, telling anyone who will listen how accomplished, beautiful, smart, considerate, capable and unique we really are," she said, adding that "you are the ones who worry whether we have a Jewish education worthy of the sacrifices you and the generations before you have made."

The seniors watched a video that showcased the wide range of subjects offered and learned of the more than 70 clubs and committees at the school. They were then escorted to their grandchildrens' classes for an interactive hour of learning.

The grandparents later stopped by a photo booth with their grandchildren en route to their final destination of the day, a luncheon at the Schwartz/Reisman Centre.

TanenbaumCHAT's Wallenberg campus on Wilmington Avenue will be celebrating its second annual Grandparents' Day on Oct. 23, when many of the grandparents will head back to school to do it all over again with another grandchild.

CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM: Bialik Hebrew Day School's senior girls soccer team – pictured with coaches Nina Rothman, left, and Lindsay Springer – won the 2013 Jewish Day School Sports League soccer tournament last week.

Demand for winter Birthright trips down

Continued from page 1

It's not coming naturally, though: you would expect with a free Birthright trip, you wouldn't have to work hard for it," the British immigrant says.

Shitrit chalks up the poor registration to a glut of trip possibilities, while others cite poor marketing.

"The providers have no history of effective marketing and are now surprised that there are 1.5 people per seat instead of 10," says David Abitbol, founder of the blog Jewlicious, who has had interactions with Birthright since the latter's inception in 1999.

"I know for a fact that there's more money and more spots available than ever before. But for a long time, the combination of not as many spots and lots of interest made providers lazy in terms of marketing," Abitbol says.

Participants in Birthright Israel's special 10-year anniversary flight dance as they are welcomed at Ben-Gurion Airport in 2009. *(CJN file photo)*

And whereas few spots, uncertainty about the program's continuance and word-of-mouth were once enough to make up for marketing, nowadays potential participants are also more lackadaisical about registration, taking for granted that the trip would be waiting for them until they are 27 years old.

Demand in Canada for winter Birthright trips is also low, at least compared to the summer tours, but this year's numbers are consistent with previous years, says Michael Soberman, national director for Canada Israel Experience, which organizes Birthright trips for Canadians.

That's because Canadian students only get two weeks off in the winter – compared with four weeks for students in the United States, and up to four months in the summer – which leaves no time for them to extend their Israel sojourns after the winter Birthright trips end, he explains.

An early October email from Birthright's New York office obtained by *The Times of Israel* indicates the organization is aware of the problem: "Just a quick note to make sure that you all know that in light of this season's lower registration numbers, we are strongly considering keeping registration open indefinitely. For that reason, from now forward please do not communicate to prospective applicants in any way that registration will be closing."

In response to *The CJN's* request for comment on reports of low demand, Taglit-Birthright in New York said it extended registration because of the early holiday season, which makes it difficult for some to apply, as well as a "broader selection of winter dates that may slow the process down while matching applicants to a particular trip."

Taglit-Birthright Israel CEO Gidi Mark says that closing registration is a fine art.

"Registration is a delicate balance," says Mark, a former career diplomat in Israel's Foreign Ministry. "The goal: create a manageable number of reserves to find an optimal number to fill the planes, create homogeneous groups, and not over-register."

Mark's assistant in Birthright's Israel office, Jonnie Schnytzer, clarifies that the leaked email came from a very junior worker who only started working for the organization a month ago and should not have been sent.

He admits there are currently a few thousand fewer potential participants in preregistration than last year, saying, "We're probably a week behind last year but planning to close it within the week."

As of Oct. 7, some 24,000 people had applied from North America, with another 5,500 applicants from the rest of the world, Schnytzer said.

"We're planning to bring 17,000 this year, up 1,500 from last year, so somewhere in between there is the waiting list," says Schnytzer.

But Shlomo Lifshitz, until 2009 by far the largest Birthright provider with his Oranim company, says that in meetings earlier this month with several Birthright organizers, he was told there is no waiting list at all, since the summer trips took care of them.

To date, some 350,000 young adults from around the world have participated in Birthright.

TimesofIsrael.com with files from Cara Stern

Canada called a more traditional community

Continued from page 1

The projection for the intermarriage rate in Montreal for 2011 is only 16 per cent because of the Sephardi element, Shahar said.

"It's more conservative in religion. So is Toronto… I suspect that the projections I gave you are even a little high, and that our intermarriage rate is going to be well below the American rate for a long time," Shahar said.

Schnoor suggested that Canada's lower rate could be attributed to a more traditional community.

"A good marker of that is day school enrolment. Day school enrolments in Toronto are 33 per cent approximately, and in Montreal, 60 per cent approximately. In the United States, it's about 17 per cent overall. That's a big difference, and that's a reflection of the fact that Canada is a more traditional, Jewish place."

Another reason could be "the immigration patterns of such a large proportion of Reform Jews from Germany to the United States. We didn't have that immigration, [and] that really formed the bedrock of the American Jewish community, a much more liberal foundation, which we don't have here," he added.

Although Canada's intermarriage rates are much lower than in the United States, "you can't deny that the intermarriage rates have gone up and up," Schnoor said.

McGill University sociologist Morton Weinfeld said the reason for the climbing rates in North America might have to do with "a postmodern belief by many Jews that they can have their cake and eat it, too. They can remain Jewish in some way that may be meaningful to them while marrying outside the faith and being fully immersed in the non-Jewish world."

Schnoor took an optimistic approach to the reason behind the rising numbers, suggesting that "Jews are able to intermarry because they are so accepted. In fact, they're desired partners… Sixty or 70 years ago, that was not the case, because North American Jews were suffering so much anti-Semitism. The problem has shifted so that, instead of wanting to beat us up, now they want to marry us."

According to the Pew study, 32 per cent of U.S. Jews born after 1980 – the millennial generation – identify as Jews of no religion, are disconnected from the organized Jewish community and are much less likely to raise their children Jewish.

That's compared to the baby boomer generation, born between 1946 and 1964, of which only 19 per cent identified as Jews of no religion.

But Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, spiritual leader of Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto, said the study didn't "differentiate between people who really have no religion and people who say no religion, but wind up having a bar mitzvah, or come to a Shabbat dinner, or they might mark other religious occasions and holidays."

Chabad of Markham spiritual leader Rabbi Avraham Plotkin also challenged the Pew findings on the millennial generation, because they were polled "at a point in life when Jewishness means the least [to them].

"I think if you would have asked the hippies in the… '60s, they would have told you the same thing. And if you look at the same [people today], they are now the conservative people who are paying for the big buildings in the Jewish community," Rabbi Plotkin said.

"When you ask people of that age, you're not asking the 60-year-olds what they felt when they were 20."

Another statistic that seemed to elicit more questions than answers was that 94 per cent of U.S. Jews said they were proud to be Jewish.

"There is a tremendous amount of pride in Jewish identity and we are challenged to ask, how do we build on that?" Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said.

"How do you take something that's positive, but relatively weak, and find ways to enhance it, deepen it and strengthen it?"

Weinfeld agreed that "it's terrific if people say they are proud to be Jewish, but the next question is, what does that mean in terms of specific actions?"

"There is a growing population of Jews who are hard to fit within the traditional categories, so you can be just Jewish or partially Jewish. The big challenge going forward is what to do with these partially Jewish Jews."

Rabbi Debra Landsberg, spiritual leader of Toronto's Temple Emanu-El, said that labelling Jews is "always tricky.

"[For the] Jews saying they are still proud of being Jewish… I have no doubt that there are many in that category for whom Jewishness is something vast and mysterious and ethically demanding and can't be summed up as religion," she said.

Rabbi Lansberg said the way Jews are often forced to fit into "categories of identity" does not speak to a younger generation.

"I think it behooves us to switch it and say, 'We're not going to start talking about status, let's start talking about dreams, hopes, vision, commitment and connectedness.' How do we grow and develop that? Status questions [should be] secondary," she said.

Rabbi Plotkin said Jewish community leaders need "to tap into the 94 per cent who are proud and to cultivate that pride and to teach them that it's not enough just to be proud but to translate it into living Jewish."

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PRESIDENTIAL LETTER

Former Winnipegger Leonard Stone holds up a framed letter from former U.S. president Harry Truman declining an invitation to speak in Winnipeg. The letter has been added to an exhibit at the Jewish Heritage Centre highlighting the city's Jewish connection with the struggle to create a Jewish state. To read story, go to cjnews.com

[Myron Love photo]

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U of Toronto hosts Holocaust conference

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Seventy years after the end of the Holocaust, researchers are still coming up with new areas to research and study.

A conference titled "The Holocaust: New Scholars – New Research" brought more than 150 people, most of them scholars, from around the world to the University of Toronto for two days of learning on Oct. 6 and 7.

"It's a chance for [scholars] to interact and learn from each other," said Doris Bergen, chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe professor of Holocaust studies at the University of Toronto.

"We're trying to showcase the vibrant research that's been done on the Holocaust all over the world."

In addition to scholars, attendees at the semiannual meeting included members of the general public and members of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), an intergovernmental organization that encourages political and social leaders to support Holocaust education, remembrance and research.

The panel discussions often raised more questions than they answered.

For example, the first panel focused on journalistic reporting of the Holocaust, or the lack thereof.

Norman Domeier, an assistant professor of modern European history at the University of Stuttgart, spoke about "What Did the Global Public Know? Foreign Correspondents in the Third Reich, 1933-1945." He said the fact the atrocities didn't dominate the front pages of world newspapers can only be attributed to "insensitive, unprofessional journalism."

Some of the presenters showcased modern ways of looking at the Holocaust, including Stephanie Benzaquen, whose talk was called "Hashtag Holocaust: Social Networks, Production of Images, and the Cultural Memory of the Holocaust."

Benzaquen, a PhD candidate in art history and a researcher at the Centre for Historical Culture at the School of History, Culture and Communication at Erasmus University in the Netherlands, focused her discussion on Instagram, the photo-sharing site that lets users add filters to make pictures appear like heritage photos.

Benzaquen said her research involves collecting Instagram photos that relate to the Holocaust, such as the Auschwitz death camp museum, and categorizing the filters used on the pictures, examining whether they're black and white, sepia, soft-toned or vibrant.

Such information can't shed more light on the Holocaust, but it may help understand how the public relates to the Shoah, she said.

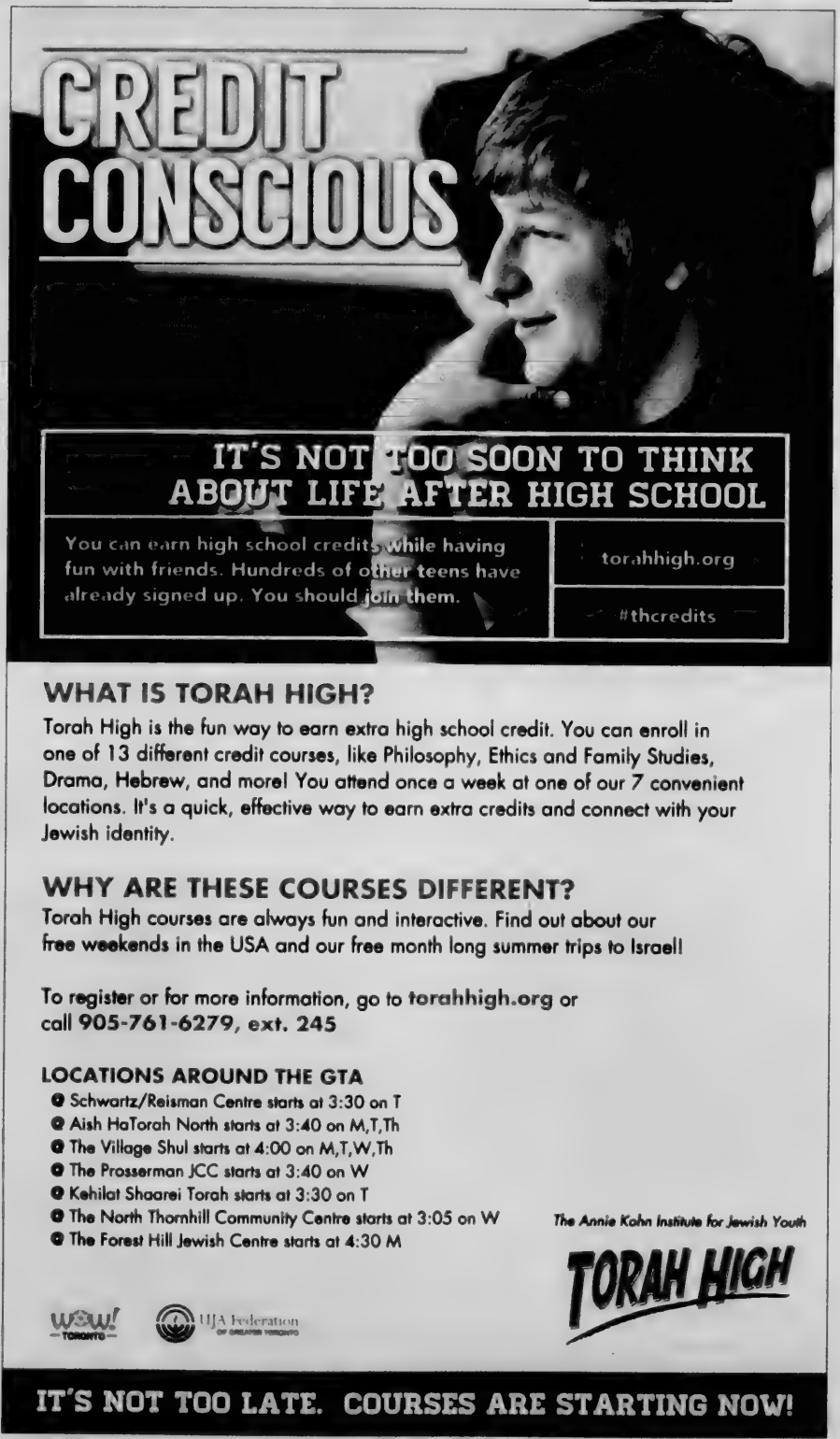
Alexander McPherson, a graduate student at Trent University, said Benzaquen's presentation was particularly interesting, because it suggested new ways of looking at memorialization.

"Already I'm thinking of things in ways I haven't thought of before," he said.

The IHRA provides funding for scholarship on the Holocaust, and Bergen said she hoped a delegate might learn about a research topic and decide to help fund a project, especially from countries such as Italy, where research on the Holocaust is not very well funded.

Peter Staudenmaier, an assistant professor of history at Marquette University, a Jesuit school in Milwaukee, said he doesn't normally study the Holocaust, but he happened to be researching a small anti-Semitic institute in fascist Italy when he heard about the conference.

He didn't know what to expect when he agreed to be part of a panel, but he said he saw the gathering as an opportunity for historians to share what they know and to look at old information in new ways.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Triplets inspire gala for kids with neurological disorders

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

More than $500,000 was raised at the fourth annual Stems of Hope Gala in support of a charity dedicated to investing in innovative research, education, therapies and programs for childhood neurological disorders.

Three To Be was founded in 2010 by Jared and Dana Florence, parents of triplets who are now 5-1/2 years old and were each diagnosed with cerebral palsy, a neurological condition that has no cure.

"Our theme this year was 'Just Be Love' which is such a fitting theme for what is happening in this room tonight," Dana told the 1,000 people at the Oct. 4 event, which was hosted by Global TV's Leslie Roberts and Liza Fromer.

"We do this for the love of our children, Taylor, Cole and Brody, and to show them that life is to be celebrated and that real hope exists despite adversity," Dana added.

"Along the way, we realized there was a need to help the parents of these special children. We are incredibly proud of [Three To Be's] Parent Advocacy Link [program], which is allowing us to provide guidance and support to the most important advocates for children – their parents."

Money raised by this year's gala will fund research in two key areas: stem-cell treatments that promote brain repair, and innovative technology to make communication possible for children who can't speak.

The Stems of Hope Galas have raised more than $2 million in total in the past four years.

"A portion of tonight's funds will go toward helping kids who have no means of communication," said Yvonne Stefanin, vice-president of the Holland Bloorview Foundation.

The Florence family, from left, Brody, Dana, Taylor, Jared and Cole [*Susan Minuk photo*]

"Our researchers, led by Dr. Tom Chau, have developed these amazing ways of defining any sort of sensory motion that a person might have. Some may just be able to move their eyebrow, others move a tongue, or even just wink slightly. Dr. Chau picks up on that motion and he is then able to train the person to be able to define letters on a computer, so that with a blink of an eye, or a move of an eyebrow, they are able to take a letter and for the first time ever they are able to communicate like never before."

Dana Florence told *The CJN* about her children's gains over the past year.

"Taylor loves princesses and the colour pink. She loves to go shopping and she loves school and her friends. Although my son, Brody, can't communicate verbally, he's been working on his communication, and he's really come very far. Through his communication book, he's able to tell us exactly what he wants and needs, and for him, that is just remarkable. Then there is Cole, who has come leaps and bounds with his talking."

Deaf until age three, "Cole wears cochlear implants and is now reading and able to type on a computer. He can even write letters."

"Three To Be is what gives us strength. The overwhelming support from the community inspires us to continue on. Nothing is impossible. The word itself says that 'I am possible,'" Dana said.

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Groups seek to educate Jews about organ donations

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The National Council of Jewish Women Canada, Toronto section, along with a number of downtown congregations and groups, have joined together to present a program on the Jewish perspective on organ donation.

Titled "Yes You Can," the event takes place Oct. 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life at the University of Toronto.

The evening includes a presentation by Rabbi Aaron Levy, leader of Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism, and Rabbi Miriam Margles, spiritual leader of Danforth Jewish Circle, who will discuss Jewish law as it relates to organ and tissue donation.

Dr. Jeff Zaltzman, chief medical officer of Trillium, a not-for-profit agency of the government of Ontario that plans, promotes, co-ordinates and supports organ and tissue transplants and donations across Ontario, will be available for questions.

Also on the program will be presentations by donors and recipients, as well as a screening of *My Second Bar Mitzvah*, about Frank Bialystok's liver transplant.

Rabbi Levy said he's participating in the evening because it is "an important topic that speaks to saving people's lives.

"[Donors] have a tremendous opportunity of saving lives through organ and tissue donation."

There's a myth, he said, that Jews can't donate their organs. "We want to clarify what Jewish tradition says. In general, we do not desecrate a dead body, but [organ donation] is an intervention that saves lives. It is for a positive purpose."

Ronda Pinsky, chair of NCJW's Gift of Life program, said that in the one year her organization's website has enabled people to sign up to become donors, 219 people have done so.

"We weren't sure, at first, how people would respond to having this link on our website, but it has been positive."

She said it's been four years since NCJW has partnered with Trillium.

"We felt that as a Jewish organization, we had to spread the word that 'yes you can' [donate organs]. Many Jews do not understand that donating an organ is the greatest mitzvah a Jew can perform," Pinsky said.

"We want to educate the community about organ and tissue transplants. About 75 people can be saved from one person's tissues, and about eight lives can be saved from one person's organs. Donor age does not matter."

IDF soldiers attend therapeutic retreat

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The soldiers were greeted at Toronto's Pearson International Airport last week.

A group of Israeli combat soldiers from Rescue Air Force 669, a medical evacuation and extraction unit that served together in the 2006 Lebanon War, arrived in Toronto last week for a therapeutic retreat co-ordinated by Peace of Mind (POM).

This is the seventh group since 2010 to be brought to Toronto by POM, a program funded by the Israel Center for the Treatment of Psychotrauma (ICTP) that helps discharged Israeli soldiers cope with trauma they may have suffered during their service.

The ICTP treats the estimated nine per cent of Israelis who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, which is three times the level of that in most western countries.

This group of soldiers, who rescued injured and dead soldiers on the battlefield, were hosted by Thornhill's Sephardic Kehila Centre.

"Many people ask why we bring them from Israel, here. It helps the therapy. They are disconnected from all the triggers, the pressures of school, of work," said Linoy Hazan, POM's Canadian co-ordinating director, explaining that two therapists from Israel accompanied the soldiers to Toronto.

Aviram Lazar, 31, who served as commander of the group, told *The CJN* at a fundraising bowling event on Oct. 9 that the program has helped him cope with issues he didn't even know he had.

"This week is the first time that someone really asked us... how do you think it influenced the rest of your life, the way you work, they way you are in relationships, and the way you look at yourself?" Lazar said.

"Most of us had no idea that we were really struggling with things from seven, eight or 10 years ago."

As a soldier in a rescue unit, he said he had to cope with constant tension and uncertainty about what the next day, or even hour, would bring.

"You could be in your room sleeping, or you could be in the office working on something and the next minute there is a siren and you're running to the helicopter and 15 minutes later, you find yourself in Gaza helping a group of soldiers rescue an injured soldier," Lazar said.

Lazar said he was surprised by how much he and his group benefited from the program and was touched by the warmth and generosity of Toronto's Jewish community, which has raised some $400,000 for the initiative since 2010.

"It's very heartwarming... In fact, it is one of the things that unite us. In the army, we weren't used to receiving help. We were used to giving help... Now these strangers are giving us help and we don't know why... We don't feel like we deserve it."

The program continues when the soldiers return home to Israel. They are assessed by their therapists and advised about whether they should continue with private therapy.

POM will be bringing in another group of Israeli soldiers, who will be hosted by Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, to Toronto on Nov. 10.

For more information about Peace of Mind, visit www.traumaweb.org.

UJA Federation announces nominees

CJN Staff

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has announced the nominees for its board of directors and individual representative council members.

Elections will be held during UJA Federation's annual meeting on Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m., at the Lipa Green Centre.

In accordance with its bylaws, the federation's governance consists of a council and a board of directors. The board of directors, the chair and the senior vice-chair will be elected by council members. No nominations can be made from the floor during the annual meeting. However, any member of the Jewish community may be placed in nomination by complying with the following bylaws:

In order to be elected or appointed and to continue as a council member, each individual must (a) be Jewish, reside in the Greater Toronto Area, and support the objects of the Corporation (b) have made a financial commitment to the United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto in respect of the most recent annual campaign and be in good standing with the United Jewish Appeal in respect of such commitment; and (b) shall not have refused to remove any barrier that is within his or her control that would prevent his or her spouse's religious re-marriage.

Each individual representative council member shall be elected at an election meeting by community individuals immediately preceding the annual meeting from among the qualified candidates duly nominated by the nominating committee or nominated by any seven community individuals, provided that in respect of nominations made by community individuals: (a) no community individuals may nominate more than three nominees for election as individual council member at any election meeting; (b) such nominations shall be in writing and accompanied by the written consent of the nominee; and (c) such nominations shall be delivered to the corporation at least 21 days before the election meeting which the election is to occur.

Nominated for chair of the board is Richard Venn and senior vice-chair of the Board is Morris Perlis. Nominees for the board of directors include, for a two-year term: Leslie Gales, Shel Geller, Leo Goldhar, Yael Karol, Jodie Kaufman Davis, Warren Kimel and Keith Ray; For a one-year term: Stephen Diamond, Lisa Draper, Craig Rimer, Lori Rosenthal and Honey Sherman, and continuing their two-year terms: Cecil Brauer, Michael Buckstein, Michael Diamond, David Dulberg, Paula Foster, Sarena Koschitzky, Bruce Leboff, Henry Morton, Wendy Posluns, Joel Reitman, Ariella Rohringer, Jason Rubinoff, Ralph Shedletsky, Fred Waks and Elizabeth Wolfe.

The following are candidates for two-year terms (2013-2015) as individual representative council members: Elena Aleinikov, Stephen Altbaum, Barbara Bank, Cecil Brauer, Morland Brown, Austin Beutel, Michael Buckstein, Samuel Cohen, Sharon Cohen, Stephen Cole, Richard Diamond, Stephen Diamond, Sheldon Disenhouse, Lisa Draper, Wendy Eisen, Ruth Ekstein, David Engel, Judy Engel, Michael Florence, Leslie Gales, Leo Goldhar, David Green, Robert Harlang, Alison Himel, Yael Karol, Warren Kimel, David Koschitzky, Sarena Koschitzky, Elyse Lackie, Bruce Leboff, Joseph Lebovic, David Mansell, Ira Marder, Steven Mayer, Henry Morton, Karen Morton, Robert Palter, David Peltz, Sarah Perlis, Felicia Posluns, Elan Pratzer, Keith Ray, Craig Rimer, Lionel Robins, Ariella Rohringer, Jeff Rosenthal, Lori Rosenthal, Ralph Shedletsky, Honey Sherman, Randy Shiff, Eileen Silver, Eric Slavens, David Spiro, Elaine Todres, Richard Venn, Dodi Weill, Alan Winer, Elizabeth Wolfe, and Henry Wolfond.

In addition to the individual council members listed, each community group of the federation shall be entitled to appoint two individuals as group council members. Any community group with a membership in good standing in excess of 100 people residing in the Greater Toronto Area shall be entitled to appoint one additional group council member. According to the bylaws of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, organizations and associations may apply to become a community group by submitting an application that confirms that it subscribes to the objects of the UJA Federation and promotes the United Jewish Appeal annual campaign. Applications for community group membership were solicited via mail in September 2013. All community groups had to be registered with UJA Federation by Oct. 4.

ISRAEL TENNIS C

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10th Annual Charity ProAm in memory of Harold Green ל"ז

On September 20, 21, 22 and 23, the **Israel Tennis Centers Foundation**, York Racquets Club and ProAm 2013 Chairman Stephen Miller hosted the ITC's **10th annual tennis ProAm** in support of Israeli children in need. With **MDC Partners** and Miles Nadal as title sponsors for the 3rd consecutive year, the 2013 ProAm featured Brad Gilbert, Jesse Levine, Dean Goldfine and the Israel Tennis Centers' own Program Director and current Israeli Davis Cup player Harel Levy, among other top local tennis professionals. Guests at the opening party enjoyed a special appearance by musical guests The Snakes. **Thanks to the generous support of all 2013 sponsors, participants, donors, and volunteers, this event has now raised over $1,000,000 for the children of the Israel.**

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Men's Sunday Tournament

Champions: Richard Pilosof / Harel Levy
Finalists: Zack Lister / Levi Bent-Lee
Consolation Champions: Jerry Wiseblott / Nick Brotman

Women's Tournament

Champions: Andrea Kraus / Matt Baccarani
Finalists: Varda Jourdan / Jibran Mohammadi
Consolation Champions: Risa Goldenberg-Wexler / Nick Brotman

Richard Pilosof, Harel Levy

Andrea Kraus, Matt Baccarani

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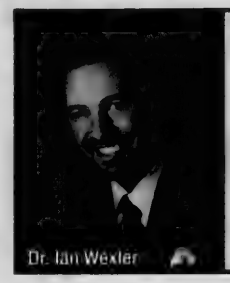

Dr. Ian Wexler

Remembering Dr. Ian Wexler ל' ז

In September, 2013, the Israel Tennis Centers Foundation announced the naming of a tennis court in memory of York Racquets member Dr. Ian Wexler, who passed away earlier this year. The Dr. Ian Wexler Memorial Court will be located at the Israel Tennis Center in Ramat Hasharon (just outside of Tel Aviv), Israel, home of Canada Stadium and host of Israel's Davis Cup matches.

Charitable donations to the Dr. Ian Wexler Memorial Court Fund may be made by contacting Gloria Truong at the Israel Tennis Centers Toronto office, at 416-444-5700, ext. 2714 or gtruong@israeltenniscenters.org.

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A Jewish way with words – Pt. 1

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

"My father never lived to see his dream come true of an all-Yiddish-speaking Canada." – David Steinberg **[http://bit.ly/jquote1]**

At least Mr. Steinberg gave us David – and many other Jewish parents gave us sons and daughters who have been able to help us crack a smile or make a serious point with only a handful of well-chosen words. Today, we look at Jewish sayings to ponder, amuse and share. (Bookmark these sites for the next time you have to deliver a speech and need just the right line.)

Let's start at the beginning – or should that be "In the Beginning?" The Torah, Mishnah, Talmud and their commentaries are full of words to the wise, and are as relevant as ever. The Jewish Education Network has brought together hundreds of them. A sampling:

• "Be pliable like a reed, not rigid like a cedar." – Eliezer Ben Simon: Taanit 20b

• "Drink plenty of water with your meals." – Berakot 40a

• "A Jew who sinned is still a Jew." – Abba ben Zabdai, Sanhedrin 44a

• "Love your wife as yourself - and honour her more." – Yebamoth 62b

• "Do not take drugs, because they will become habitual, your heart will request them and you will also waste money. Even as medicine, don't use drugs if another medicine is possible." – 12th century commentator Rabbi Samuel ben Meir **[http://bit.ly/jquote2]**

Jewish Quotations has culled more than 3,000 sayings from quite an interesting crowd. Where else could you read about the musings of the Chofetz Chaim ("It is no challenge to die like a Jew. The true challenge is to live like a Jew.") next to those of Woody Allen ("The good people sleep much better at night than the bad people. Of course, the bad people enjoy the waking hours much more.") You can search by topic (animals, anti-Semitism, books, etc.) or by keyword. More Jewish gems:

• "Days are scrolls, you may write on them what you wish." – Bahya ben Asher

• "A kind word is no substitute for a piece of herring or a bag of oats." – Sholom Aleichem

• "Nobody has ever drowned in his own sweat." – Anne Landers **[http://bit.ly/jquote3]**

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning ... if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." (Psalms 137:5) Jews have always striven for the right words to describe Jerusalem. Here are two of the best pages devoted to the holy city, one with traditional quotes:

• "Ten measures of beauty descended to the world; nine were taken by Jerusalem." - Kiddushin 49b **[http://bit.ly/jquote4]**

And another page has contemporary quotes:

• "Through a historical catastrophe – the destruction of Jerusalem by the emperor of Rome – I was born in one of the cities in the Diaspora. But I always deemed myself a child of Jerusalem, one who is in reality a native of Jerusalem." – S.Y. Agnon, upon receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature, 1966 **[http://bit.ly/jquote5]**

I started this column with David Steinberg's Canadian dream. Let's conclude with a Jewish quote from south of the border. "The time is at hand when the wearing of a prayer shawl and skullcap will not bar a man from the White House, unless, of course, the man is Jewish." – Jules Farber **[http://bit.ly/jquote6]**

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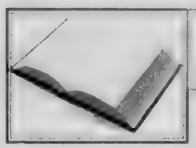
The raven and the dove

Rabbi David Cadoch



Rabbinic Reflections

We read in Parshat Noach of the destruction of life via a deluge caused by the corruption of humanity. At the end of 40 days of continuous rain, Noah sends out a raven to scout the land to determine if the floods have receded. The verse reads: "And he sent forth a raven, and it went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth." The raven flies off and returns each time to signal that there is no dry land.

Then Noah sends out a dove, and the wording changes. "And he sent forth a dove *from him*, to see if the waters were abated... But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him to the ark...; and he put forth his hand... and brought her in unto him into the ark."

The wording "*sent from him*" seems superfluous, but when we examine the rabbinic writings, light is shed on the relationship between the dove and humans. The dove symbolizes love and peace. It is now the symbol of the United Nations. This is one of the few species of birds who remain with their mate for life, a monogamous concept that's the foundation of marriage in our society when a couple build their home by Torah standards.

Furthermore, when the dove returns to signal the land's state, Noah reaches out his hand and brings the dove into the ark. This care and concern are what love and peace represent, and these holy concepts need to be present in promoting the ideals of peace and harmony.

Last year, my children and I witnessed first hand the manner in which a dove and its mate build their home. We have a tree next to our window. Prior to building its home, the female dove scouted the area with her mate from a telephone wire. They observed our family every day, and watched for intruders. At some point, they must have decided it was safe. Every day, the doves brought twigs and leaves to build their home. We watched the construction, and although it seemed fragile, we were surprised at its resilience during rain and wind.

Finally, the mother established herself in the nest and the father flew off to bring food. During the day, he watched from the telephone wire, and once evening arrived, he sat next to his mate and kept her warm and safe. This happened even after the chicks were born, until they were ready to leave the nest. Every year since, they have returned to the same nest. My children were awed at this demonstration of care and devotion.

Now we can understand why Noah chose the dove as his messenger. In his final flight to discover dry land, the raven disappeared, whereas the dove returned with a dry olive branch. Olive oil was later used to light the menorah, a guiding light for the people of Israel. It was also used install the Kohen Gadol into his holy mandate, and to anoint the kings of Israel.

The United Nations should re-examine the symbol behind them and be reminded of what the dove and the olive branch represent.

Rabbi David Cadoch is the spiritual leader for Shabbat and chagim at Beth Hakenneset HaRambam at the Donald Berman Maimonides Geriatric Hospital.

Why Israel's municipal elections matter

Yonatan Weinberg *Sybil Ottenstein*

From the Reut Institute

In a few short days, the State of Israel will be holding one of the country's most significant elections in recent years. Israelis are beginning to comprehend the fact that municipal elections, and not only highly publicized national elections, have a palpable impact on their quality of life.

Municipalities have a decidedly intertwined relationship with communal institutions such as schools, community centres, kindergartens, etc. These institutions have an enormous impact on our daily lives, affecting personal security, culture, education and various other aspects of "quality of life."

Developing communal institutions can bridge the gap between citizens and local government. As can be seen throughout Jewish history, communities are the critical building blocks of a resilient society and the platform best positioned to enhance the capacity of individuals and to address collective needs and goals.

Jewish Canadians, for instance, have effectively incorporated communal institutions into their daily lives, forming a web of institutions and organizations that enhance the quality of life for those within the community. Acting as mediators between the demands of citizens and the institutions of municipalities, communities are the most desirable level at which to facilitate dialogue between government and the public.

However, while the range and scale of their influence is vast, municipal elections still don't receive nearly enough attention within the Israeli public sphere. The underlying issue extends beyond elections. For the most part, municipalities have simply not been able to effectively connect with the public and demonstrate their relevance to people's everyday lives.

Today, Israel's communal institutions need a fundamental change in approach. The ability to catalyze this change depends on the persistence and dedication of a community's residents. Once citizens understand that they're stakeholders in their communities, they can begin to transform their communal institutions into vibrant and dynamic centres of communal life. As a result, community members can take a personal role in enhancing the resilience of their communities..

The role of community platforms in socio-economic development is central to the Reut Institute's work on what we call the "Urban Leapfrog" project. For the last 2-1/2 years, the institute has been working with the municipality of Safed, a city in northern Israel that faces significant socio-economic challenges, in order to create a vast and sustained improvement in residents' quality of life.

Our shared vision sees communal institutions as the epicentre of change. For example, one of Reut's projects in Safed unites the city's young adult centre with the women's organization Wepower Israel in order to create an intensive women's leadership course for community members. The course's participants have shown personal initiative, completing projects designed to respond to specific civic challenges in their community.

Creating a productive dialogue between citizens, communal institutions and municipalities enhances residents' human capital, providing them with a sense of ownership of the public sphere. This process will succeed if Israeli society adopts the same communal structures that are vibrant and thriving in the Jewish Diaspora.

The authors are analysts at the Reut Institute in Tel Aviv.

Breaking the silence

From the Bimah

Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

"We don't speak to each other." "We aren't on speaking terms." "She and I haven't spoken in nine years."

Long before I began working as a community rabbi, I was aware of the "we're not talking" malady, because friends and extended family suffered from it. The more I paid attention, the more commonplace I found this problem to be.

The irony is bitter that in our hyper-connected age, people in families still deliberately avoid contact with one another. Or perhaps it's not so surprising. Telephones, Skype, FaceTime, email, text and Twitter all serve to connect us when we want to connect, but they're no more than tools. So when we want to avoid using them to avoid contact with another person, they serve that function just as well.

Any number of causes underlie this phenomenon. It's sometimes triggered by a simple misunderstanding – a careless word, a comment taken the wrong way or a perceived slight. The Thanksgiving scene in the film *Avalon* comes to mind: "You cut the turkey? Without me?" But the roots lie deeper than that. Self-confidence issues are often at the forefront of these fragile relationships before the rupture happens. Other sources of animosity can also be the cause: finances, death or illness of someone close, envy, or love. One person may blame another for something that had little to do with them: "You caused Grandpa's heart attack!" "She was never the same after you moved away!" – and so on.

Other times, the lack of communication may be rooted in profound differences or issues – abusive or toxic relationships and radical lifestyle changes, for example.

Whatever the genesis of these estrangements, it's often difficult to recognize that life is short and fences can be mended. Sometimes, an extreme situation will tip the scales and bring about a reconciliation: a joyous event such as a wedding or birth, or on the other end of the spectrum, a death.

As layers of resentment and bitterness accrue over months, years or decades, "forgive and forget" seems like an inadequate strategy for repairing a damaged relationship. Yet sometimes it may not be necessary to work through all the problems and history of a troubled relationship. As an American politician from mid-century once said, "When all is said and done, we must forgive each other, redeem each other, and move on."

Someone must seize the high ground and take the first step to try to re-establish the connection. Once an inroad has been made, it might be that the most difficult thing to do is not to talk, but rather to listen. It may take some rehashing of old grudges, some revisits of slights from many years before, in order to heal the wounds. But it can happen, and I myself have been witness to a silence of 40 years broken and a relationship restored and renewed.

If you have a unique story of how a relationship of yours or of someone you know was restored after a period of silence and you'd like to share it, I'd like to listen. Please write me at joekanofsky@gmail.com.

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At the Annual General Meeting held September 24th, Lorie was introduced and remarked: "I'm excited to join this great organization. JVS has a proud history of serving the community and I'm humbled by the choice of the Board to be able to take the organization forward into the future."

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Iran cancels anti-Zionism conference

The Times of Israel

Iranian officials have reportedly ordered the cancellation of an annual anti-Zionism conference.

As part of an apparent effort to rebrand the Islamic Republic in post-Ahmadinejad times, the New Horizon Conference, scheduled to take place in November, was cancelled by the Foreign Ministry, reported the British daily *The Telegraph*.

Hassan Rouhani [*Wikimedia Commons*]

Hardliners in Iran blasted the decision, which they see as another concession on the part of the new government. Iran's recently elected president, Hassan Rouhani, has made a concerted effort to put a new face on the regime in Tehran. This after eight years of his Holocaust-denying predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Websites sympathetic to organizers of the conference displayed strings of angry comments, according to the British report: "Have our leaders given in so much to the world that are even afraid of a conference that might hurt Mr. [Barack]] Obama's feelings?" read one post. "The latest piece from our government's show of capitulation," read another.

In the United States and in Israel last week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been speaking repeatedly to U.S., European and even Farsi-language media outlets, warning of Iran's and Rouhani's duplicity regarding the nuclear issue, and urging the international community not to lift sanctions unless or until Iran is stripped of its "military nuclear" capabilities.

If sanctions on Iran are removed without ensuring a guaranteed end to uranium enrichment, Europe and the rest of the world will face hundreds of nuclear weapons in the hands of a "murderous" regime, Netanyahu said in a series of interviews with European media outlets last Thursday.

"When a murderous regime engages in soft diplomacy and uses calming words of peace, but nevertheless continues to acquire immense power — it must be stopped, immediately," Netanyahu said, according to quotes provided by the Prime Minister's Office.

"This is the central lesson of the 20th century. It's also the central lesson of North Korea. If [the Iranian regime] is not stopped immediately, there won't be just two bombs pointed toward you [the Europeans], but 200. Stop it now while you're in a strong position to do so," he exhorted.

The interviews were conducted with Germany's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and ARD TV, France's *Le Monde* and France 24, and the UK's *Financial Times* and Sky TV.

TimesofIsrael.com

Israeli Air Force sends warning to Iran

Israeli Air Force F-15 [*Flash90 photo*]

JTA

JERUSALEM — The Israeli Air Force held a long-range missions exercise and posted photos and a video of the drill in a move widely interpreted as a warning aimed at Iran.

The footage posted last Thursday on YouTube shows the aerial refueling of two warplanes, an F-15 and an F-16, from several angles, including from within the cockpit. The photos, which were posted along with the video on the Hebrew-language version of the Israel Air Force website, show three fighter jets accompanying a fueling plane at an unspecified location.

"'All options on the table' means also military options," the item on the website read, in what foreign and local media interpreted as a clear allusion to Israel's options in its efforts to prevent Iran from developing military nuclear capabilities. "The air force, the long arm of the Israel Defence Force, is tasked with carrying out that option if necessary."

Iran has denied that it is pursuing plans to develop military nuclear weapons.

According to *Haaretz*, Greece's air force also participated in the drill.

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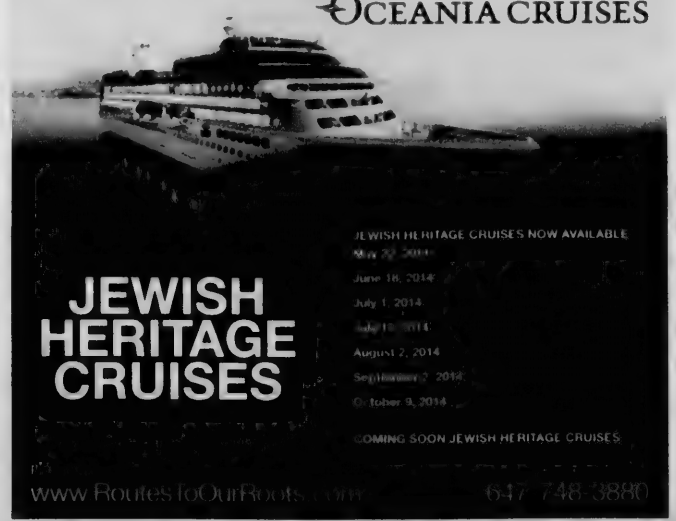

Circumcision ban dropped

JNS.org

The Council of Europe won't ban male ritual circumcision as it does female genital mutilation, the organization's Secretary-General Thorbjorn Jagland wrote in a letter to Israeli President Shimon Peres.

The letter came in response to Peres's appeal over the council's resolution against circumcision earlier this month. The council's Parliamentary Assembly called male ritual circumcision a "violation of the physical integrity of children," and voted in favor of the non-binding resolution, 78-13. Peres wrote to Jagland that male circumcision is a "fundamental element of our tradition and obligation as Jews."

Jagland wrote that female circumcision is considered gender-based violence.

"While our organization is of course fully committed to children's rights to physical integrity, nothing in the body of our legally binding standards would lead us to put on equal footing the issue of female genital mutilation and the circumcision of young boys for religious reasons," he wrote.

Correction

The article "Shas founder Rabbi Ovadia Yosef dies at 93" (Oct. 10) contained conflicting details about Rabbi Yosef's birthplace. He was born in Iraq and moved to Egypt as a very young boy. *The CJN* regrets the error.

Nobels could have been Israel's: HU president

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

Israelis shouldn't be surprised that their best and brightest are going abroad to win Nobel Prizes, says Menachem Ben-Sasson.

As president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Ben-Sasson has felt the pain of brain drain acutely: "For decades, the country has neglected to upgrade and expand research facilities and budgets that scientists need to get their work done. Our universities would love it if their graduates came back home to continue their work, but that requires investment," he told the *Times of Israel*.

Menachem Ben-Sasson *(Wikimedia Commons)*

On Wednesday, the Nobel Prize for chemistry was awarded to two U.S.-based professors who met at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot and are former Israelis: Arieh Warshel, born on a kibbutz and a professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles since the 1970s, and Michael Levitt, who was born in South Africa, immigrated to Israel in 1979 and taught at Weizmann between 1980 and 1987. They share the Nobel with Prof. Martin Kaplus, a Jew who fled Austria for the United States with his family in 1938, and whose daughter, Rebecca, is a family doctor in Jerusalem.

In what pundits called a prime example of the problem of brain drain – the large-scale emigration of scientists and other academics because they cannot find suitable positions in Israel – Warshel told Israeli interviewers that he had left the Weizmann Institute "because they wouldn't give me tenure." Levitt also felt professionally stymied.

In the 1980s, Warshel said, the issue of job security in inflation-ridden Israel was a very serious one, and he felt there was no choice but to seek a stable academic future abroad. (In response to Warshel's comments, the Weizmann Institute said in a statement that he would most certainly have advanced, had he remained).

Maybe he was right, Ben-Sasson said last week. "You can't generalize from an individual case, but the way things are, Israeli researchers feel they have no choice."

The way to get Nobel-quality researchers to do their work in Israel is to provide them with the resources they need, he said.

By "resources," Ben-Sasson does not necessarily mean higher salaries. "Many of our PhDs and scientists want to work in Israel and they don't care about the salary," he said. "What they do care about is having the tools and equipment they need to work, modern labs and a cluster of other scientists they can work with."

On Monday, the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies released a report decrying shortcomings in Israel's higher education system that have led to the brain drain problem.

The report determined that "Israel's academic brain drain to the United States is unparalleled, with 29 Israeli scholars in the U.S. for every 100 remaining at home" in 2008 (the most recent year for which information is available). The figures were well beyond those of "brain drain runner-up" Canada, which lost just 11.5 per cent of its researchers to the United States that same year.

Compared with statistics from five years earlier, the brain drain rate in most countries had fallen, but in Israel it rose.

What about all the highly touted recent investments in higher education?

"Absolutely there is money going to universities, but the question is what is being done with it? Much of it has gone to build classrooms, which of course you need," Ben-Sasson said. (There are currently 300,000 students in Israeli higher education programs, a per capita increase of 400 per cent since 1973.) "But what are they teaching? You need classrooms, but you need 10 times more investment for labs and equipment for scientists, and this is something the policymakers have forgotten about."

Government programs to recruit scientists who have gone abroad haven't changed things much. "Believe me, we know exactly which of our graduates and researchers went abroad and why," Ben-Sasson said. "This past year, Hebrew University announced 50 new academic positions, an unprecedented number. And for each position, we had as many as 25 applications," he said. "We could fill many more positions, but the resources are limited."

Could a country as small as Israel find positions for all these academics going abroad? Most definitely, Ben-Sasson claimed, even if they don't all become lecturers at Hebrew U. It's a matter of creativity, he said. "Scientists care about research, and they need the facilities to do that, but when it comes to employment you could have some variety – with some researchers working in industry or business. You could have, for example, a situation where a PhD is teaching in an advanced high school class. It's a matter of being wiser in how we use people."

Not all will want to stay. Many budding Israeli academics go abroad to do post-graduate studies, because of the paucity of doctoral programs here, and some will always find situations that fit them abroad. But the large majority want to come back to Israel, Ben-Sasson reasoned, adding that it's the state's responsibility to give them that option. "The only way to do that is invest in infrastructure, in equipment and in opportunities," he said. "Once we do that, they will come back.

"I'm happy that people of merit won the Nobel, and that they worked in Israel," he said. "Israeli education got recognition from people around the world for its quality. It says something about the power and positive side of academia in Israel."

TimesofIsrael.com

Jews share in top honours

JTA and JNS.org

Two Israeli scientists and one American Jewish scientist will share the Nobel Prize in chemistry, while Jews were also among the winners of Nobels for physics and medicine.

Arieh Warshel, a U.S. professor born and educated in Israel, and ex-Weizmann Institute professor Michael Levitt were among the winners of the 2014 Nobel Prize for chemistry, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced last week..

Warshel, 74, a distinguished professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Southern California, and Levitt, of Stanford University, were named Oct. 9 along with Martin Karplus of the University of Strasbourg in France and Harvard University.

Warshel received his bachelor's degree in chemistry from the Technion Institute in Haifa and his master's degree and doctorate in chemical physics from the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot. He joined the USC faculty in 1976.

Levitt, a native of Pretoria, South Africa, was a professor at the Weizmann Institute in the 1980s and reportedly took Israeli citizenship, the *Times of Israel* reported.

Karplus, a Vienna native, is the son of secular Jewish parents who were well respected in the Austrian capital. In 1938, he fled with his parents from the advance of the Nazis.

"The work of Karplus, Levitt and Warshel is groundbreaking in that they managed to make Newton's classical physics work side-by-side with the fundamentally different quantum physics," the Swedish academy said in a statement. "Previously, chemists had to choose to use either/or."

Also last week, Francois Englert, a Belgian Jewish professor at Tel Aviv University and a Holocaust survivor, shared the Nobel Prize in physics with Peter Higgs of Britain. Jewish Americans James Rothman of Yale University and Randy Schekman of the University of California, Berkeley, joined German-born researcher Thomas Suedhof of Stanford University in winning the Nobel Prize in medicine.

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Reason to question validity of Diaspora Jews weighing in

Continued from page 7

is one thing, but weighing in on specific security and existential governance matters for which Diaspora Jews incur no personal consequences is quite another.

Veteran Middle East analyst Jim Lederman raised a vitally important point that goes beyond Rabbi Wolpe's observation. As Lederman explained: "All too often, because Diaspora Jews, by definition, do not participate in the daily internal Israeli debate, they do not even know what questions to ask that affect the lives of Israelis. For instance, "How are we supposed to rule ourselves?" is a question Diaspora Jews do not take part in... [and] in fact don't even know to ask.

"But let's assume theoretically that Diaspora Jewry could have a say in Israeli policy-making. If so, then they must participate in the entire daily internal Israeli political debate – not just one aspect of it. Not only that, they would have to do it in a way where they would have the same stakes and suffer the same penalties. Would they be willing, for example, to pay twice as much for gasoline, 170 per cent more for a car or 65 per cent more on some dairy products every day? And would they then be willing to turn all that extra money over to the treasury with no say in how it's spent – just as the Israeli public does? Or would they be willing to re-enact the most painful drama in the entire Torah – the Akedah – as many Israeli parents do every two weeks when they drop their child off at the bus, taking the child back to the army? The moment they kiss each other goodbye the parent knows, as Abraham did, that they have entrusted their child in an act of faith to a wholly unknown force whose real interest in the child and his or her safety is totally unknown."

Perhaps we in the Diaspora do not understand nor fully appreciate the uncertainty that is an inherent part of daily life in Israel. So, on life-and-death matters affecting Israelis directly, there is reason to question the validity of Diaspora Jews' "weighing in."

David Koschitzky is chair of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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All Jews deserve seat at the table and their voices heard

Continued from page 7

In that case, former prime minister Ariel Sharon was "anti- Zionist" when he told a meeting of stunned Likud leaders, – the current Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu among them – in May 2003, "You want to remain in Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah and Bethlehem? The idea that it is possible to continue keeping 3.5 million Palestinians under occupation – yes, it is occupation, you might not like the word, but what is happening is occupation – is bad for Israel and bad for the Palestinians, and bad for the Israeli economy."

For that matter, Tzipi Livni, the current Israeli justice minister (in charge of relations with the Palestinian Authority), must be labelled "anti-Zionist" because she addressed Netanyahu in the Knesset with these words: "You have turned Israel into a weak, fearful state which is losing its friends in the world, which defies leaders of the free world, the source of its strength. Perhaps you have led Israel to this position out of weakness, due to your inability to make a decision and take a stand. You refuse to pay a political price for the peace process, [and] since your main interest is the coalition, you will not be able to make the right decisions."

Governments can be wrong and policies can be ill-advised, and when they are, we must say so and be heard. Actions by the Israeli government have an impact on Jews in the Diaspora as we experience anti-Semitism, boycotts and sanctions. Unless we have a voice, we cannot prevent or challenge misguided policies that have a negative impact on both Israelis and Diaspora Jews.

We deserve to have a seat at the table to ensure that all voices are heard and that Jewish organizations are truly representative of the entire Jewish Diaspora. It's in the interest of Israel's future and our future. Those of us with other points of view to those espoused by so-called mainstream Jewish organizations should work together to find a way to raise the voices of progressive Zionists in Canada.

Arie Raif is an Israeli political activist and former Israeli diplomat to Canada. He's currently vice-chairman and CEO of the Canadian Peres Center For Peace and a member of JSpace Canada.

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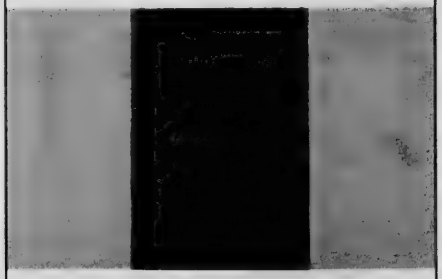

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Kosher chicken may be less safe to eat

JTA

NEW YORK — Kosher chicken might be less safe to consume than conventional poultry, a new study found.

Researchers with Northern Arizona State University examined the occurrence of antibiotic-resistant E. coli on four types of raw chicken: conventional, organic, kosher and those raised without antibiotics (RWA), all purchased throughout the New York area from April 2012 to June 2012. The study found kosher chicken, regardless of brand, had the highest frequency of antibiotic-resistant E. coli – nearly twice the amount in conventional products. It also found no difference in levels of antibiotic resistance between strains found on organic and conventional chicken.

The study screened for all types of E. coli strains, most of which are not harmful to humans, according to *Food Safety News*. The findings go against widespread consumer perception that kosher food is healthier and cleaner.

The reasons for the greater levels in kosher poultry than non-kosher are not clear. The authors wrote that their research "suggests that use of antibiotics in the kosher production chain is common and that it may be more intensive than use of antibiotics among conventional, organic or RWA practices."

The article suggested more studies are needed to test whether antibiotic resistance among kosher products is consistently higher than in other categories. The study was published on the F1000 Research website, which calls itself the first "open science journal for life scientists."

U.S. reduces military aid to Egypt

JTA

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is suspending delivery of some "large scale military systems" to Egypt, but will maintain assistance that will help secure its border with Israel.

"The United States continues to support a democratic transition and oppose violence as a means of resolving differences within Egypt," said a statement released Oct. 9 by Jen Psaki, a U.S. State Department spokeswoman.

It added that the United States would "hold the delivery of certain large-scale military systems and cash assistance to the government pending credible progress toward an inclusive, democratically elected civilian government through free and fair elections."

The Obama administration has resisted pressure to cut aid to Egypt from some lawmakers and human rights groups since July, when a military coup ousted the elected Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated president, Mohammed Morsi.

It's against U.S. law to continue foreign aid following military coups, and Obama administration officials have been at pains not to use that word.

In recent weeks, however, as the Egyptian military has stepped up its crackdown on Brotherhood-affiliated opponents of the regime, the Obama administration has signalled it would reconsider aid.

Psaki in her statement did not say how much of the $1.5 billion in annual assistance – $1.3 billion of it in defence aid – would be cut, but she outlined areas where assistance would continue, suggesting that at least some of the defence aid would be diverted to civil society programs.

"The United States will work with the interim Egyptian government and Congress to continue to provide support that directly benefits the Egyptian people in areas like health, education, and private sector development," she said.

Defence assistance would continue in areas close to Israel's border, according to Psaki's outline.

"We will continue assistance to help secure Egypt's borders, counter terrorism and proliferation, and ensure security in the Sinai," she said. "We will continue to provide parts for U.S.-origin military equipment as well as military training and education."

Israeli officials had earlier last week urged continued western support for Egypt's military ruler, Gen. Abdel al-Sisi, seeing him as the best guarantor of the 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

Egypt's military rulers called the U.S. freeze on some forms of military assistance "errant in both substance and timing."

"The decision raises serious questions regarding the United States' readiness to provide constant strategic support for Egyptian economic and security programs," said a Foreign Ministry statement sent to reporters last Thursday by the Egyptian embassy in Washington.

Egypt's Foreign Ministry said the decision was "errant in both substance and timing, despite the fact that the decision is of a temporary nature and does not terminate or reduce the aid programs and that it was accompanied by assurances that the United States will continue to support the interim government in Egypt."

The statement said that Egypt remained "keen to maintain its good relations with the United States" but added that its internal affairs and security decisions would be taken in an "independent manner."

TEVA RESTRUCTURES: A worker leaves the Israeli pharmaceutical company Teva Industries in Jerusalem on Oct. 11. Teva announced last week that it's slashing its global workforce by 10 per cent – some 5,000 workers, including 800 in Israel – in an effort to make the company more efficient. *(Flash90 photo)*

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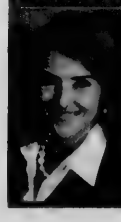

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Block remembered as a pillar in London

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Up until she was 66, Laya Block would cook Shabbat dinner every week for 30 or 40 hungry students.

She'd start on Thursday and when she was done – in her own kitchen, mind you – she'd pack up the chickens, chicken soup, kugels and salads and shlep them to the Chabad House in London, Ont., where she and her husband, Irving, a professor of philosophy at the University of Western Ontario, hosted the dinners.

Block's meals were famous among Jewish youths studying in London, and many would ask for the recipe for her signature dish – the homemade pareve vanilla ice cream that ended the meals, recalled Laya's daughter, Bassie Gurkow.

Block died recently at age 79 after being stricken with a brain tumour. Laya, also known as Lillian and Lilly, was laid to rest in New York, in the same cemetery as her parents and the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Mendel Schneerson.

A memorial service in her honour will be held in London's Jewish Community Centre, 536 Huron Street, on Sunday Oct. 20, at 3 p.m.

Gurkow vividly recalls the Shabbat dinners. You could count on a core of 10 to 15 regulars to attend, along with other students who'd come occasionally or even just once. There was never any need to publicize the gathering. News spread by word of mouth.

Her mother was meticulous in setting the stage for the dinners

"She was very dignified and gracious. When she set a Shabbat table, it was beautifully done," Gurkow recalled.

Back in the 1970s, Manuel Prutschi, who later served as a senior official with Canadian Jewish Congress, was one of the students who took part in the Shabbat dinners hosted by Laya and Irving.

"I don't think there was a student who went to Western who didn't go there," Prutschi said. "Shabbat there was like you were entering another dimension. It was something marvellous.

"They touched hundreds, thousands of students and cultivated in them Jewish identity and values.

"Some became religious, but all of them were touched by Lilly and her husband and they will always remember that."

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Laya and Irving moved to London in 1961 after consulting with Rabbi Schneerson.

Her father had other options, but "the rebbe directed them to choose this position," Gurkow said.

The Shabbat meals started small, as

Laya Block

the family invited others to join them. "It just grew from there," she recalled.

When her older siblings approached nursery school age, her mother, who held a master's degree in education, opened Gan Gani Pre-School to accommodate them and others in London searching for a Jewish option.

The school is still in operation under Gurkow's supervision, though Laya taught there until she was 67. Gurkow estimates that 600 students have passed through the school's doors in its 50 years of existence.

When her brothers and sisters – she's from a family of eight – got older, her mom opened an elementary day school, the London Community Hebrew Day School. It's still in operation, though the family has no formal connection to it anymore.

Laya was also responsible for opening a mikvah, as well as organizing an annual lecture series that brought together women from all religious streams of Judaism, as well as members of Hadassah, for a gourmet dinner and an evening of discussion.

Rabbi Mordechai Silberberg, who heads Chabad House at Western, called the Blocks "leaders in the community."

Laya "came from an illustrious Chabad family... She was very impressive. Her persona was very dignified, very strong. She felt confident She had leadership skills and character. She was extremely responsible, organized and dignified."

Gurkow said the family is asking anyone with personal reminiscences of Laya to send them to the following email address: layablockmemories@gmail.com.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Dworkin, Marcia	Sept. 24/13	257 Winding Lane
Brand, Meleh	Sept. 25/13	Private
Sokoloff, Anita	Sept. 26/13	Private
Rabinovich, Simon	Sept. 26/13	4455 Bathurst St
Jakabb, Eric	Sept. 27/13	
Barak, Lily Sylvia	Sept. 27/13	755 Steeles Ave. W
Rudler, Sara	Sept. 28/13	4455 Bathurst St
Abramovitz, Seymour	Sept. 28/13	5960 Bathurst St
Greening, Murray	Sept. 28/13	Private
Kotlyar, Liusya	Sept. 28/13	Private
Levit, Blyuma	Sept.28/13	5935 Bathurst St
Nosov, Jack Milton	Oct. 1/13	Private
Bortnick, Louis	Sept. 30/13	80 Antibes Dr
Levitt, Sol Harold	Oct. 1/13	55 Ameer Ave
Nosov, Jack Milton	Oct. 1/13	Private
Budlovsky, Michael	Oct. 2/13	10 Boldmere Cres
Goldinov, Daniel	Oct. 1/13	24 Wildwood Ave
Cherry, Ethel	Oct. 1/13	2 Neptune Dr
Disenhouse, Martin	Oct. 3/13	7801 Bathurst St
Isenberg, Sarah	Oct. 3/13	Private
Kershen, Sam	Oct. 3/13	16 Robinwood Trail
Botbol, Natalio	Oct. 4/13	62 Coghill Dr
Wolkowicz, Margarita	Oct. 4/13	1680 Ellesmere Rd
Freller, Robert	Oct. 3/13	7 Townsgate Dr

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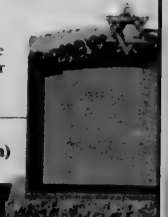

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Charles Kadin	Sep 23/13	20 Barkebrook Pl.
Genia Tushinski	Sep 26/13	90 Fisherville Rd
Ethel Wasserman	Sep 26/13	9 Geddes Crt.
Sylvia Marsch	Sep25/13	309 MajorMackenzie Dr.E
Ann Levitt	Sep 26/13	1904-625 Avenue Rd
Marty Gold	Sep 24/13	54 Lisa Cres.
Mendel Greenberg	Sep 25/13	3560 Bathurst St.
Wally Kliaman	Sep 26/13	31 Gypsy Roseway
Austin M. Cooper	Sep 24/13	33 Harbour Square
Maxwell Leibow	Sep 27/13	77 Dunfield Ave.
Phil Hollend	Sep 29/13	5444 Yonge St.
Sophie Dwosh	Sep 29/13	347 Cortleigh Blvd.
David Danon	Sep 27/13	82 Combe Ave.
Abram Teitel	Sep 28/13	3560 Bathurst St.
Hy Burstein	Sep 29/13	3600 Yonge St.
Murray Caplan	Sep 30/13	4350 Bathurst St.
Zeev Greenberg	Sep 30/13	147 Mossgrove Trl.
Rose Katz	Sep 29/13	33 Glenayr Rd
Albert Lerech	Oct 2/13	21 Mayfair Ave.
Benny Stark	Oct 4/13	2600 Bathurst St.
Fela Magnuszewski	Oct 2/13	28 Wasdale Cres.
Helen Burshtein	Oct 4/13	88 Promenade Cir.

HEBREW BASIC

Mortimer Bernstein	Sep 28/13	205 Cummer Ave.
Beatrice Ogden	Sep 29/13	1035 Eglinton Ave. W.
Geza Bogler	Oct 1/13	11 Townsgate Dr.

Watch company finds new customer in Israel

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

On Oct. 27, the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) will hold its annual marathon in and around Arlington Va. More than 30,000 runners will take part – military and non-military – but only one, the 1775th marine to cross the finish line, will receive a special prize, a Marathon watch.

The Marine Corps, which was founded in 1775, is already quite familiar with watches from the Toronto-area company. Its soldiers have been issued with timepieces by Marathon Watch for years, but it's not the only armed force or police tactical unit to employ the company's well-built watches.

Marathon has been a supplier to the RCMP, and the Toronto Police Service's emergency task force is also a customer. In the United States, the Department of Homeland Security equips its personnel with Marathon watches. A "tactical distribution company," which supplies police and paramilitary forces with vests, boots, tents and other paraphernalia, acts as a middleman, supplying Marathon watches to customers around the world.

Mitchell Wein

Recently, the elite Israeli special forces unit, Duvduvan, signed on to acquire watches by Marathon.

At the family-run company's Richmond Hill offices, Mitchell Wein won't say how many watches the Israeli commando unit acquired – that information is classified – but he noted that the first time ever, Duvduvan granted a private company permission to use its logo in its watches.

The thick, heavy "diver's watch" chosen by Duvduvan has "IDF SF" engraved on the side and the unit's paratrooper wings logo on the watch face.

"They are so happy with it that it's the first time ever that the Israel Defence Forces' Duvduvan unit granted a licensing agreement," said Wein, the fourth generation in his family to work in the watch business.

Duvduvan, which means "cherry," is part of the Israeli paratroop brigade and is a highly sought-after unit that conducts risky undercover operations in enemy territory.

Like all the timepieces the company supplies to military customers, the watch sold to Duvduvan meets rigid specifications that far exceeds anything a civilian might require.

The diver's watch acquired by Duvduvan is good to a depth of 300 metres. Like other military-grade watches, they're tested for "very high specifications," Wein explained. They must pass a drop test, a vibration test, a shock test and meet other criteria to ensure the hands are always aligned and that the wearer can tell the time in all kinds of conditions.

Altogether, Marathon offers a collection of 12 to 15 different watches, along with a number of variations for each model.

"Our prices go from $150 all the way to $3,600," said Wein.

At the top end of the scale you'll find the "Chronograph Pilot."

"It's a special, dual movement watch with normal timing that can also be used as a stopwatch," Wein said.

Marathon also sells relatively simple mechanical watches, worn by everyday soldiers, as well as self-winding timepieces and a pilot's watch called the Military Navigator. With an adjustable outer ring, it gives accurate time for two time zones and has a special lens that remains flexible at altitude under extreme changes of pressure, Wein said.

Though the company is based in Richmond Hill and Wein is personally responsible for the watches' design and appearance, the timepieces themselves are engineered and assembled in the small Swiss city of La Chaux-de-Fonds.

The city is a hub of watch-making companies employing talented individuals. Given the tolerances demanded, the unique requirements and the made-to-order mechanisms, they're all hand crafted by Swiss watchmakers, Wein said.

The family has been connected to European watch-making for generations, explained Wein. Weinsturm Watch began business in 1904, later changing its name to Wein Brothers.

Even before the Russian Revolution, the family sold watches from Poland all the way to the Pacific Ocean, said Leon Wein, Mitchell's father. Part of the family also had a big importing business in the United States. In 1939, Mitchell's grandfather, Morris, founded Marathon Watch in Montreal. During World War II, the company supplied timing instruments to Allied Forces.

Over the years, Marathon expanded its line of watches and added other timepieces. The company benefited from a big order from the U.S. Army during the first Persian Gulf War in 1990-91.

"We bid on it and got the order," Leon said. "A 60,000 order changed to 120,000 watches in five minutes," he added. To satisfy the demand, the company employed extra watchmakers and at their peak, they were turning out 5,000 watches a week.

After that "we became more recognized as a brand name," Mitchell said.

As for the name, "Marathon," that was an idea hatched by Morris and Mitchell's uncle, Myer. They saw it as describing watches that were "best in the long run," Mitchell said.

Looks like the U.S. Marine Corps agrees.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP: NCSY and the Jewish Business Network (JBN) held its opening program recently at the home of entrepreneur and philanthropist David Cynamon, left. He's seen here with Or Gal, 17, a student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy and a head of operations for JBN Executives for Teens. JBN was created in 2009 by NCSY alumni and in 2010 it launched a high school program. Members meet weekly to develop social action projects and hear from corporate leaders. The goal of JBN is to inspire the next generation of Jewish business leaders to connect to Jewish values. "It was inspiring and a privilege to host and meet with these young men who will one day be the future leaders of our community," Cynamon said.

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FINANCIAL POST ARTICLE • AUGUST 29 • 2013

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This Great Escape: The Case of Michael Paryla
Andrew Steinmetz
Biblioasis

Nancy Wigston
Special to The CJN

Good news for fans of Andrew Steinmetz's award-winning *Eva's Threepenny Theatre* (2009 City of Ottawa Book Award winner, finalist for the 2009 Rogers' Writer's Trust Fiction Prize). His new book, which is moving, funny, dazzling and inventive, continues his Great-Aunt Eva's family saga. Nominated for the Hilary Weston Writer's Trust Prize for Nonfiction, this one's already a winner.

This Great Escape follows the trail of Michael Paryla, a mystery cousin found dead at age 32, in Beatles-era Hamburg. Once again, Steinmetz ventures into the Hansel-and-Gretel forest where his Mischling relatives dwelt. Michael was Eva's son.

The family was theatrical: Karl, Michael's absent father, was a well-known stage presence; his mother toured in a 1928 production of Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*. Her Jewish roots drove Eva and her husband from Nazi Germany in 1933, and she gave birth to Michael in Vienna. At humiliating cost, Eva bought the family's escape to Switzerland. Eva and Michael – he was 24 – later emigrated from a displaced persons camp to Canada.

"I knew two things about Michael growing up," Steinmetz says. "I knew he had been in the movie *The Great Escape*. I also knew he had died of an overdose." In the 1963 John Sturges hit (best remembered for Steve McQueen's motorbike scenes), Michael Paryla appears on screen for 57 seconds, "watched by millions yet completely unknown, eclipsed by Hollywood stars... He was a refugee from Nazi Germany, partly Jewish and the son of one of Austria's most celebrated left-wing actors, playing a Gestapo agent, a role reprised on thousands of televisions."

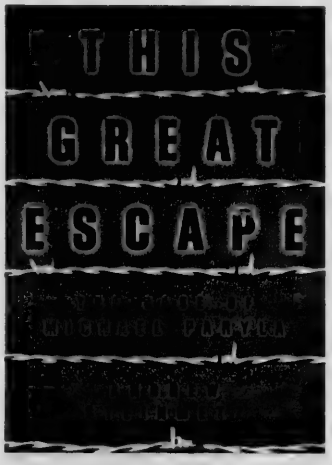
In the film, Michael moves along the train carrying escapees from Goering's Stalag Luft III, checking the papers of actors Richard Attenborough and David McCallum. (James Garner and Donald Pleasance jump off at his approach.) Michael does not appear in the film credits; he was a last-minute substitution.

"Spellbound" at first by his cousin's "fedora and trench coat" stereotype, Steinmetz later changes his mind. "I chide him, perhaps, for not feeling enough, for not being affected nearly enough by the past," he says now. "That's probably unfair of me." Following his cousin's trail to Germany (Michael left Canada to work as an actor in Germany), Steinmetz bumps into history everywhere he looks.

As Steinmetz pursues his elusive subject, he makes us aware of another Michael, one man playing another man's part. His clothes don't quite fit. The sleeves are too short. It's maddening. Obsessively watching and re-watching the film, Steinmetz brings us tantalizingly close to this man, discovered dead and alone after missing a 1967 curtain call. Suicide? Accident? Murder? As a detective, Steinmetz is astoundingly thorough.

What's remarkable is the growing connection between these cousins – even if only one can feel it. Steinmetz's long inability to create his signature – a sign of an "identity disorder" – is beautifully, honestly rendered.

Similarly, "if I look at his life," he says, "Michael was always forced to hide a part of himself. In 1935 Austria, it was his Jewishness; in wartime Switzerland, it was his immigrant status. In postwar Canada, it was his German roots. No wonder he became an actor."

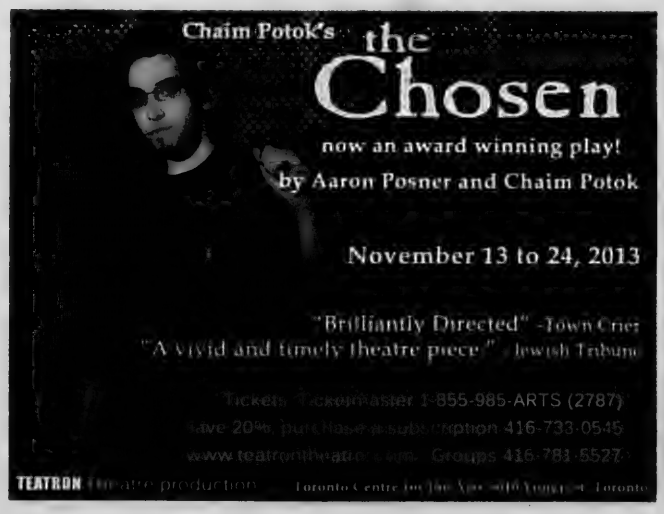


The unstoppable Steinmetz takes German trains, reproduces diaries and letters, interviews relatives and film archivists, presents *The Great Escape* script and explains the truth that inspired it. He takes acting lessons, meets stern Germans and kind Germans, questions foreigners who feel unwelcome there but who welcome this curious Canadian. A medical librarian, he examines the history of often-lethal barbiturates. Google Translate hilariously delivers current German opinion on the Sturges movie: "Class film, shot in the never get bored."

Most movingly, perhaps, he conducts oral histories with friends of "Mike," the "blonde James Dean," whom they knew in Sault Ste. Marie.

"I found their testimony so poignant and so moving," Steinmetz reflects. "There was something about their sincerity, about the dignity and respect that they gave their words, a fragility and strength to their witness. And I thought to myself, this really has nothing to do with Michael [specifically]; what I feel and hear in their voices has everything to do with the human condition, which is extraordinary."

We end the book with similar certainty that Michael Paryla – actor, son, stateless soul, individual and symbol of his times – whatever the exact cause and nature of his final escape, was, in every sense, extraordinary, fully deserving of this long-delayed spotlight.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HEALING THE WORLD: The Hamilton Public Library hosted the photo exhibition *Israel-Helping to Heal the World* from Oct. 1 to 15. It featured several pictures of the work done by IsraAID, the Israeli non-governmental organization that provides emergency relief to areas in the world struck by natural disasters, and pictures from Save a Child's Heart that showed children from Gaza, the West Bank and various Arab and Muslim nations who received free cardiac surgery in Israel. The exhibit was organized by UJA Federation of Hamilton's public relations committee with the support of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. Pictured at the opening, from right, are *Hamilton Spectator* editor-in-chief Paul Berton, PR committee chair Lorne Pinkelstein, CIJA vice-president Judy Zelikovitz and Irit Stopper, deputy consul general of Israel in Toronto.

Singer's latest CD a semi-autobiographical grouping

Marvin Glassman
Special to The CJN

Toronto singer/songwriter Donna Greenberg has made up for lost time since recording her first CD, *Stranger*, at age 50.

Since Greenberg recorded it in 2009, she has received so much praise for both the CD and her live performances that she has recorded three more CDs over the past four years.

Greenberg will showcase music from her four CDs, performing with her pianist and arranger, Jordan Klapman, in A Harvest Of Song concert Oct. 17 at Musideum.

Prior to recording *Stranger*, Greenberg excelled as a ballet dancer, choreographer and instructor with her company, Ballet Espressivo, which she founded in 2003. She still continues to teach adult ballet classes through her company.

"I always loved to sing and write music, but also loved the world of dance and have no regrets for beginning my music career later in life. I felt committed to realize my dream of recording my songs, proving that it is never too late to meet your goal", Greenberg said.

Although not signed with a major record label, Greenberg has hit the top sales charts as an independent artist in Canada. Her recording of *Stranger* has received airplay internationally on radio and been promoted on her YouTube channel.

Donna Greenberg

Greenberg is known for her rich voice, singing jazz standards as well as her own songs of dramatic ballads that speak of love, and can sing in English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Her latest CD, *Burnt... and Toasted*, is a semi-autobiographical grouping of 12 songs that was staged as a one-woman musical cabaret show in July at the Toronto Fringe Festival. Many of the songs were based on a romantic relationship that she described in song as a relationship of abuse, betrayal and lack of trust.

"I don't want to talk about the relationship, except to say that I have emerged as a strong person and have deep, mature lyrics to share with the audience. I tell the story of a woman, in character, not really me, who emerged from her pain as a stronger person fulfilling her dreams."

"In *Burnt*, she at first was singing in the third person," Klapman said, "but I worked with Donna to let her sing her heart out, and she connected immediately with the audience. I admire Donna for her courage to share her pain and journey with the audience.

"Donna's strength of projecting her voice with her emotional songs makes her an exciting performer," added Klapman, who has been Greenberg's music director and arranger since 2009.

Born and raised in Toronto, Greenberg developed her love of music from her parents' love of the Great American Songbook composers such as George Gershwin, Cole Porter and Richard Rogers. She studied English literature at the University of Toronto and received further training in music after graduating. While on a summer break, Greenberg toured Israel and worked on a kibbutz.

After working in the Toronto library system for 11 years, she founded her dance company and excelled, not only in performing ballet and choreographing dance, but also in creating short films on the ballet.

One of her films, *I Can't Go On*, is dedicated to her grandfather, who was a Holocaust survivor.

"The film, told totally through dance and music without the spoken word, is set in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943. The two dancers portray Jewish resistance fighters who battled the Nazis against the odds of survival. I was proud not only to choreograph the dance, but to produce and direct the film as well."

Singer/songwriter Donna Greenberg performs in concert in A Harvest Of Song, with pianist Jordan Klapman, Oct. 17, 8 p.m., at Musideum, 401 Richmond St. W., in Toronto. Tickets are $20. For tickets, call 416-599-7323 or go to www.donnagreenberg.com.

How to start a dialogue through film

Rita Poliakov
Special to The CJN

Therese Shechter wasn't a virgin when she got married. And, at 47, she wasn't about to don a white dress, either.

"I remember thinking that I don't know why I would want to wear a dress that erases my sexual history," said Shechter, a documentary filmmaker releasing her latest film, *How to Lose Your Virginity*. "Because that's what it's meant to do. I thought that was a pretty good thing I was bringing to my marriage."

Shechter spent five years working on the film, which, far from a how-to video, explores the idea of virginity and its role in controlling female sexuality.

"I'm really interested in the idea of how we created our own identities as women, as opposed to how the society around us tried to tell us who we are," Shechter said. "I think one way that happens is through our sex lives."

How to Lose Your Virginity explores that hypothesis using humour and personal experiences. The film starts with the story of how Shechter lost her virginity.

"At the time I thought I was the oldest living virgin at 23. I really believed I had to find the perfect person, because whoever this person was, as soon as we had sex, I would become so deeply connected to them," she said. "By the time I hit 23, I thought OK, enough. I need to get this over with. I ended up having sex with the guy I was dating. It was incredibly uneventful.

"I was really pissed off. I thought, 'This is what all the fuss was about?' I was really mad I was sold this idea that having intercourse for the first time would change me forever."

Shechter, who grew up in Toronto and now lives in New York, raised $50,000 for the film through two Kickstarter campaigns. For the filmmaker, the successful campaigns proved there was a need for a film like *How to Lose Your Virginity*.

"I would hear people saying, 'It's about time we start talking about this stuff. It's about time we start being more honest about our sex lives,'" she said.

Even so, few people were willing to talk about the issue on camera.

"People really don't want to be identified when talking about their sex lives. We can't talk honestly about sex. It's really embarrassing and awkward. So I'm really grateful to the people who spoke on camera," she said.

The film includes people from all walks of life – from those who abstain from sex to those in the porn industry.

While the film has yet to be screened in Canada – its Canadian premier will take place Oct.25 at the St. John's International Women's Film Festival – it's currently showing in Israel.

"The organizations I'm working with [in Israel] are really excited about it. We're talking about a secular audience, unfortunately, because obviously a religious audience is going to have strict ideas about what constitutes [virginity]," she said, adding that Israel is a much more open society than North America.

"I think young people are a lot more sexual in Israel [in the secular community]."

Therese Shechter tries on "the big white dress."

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

JUDGES & LAWYERS ARGUE SHYLOCK APPEAL ON YOUTUBE

The Stratford Festival recently convened a panel of distinguished legal luminaries to hear an appeal from Shakespeare's famous Jewish character, Shylock. Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin led the panel, which included retired Supreme Court judge Ian Binnie and University of Toronto law dean Mayo Moran, as well as lawyers Earl Cherniak, Patricia Jackson, Sheila Block and Alan Lenczner. The Oct. 5 proceeding was recorded and posted on YouTube under the title Shylock Appeals, Stratford Festival.

• • •

Literary Events

• Toronto-born **Marianne Langner Zeitlin** reads from her new novel *Motherless Child*, which is set partly in Toronto, at Indigo Books, Bay and Bloor, Wednesday Oct. 16, 7 p.m.

• **Gerald Tulchinsky**, history professor at Queen's University and author of the recent *J.B. Salsberg: A Life of Commitment*, will be on hand at the launch. Art-Square Gallery, 334 Dundas St. W., Thursday Oct. 17, 7 p.m.

• The Koffler Centre is hosting a visit to Toronto by first-time Israeli novelist **Shani Boianjiu**, whose book, *The People of Forever Are Not Afraid*, follows a group of young women coming of age in the Israeli military. Boianjiu is being interviewed by award-winning writer **David Bezmozgis** at the International Festival of Authors, Lakeside Terrace, Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queen's Quay W. $18, $15. Sunday Oct. 27, 1 p.m.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Watch for the premiere screening of *GrandParenting*, a documentary by filmmaker **Karen Shopsowitz** on TVO, Wednesday Oct. 16, 9 p.m.

• Chilliwack performs a concert to raise funds for Mazon Canada. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St. Tuesday Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. Floor tickets $90 includes $30 tax receipt. **Rabbi Gary Zweig**, 647-294-6305, gszweig@gmailcom. Richmond Hill box office, 905-787-8811.

• Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center presents a premiere screening of *The Prime Ministers*, a film starring the voices of **Sandra Bullock**, **Michael Douglas** and **Leonard Nimoy**, based on the book by **Yehuda Avner**. Eglinton Grand Theatre, Oct. 30, 7 p.m. For sponsorship and ticket information contact npolyak@fswc.ca or 416-864-9735, ext. 40.

• Israeli-born cellist **Matt Maimovitz** joins the Ontario Philharmonic Orchestra and maestro **Marco Parisotto** to perform masterworks by Jewish composers, **Schelomo** (*Hebraic Rhapsody*) by **Ernest Bloch**, and **Gustav Mahler**'s *Titan Symphony (No. 1 in D)*. Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Tuesday Nov. 5, 8 p.m. $40. 416-922-3714, ext. 103.

• Music on Canvas – French Music for an Autumn Afternoon is a concert featuring pianist **Maria Dolnycky** and violinist **Zachary Ebin** playing works by Marias, Mozart, Chaminade, Faure and Franck. KUMF Art Gallery, 2118-A Bloor St. W., Suite 204 (east of Runnymede). Sunday Nov. 10, 3 p.m. Tickets $20, $15, available in advance or at the door. 416-621-9287.

• • •

Passages: Hy (Chaim) Burstein, who died in Toronto on Oct. 1 at the age of 85, discovered a passion for riding horses as a teenager and continued riding until he was in his late 70s. The retired plastics-industry executive was also the published author of *Ride 'em Jewish Cowboy*, a lively memoir about his equestrian experiences around the world, as well as several self-published titles.

Born to Russian-Jewish immigrants in Toronto in 1928, Burstein started his career as a truck driver in his father's burlap bag company on Simcoe Street. During a visit to Israel in 1959, he met his wife, **Zuzek**, a former Miss Israel, and proposed to her after five days. They were married three weeks later. She then gave birth to six children – five boys and a girl, including a set of twins – in less than six years.

Hy Burstein was sometimes known as "Riding Hy"

As he chronicled in his memoir, Burstein travelled the world seeking exotic trails and equestrian adventures. He was a regular herder at a large ranch near the Montana-Wyoming border, where he would help push thousands of cattle up the mountains to pasture in spring, then back down to market in the fall.

Once, on an African trail with a party of riders, the horses suddenly bolted as a lioness darted between the trees toward her cubs. On a riding excursion in Israel's Galilee region, he rode for several hours from the Vered HaGalil ranch down to Lake Kinneret. His guide kept a loaded pistol at his side at all times for security.

After the proprietor of the Montana ranch professed a dislike of Jews, Hy let the remark go but later asked him what he had against Jews. "They talk too loud and can be very noisy," came the reply. Hy responded that ranch guests on drinking binges had often kept him up all night with their loud voices "and believe me, they weren't Jewish. Besides, I'm Jewish." The proprietor offered a red-faced apology and added, "Those Israelis sure know how to fight a war."

Ride 'em Jewish Cowboy was published by Jerusalem-based Devora Publishing in 2004. Hy also wrote and self-published a novel, a screed on comparative religion, and a book about an anti-Semitic murder in Paris.

Appalled at the kidnap, torture and murder of teenager Ilan Halimi by a French-Muslim gang in 2006, Burstein visited the Paris suburbs where the crime occurred and hired the detectives who had worked on it to guide him through every aspect of the case. "By the time they dropped me at the airport for my flight back home, I possessed an insider's view of the case, complete with privileged details known only to the police," he later wrote.

Burstein kept horses on his family's 100-acre ranch in Caledon. He leaves his wife, Zuzek, his six children and their spouses, and 14 grandchildren.

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NIGHT OF PUBLIC ART

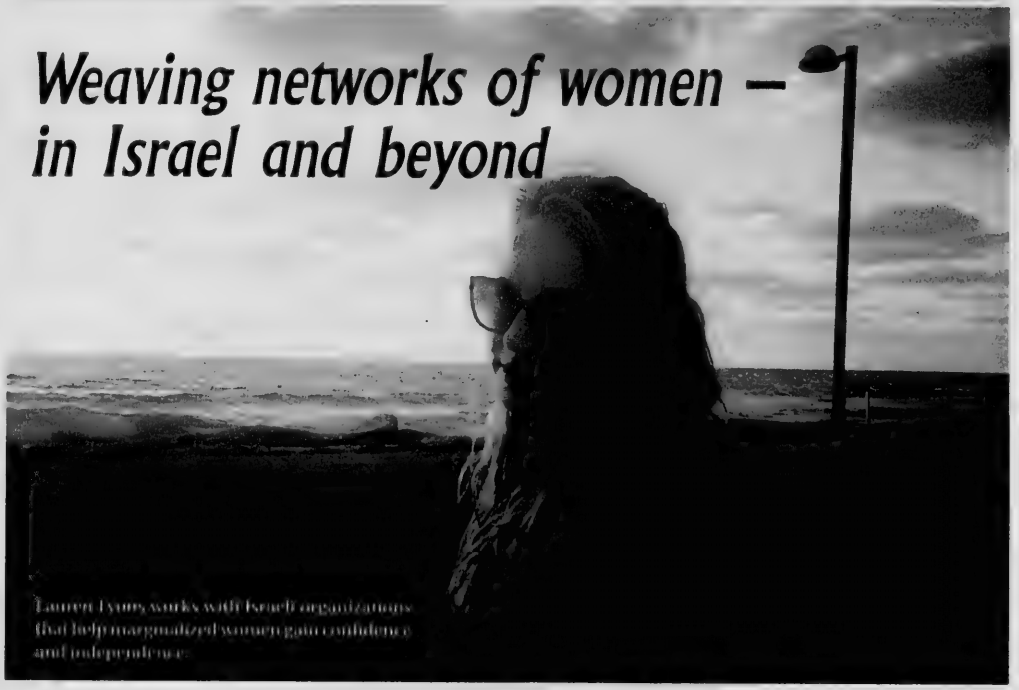
Toronto's Nuit Blanche festival brought many Jewish artists and organizations out into the night Oct. 5. Pictured is *My Virtual Dream*, a joint installation by Baycrest Health Sciences and the University of Toronto. Inside the 60-foot white dome, participants were hooked up to machines that detected their brainwaves, which were used to create unique 360-degree "dreamscape" projections on the dome's interior. For more Nuit Blanche photos, visit cjnews.com.

[Cara Sterm photo]

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Weaving networks of women – in Israel and beyond



Lauren Lyons works with Israeli organizations that help marginalized women gain confidence and independence.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Jennifer M. MacLeod
Special to the CJN

Lots of young women book an Israel trip after university, but for most, it's an arms-length experience: see the country, taste the food, indulge in the nightlife, then come back to start a career.

Torontonian Lauren Lyons did things differently. After graduating from OCAD University in 2005, she moved to the Holy Land for a volunteer internship with a feminist organization called Achoti. She found herself immersed, and "blown away by these women and their stories."

Achoti, founded in the 1970s as a feminist organization of Jewish women from Arab countries, had been expanding its mandate to include other marginalized groups, such as Ethiopian, Bedouin and Palestinian women.

Lyons helped develop an economic initiative with a group of Ethiopian women from Kiryat Gat, which has one of Israel's highest unemployment rates.

"Being in the peripheries in Israel can be a difficult thing," says Lyons.

Through traditional handicrafts, such as sewing and embroidery, Achoti helped train women in business and professional sewing, with the co-operation of Comme il faut, a high-end women's fashion company.

Soon, she says, "we realized something powerful was happening."

More than just businesses, the women began building relationships. Achoti held seminars to bring women together from communities all over the country.

"We started to create networks, exchange ideas," ostensibly about embroidery and sewing techniques, but also to "learn about each other," Lyons says.

When Lyons met Safa Younes, an Arab-Israeli social worker who wanted to start an organization like Achoti for Arab women, Lyons came on board at the Arous El-bahar Association for Women in Jaffa, with which she's still involved.

Arous El-bahar is the Arabic name for Jaffa and means "Bride of the Sea."

Through these organizations, "we started to find a pattern. A lot of women were doing the same things, [but they] weren't interconnected... Achoti is a leader in connecting all these women's groups, inviting them to conferences where we'd get all these women together in one place, doing activities, sharing their embroidery and traditional handicrafts," Lyons says.

"Underneath, it was very similar... Embroidery was connecting all these women together... stitching relationships back together. Some of these women had never met... They got to break down social barriers and prejudices."

The women, who are seen as the "lowest" members of Israeli society, she said, arrive at conferences and events "with an identity and... skills" to show off proudly, "and have people who want to hear about it, and learn from each other's experiences."

One of the most popular endeavours of Arous El-bahar are its Jaffa Peace Dolls.

Using eclectic and colourful donated fabrics, Arab and Jewish women collaborate to create delightful, cuddly dolls. Each one is unique and proudly sports a fabric heart.

"They're just adorable. All the kids really love them," Lyons says, adding that adults find them irresistible because of what they represent.

"It's just such a positive response."

Younes told the *Jerusalem Post* that "65 to 70 per cent of the women who have taken courses through Arous El-bahar have been able to find work" following their experience.

In 2009, with the help of grants from the Greater Miami Jewish Federation and the Jewish Women's Foundation of the Greater Palm Beaches, Achoti opened Israel's first fair trade store in Tel Aviv featuring the handicrafts of Arous El-bahar and similar organizations.

Though Lyons moved back to Toronto in 2010 and works for a custom home-building company here, her ties to the economically disadvantaged, exploited and abused women of Israel are stronger than ever.

She is still involved through a network of women's organizations that includes Arous El-bahar, Achoti, and the Rikmah Project, which promotes women's embroidery from Palestinian villages around Jerusalem.

Hundreds have been touched by these organizations, Lyons says. Many were virtually housebound before, and these projects make them "a part of something."

They're not only making money, but also sharing "their culture with the mainstream Israeli society... [expressing] who they are and what a rich culture they come from, instead of being just in the periphery."

Jewelry design, her major in university, is still a passion, and Lyons has recently collaborated on a line that incorporates Ethiopian embroidery with her own sterling silver designs.

But, fascinated by the often-overlooked lives and histories of these marginalized women, Lyons says her newest obsession is food – recipes and women's stories from all sectors of Israeli society.

"I'm a bit of a collector," she says. "I came back to Toronto and felt that I had discovered something, been given a gift."

Now, she's sharing these collected stories of "voiceless" women and weaving ever-larger networks.

Travelling back and forth multiple times each year, she's working on a book to bring together Israeli women's stories and recipes as part of what she appropriately calls a "tapestry."

"It's so important to share what's happening in Israel, the creativity, the diversity... the beauty," she says.

For more information about Achoti, visit achoti.com.

The Arous El-bahar's Jaffa Peace Dolls, which can be seen at facebook.com/Jaffadoll, are among the organization's most popular initiatives.

Deadline reminder: Oct. 21 is the deadline for the issue of Oct. 31. Oct. 28 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 7. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 17

JEWS AND GENES

Legal, ethical and Jewish perspectives on genetic testing are discussed, Temple Sinai, 7 p.m. Call 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

PHILOSOPHER VS. MYSTIC

Rabbi Daniel Korobkin examines the philosophies of Maimonides and Rabbi Yehuda Halevi in a 5-week session, 9:45 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $55. Call 416-877-2050 or info@mekorot.ca.

Friday, Oct. 18

INFO FOR CAREGIVERS

Allison William discusses "What Every Caregiver Should Know: Tools and Resources for Success," 1 p.m., 540 Finch Ave. W. Sponsored by Family Caregiver Connections. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 499.

Saturday, Oct. 19

UJPO ANNIVERSARY

The United Jewish People's Order marks its 85th anniversary, 7 p.m. at the Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave., with an art exhibit and concert. Call 416-789-5502 or email info@winchevskycentre.org.

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom of Halton-Peel, a Conservative egalitarian congregation, meets today. www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

Sunday, Oct. 20

MAH-JONG MADNESS

Chaverot chapter of Hadassah presents Mah-Jong Madness, 2:15 p.m., Earl Bales Community Centre. $36. Call 416-630-8373 to reserve.

ADRIENNE CLARKSON

Former governor general **Adrienne Clarkson** discusses "True Encounters: Meeting the Other," 7:30 p.m. Temple Emanu-El. RSVP 416-449-3880 or email reception@templeemanuel.ca.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Randy Stein discusses "Social Media: Is it kibbitzing or changing the world?" 9:15 a.m. Beth David Synagogue. $8 (includes breakfast.)

ZAREINU RUN

Join the Zareinu run team in the Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon/Walk. Call **Nadine** 416-661-1800, ext. 227.

BATHURST LAWN OPENING

Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park officially opens its new building at 6033 Bathurst St., 10:30 a.m.

WOMEN AND CANDLES

Rabbi Yehoshua Weber discusses "Women, Shabbat Candles and Chanukah Candles," 10 a.m., Beth Avraham Yosef Congregation, 630 Clark Ave. W. 647-234-7299.

GRANDPARENTS DAY

Grandparents and children are invited for lunch and crafts at Temple Sinai, noon. Call 416-487-3281 by Oct. 18.

JEWS IN FILM AND TV

A 6-week course on "The Image of the Jew in Film and TV," will be held at Darchei Noam, 7 p.m. $75/$90. Call 416-638-4783.

FALL FASHION SHOW

Temple Har Zion holds a fall fashion show and tea, 2 p.m. $36 Call **Joanne Fisher** 905-731-3092 or **Liz Kalmanson** 416-487-3838.

BAVA METZIA

Rabbi Noah Sonenberg teaches Talmud Bava Metzia Sundays until May 18, 8 p.m., Or Chaim Yeshiva. www.mekorot.ca or 416-877-2050.

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

David Lipovitch discusses "The Canaanite Roots of Jewish Holidays," in English and Yiddish, 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. RSVP **Sandy** 416-458-1440 or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

THE NEXT GENERATION

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Raising the Next Generation to Thrive as Jews," 10 a.m., Schwartz/Reisman Centre. 905-303-5471.

Monday, Oct. 21

CHABAD CLASSES

Goldie Plotkin teaches a class for women, starting Oct. 21. **Rabbi Avraham Plotkin** teaches a Talmud class for women starting Oct. 22. **Rabbi Yudi Zarchi** teaches a men's course starting Oct. 23. **Rabbi Meir Gitlin** teaches a Hebrew reading course for beginners starting Oct. 23. All classes at 83 Green Lane, Thornhill. Call 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or www.chabadmarkham.org.

Continued on page 37

UJA Federation stands with the People of Israel

Funds support Emergency Preparedness and Normalization of Israeli Lives

By Dan Horowitz

Despite a relative cooling off period between Syria and the United States, the people of Israel still find themselves living under constant potential threat from the northern tip of the country to the south.

According to a number of Middle Eastern news outlets, Hezbollah has threatened to launch a rocket attack on the Jewish state if the U.S. intervenes in Syria's civil war, while, in the south, Hamas will not hesitate to initiate a new military confrontation against Israel if the Egyptians undermine their regime. UJA partner communities have been directly affected. Eilat has been hit by a number of rockets over the past year, launched from Sinai. Sderot continues to be on the front lines with Hamas. And then, of course, Iran is a constant source of concern.

"A nuclear armed Iran would pose an existential threat to Israel, an unacceptable danger to world peace and security, including the likely bid of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East, making everyone less secure," said U.S. Vice President Joe Biden.

Israel is a vibrant, strong country. At the same time, the reality is that innocent Israelis from Metulla to Eilat are living their lives under threats from terrorist organizations and resulting from hostile elements, both governmental and not, in bordering nations. The impact is not just on maintaining security and preparation against attack but also ensuring peace of mind.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is making certain that Jewish Toronto plays a leadership role in partnering with the people of Israel to assure both personal safety and normalization of life in an unstable region. To that end, UJA Federation is funding a number of initiatives, throughout the country, designed to ensure emergency preparedness and quality of life, including:

• Through its partner agency, The Jewish Agency for Israel, UJA is helping ensure that new immigrants all over the country are provided with gas masks to protect themselves, and their children, from potential chemical and other weapons.

• In its partner community of Eilat, UJA spearheaded the completion of a new emergency wing which just opened in Yoseftal Hospital, the sole provider of emergency medical services to residents of Eilat and the surrounding area. The next closest hospital is 250 kilometres north in Beersheva.

• In Sderot, a UJA-partner community that has been besieged by thousands of rocket attacks over the last decade, UJA supports after-school programs for children, keeping them safe and off the streets, after a short Israeli school day, until their parents return home from work.

• The Fund for the Victims of Terror offers immediate assistance to those in Israel suffering hardships as a result of terror attacks. The Fund has provided financial assistance to thousands of victims of terror and related disasters, including 230 families in 2012.

"We are partners with the people of Israel, through and through," said UJA's Campaign Director and Counsel, Steven Shulman. "There may be great distance between Toronto and Israel on a map, but none in our hearts. The people of Israel are the heroes but, as a leading Jewish community, we have a vital role to play in ensuring that Israelis are better prepared for emergencies and to take action that can minimize worries associated with living in a tough geopolitical neighbourhood. This is one of the many reasons all of us should be proud to be associated with UJA Federation."

UJA Federation is funding a number of initiatives across Israel designed to ensure emergency preparedness and quality of life

Jewish Toronto — Jewish Toronto is published by your community partner, the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. — UJA Federation

Continued from page 36

COOKING DEMONSTRATION
Beth Sholom Sisterhood holds a Shabbat cooking demonstration, 7 p.m. $25/$30. RSVP **Naomi** 416-783-6103, ext. 231 or naomi@bethshalom.net.

ORGAN DONATION
Rabbis, doctors, organ recipients and donors discuss Jewish perspectives on organ donation, 7:30 p.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. Register at beadonor.ca or ncjwc-ts.org.

AUTHOR TALKS
Nancy Richler discusses her novel *The Imposter Bride*, Beth Tzedec Congregation. Lunch at 1 p.m., review 1:30 p.m., $20. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

THE JEWS OF TURKEY
Rifat Bali discusses "The Jews of Turkey during the Multi-party Period," Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 8 p.m. RSVP Zoryan Institute 416-250-9807, or email lrudner@cija.ca.

THE ASCENT OF WOMEN
Sally Armstrong discusses "The Ascent of Women," 2 p.m. Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880.

Tuesday, Oct. 22

ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT
Canadian Institute for Jewish Research presents **Asaf Romirowsky** discussing, "UNRWA:Detractor or Facilitator of the Arab-Israeli Conflict," Lodzer Centre Congregation, 7:30 p.m. 855-303-5544.

FILM REVIEW
Heather Kassel reviews the film *NO*, Adath Israel Synagogue, 8 p.m.

JEWISH APPROACH TO ETHICS
Bracha Feder leads a 6-week course on "Classic and Contemporary Texts Confront Life's Realities," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

CHUG HATANACH
Rabbi David Seed discusses Chapters 37 and 145 of the Book of Psalms, Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m.

DAVID & BATSHEVA
Loretta Tanenbaum discusses "David and Batsheva, as Seen through Amichai's Poetry," 10 a.m. Beth Tzedec. To register, 416-781-3514, ext. 234, or mlaba@beth-tzedec.org.

LUNCH AND LEARN
Senator Linda Frum discusses "The Senate of Canada," Beth Tikvah's Lunch and Learn series. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Wednesday, Oct. 23

FAMILY FEUDS IN THE BIBLE
Hana Werner discusses "The Rebellion: Absalom and David," dessert, 1:30 p.m., lecture at 2 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. $10. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

MAH-JONG TOURNEY
Shaar Shalom hosts a mah-jong tournament, 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. Call 905-889-4975 or www.shaarshalom.ca/mahjongg.

Thursday, Oct. 24

FOUNDATIONS OF PRAYER
Rabbi Shlomo Gemara teaches a 3-week course on "The Foundations of Prayer From Abraham to Present," 8 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $54. 416-877-2050 or email info@mekorot.ca.

CHARTER OF VALUES
Rabbi Jarrod Grover and **Prof. Salim Mansur** discuss Quebec's proposed charter of values, 7:30 p.m. Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Other News

PEER SUPPORT
Baycrest is starting a peer support program for people who have been through the mental health system. Call **Janis Sternhill,** 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

TEMPLE SINAI NURSERY
Registration opens this week for Temple Sinai Nursery School. Call 416-487-3281.

ISRAELI CONSUL SPEAKS
Israeli Consul General **DJ Schneeweiss** discusses "The Peace Proces and Israel's Security and Diplomatic Challenges," Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m., First Narayever Congregation, 187 Brusnwick Ave. Free admission.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS
Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes held at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Mind, Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women who want to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Oct. 17, 7 p.m.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement Group: A 6-session group for those under 60 who have recently lost a spouse. Starts Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage-preparation group. Offered with the Rabbinical Assembly of Ontario. Starts Oct. 22, Adath Israel Synagogue, 7 p.m.

Widows/Widowers 60+: A 6-session group for men and women over 60 who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Starts Oct. 23, 1 p.m.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

When You're About to Separate, What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Starts Oct. 29, 1 p.m., 35 Madison Ave.

Adult Child Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Functioning in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals, Oct. 30, 7 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS
Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario offers self-help groups for bereaved parents. **Beth Feffer**, JF&CS, 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors. MPP David Zimmer speaks Oct. 17, 9:30 a.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Call **Tammy** 416-635-2900, ext. 458.

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila** 416-665-3333 or **Marcia** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Oct. 22 **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses the 1950s, 10 a.m.; Oct. 23, **Kevin Courrier** discusses "The Complex World of Comedy," 7 p.m.; Oct. 24, **Judy Chodirker** discusses "Eating for Brain Health," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine Oct. 23. Dance with live music Oct. 27. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Oct. 17, 1:30 p.m., **Avrum Rosenzweig** discusses the work of Ve'ahavta. Oct. 24, 1:30 p.m, **Dr. Shalom Glouberman** discusses "Making Canada's health care system more patient-friendly." Register for art appreciation classes Oct. 29/Nov. 5. The art of Georgia O'Keefe and Matisse.

Edithvale Community Centre, 416-665-9050. Feldenkrais Awareness through Movement, Mondays 10 a.m. $60/5 classes.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

A beginner bridge class runs Nov. 4-Dec. 23, 10 a.m. Beginner bridge level 2 at 1 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

Evening mah-jong for intermediates Mondays at 7 p.m.

Living Rhythm music program for pre-schoolers, starts Nov. 6, 4 p.m.; Mommy and Baby fitness starts Oct. 21, 10:30 a.m.; Glowga Funk: yoga and dance in the dark for children aged 2-6 starts Oct. 16. Call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Sing at the JCC: adult choir meets Tuesdays 1 p.m. Next session Oct. 21; women's chorus meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. Next session Oct. 22; Jewish chanting circle Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 133 or email music@mnjcc.org.

The Toronto Jewish Film Society screens the Israeli film *Seven Minutes in Heaven*, Oct. 20 at 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. $15/10. Guest speaker is critic **Mark Clamen**. Call ext. 606.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, Oct. 21-Dec. 9., 7 p.m. ext. 606.

Learn more about making Shabbat with **Belinda Keshen. Sharoni Sibony.** Oct. 27, 11:45 a.m. Email principal@djcs.org.

Family Fun Fair Oct. 27, 1-3 p.m. Crafts, games and prizes for kids, while adults can learn more about community resources. Ext. 388.

Book launch for *Days of Rest* by **David Goldstein,** Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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David Weinberg, Director, Israel office, Canadian Jewish Community's Center for Israel and Jewish Affairs

Sunday, November 3rd, 9:15am - 4:30pm

Topics include
Israel as a Religious State: Challenges & Opportunities
The Beatles and the Bible: Thinking about General Culture
Four Who Entered the Pardes: How Rabbi Akiva Emerged Unscathed
What can computers tell us about the Torah?
Torment and Ecstasy in the Teachings of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav
Aliya - no one told me about this... A Candid Discussion of the Realities of Aliya
Halachic & Hashkafic Perspectives on Sports & Sports Fandom
Awakening: The Resurgence of Patriotism in Post-Post-Zionist Israel
Hindu Hassidim: How East Meets West

Additional Sunday speakers include:
Dr Joel Hecker, Professor of Mysticism; **Ari Lamm,** Fulbright scholar, Tikvah Foundation, Post-Graduate Fellowship; **Dr. Moshe Koppel,** Professor of Computer Science; **Rabbi Reuven Tradburks,** Director, Israel Office, Rabbinical Council of America

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I hear you – or maybe I don't

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

It was one of those unusual clinics where I saw more than one case in which the exact same issue surfaced. It confirmed something I know to be true, but because I have residents in training with me, it gave me the opportunity to demonstrate to them an important component of geriatric care.

The first encounter was with a couple accompanied by two generations of family members. The couple lived at home with personal care help – each had some degree of cognitive impairment, but not enough to completely interfere with their reasonable and safe functioning as long as there was some supervision. I was interviewing the husband, and my resident was assessing his wife.

As I did my assessment, it became clear that the gentleman was quite hard of hearing. According to his son, however, he refused to wear his hearing aids because "they bothered him" and he had problems adjusting them.

The patient explained that he had "no problem with hearing," while at the same time, leaning toward me to hear my question or answer and turning to the son to repeat the question. I retrieved my office Pocket Talker, a portable amplifier that gives users the ability to hear more clearly in difficult listening situations.

I put the earphones on him and gradually increased the volume. Suddenly his face lit up when I asked if he could hear me, and he said, "Very well." He could now readily engage in a three-way conversation with his son and me using this low-technology device. The son agreed to borrow a device from the audiology department for a one-month trial before deciding to purchase one.

My resident was ready to review the wife's issues with me, her son and her husband. The resident told me about his assessment before we entered the room. In addition to mild dementia, he mentioned that she was quite hard of hearing, but had previously refused hearing aids. I retrieved the Pocket Talker, and as with her husband, her face lit up when she heard my questions. I looked at the son and the husband and said, "Maybe there's a two-for-one deal."

Later in the clinic, a different resident saw another patient. This resident had not been apprised of the previous patients' hearing issues. She recounted a history of progressive cognitive decline and said that the accompanying daughter had mentioned an apparent hearing impairment. The patient absolutely refused to go for a hearing assessment, said she did not want hearing aids, and, in any event, they were "a waste of money."

I repeated the same manoeuvre that I had used with the previous couple. Although not as dramatic, the way the patient responded to my questions clearly indicated that she could hear better with the device.

Since this was a first visit, I was uncertain about whether some of the apparent cognitive impairment may have been due to or aggravated by the hearing impairment. As I explained to the daughter when I said I was not yet sure of the degree of cognitive impairment: "If you can't hear it, you can't remember it."

In this one clinic, with three patients out of a total of eight, I had the opportunity to demonstrate to the young residents the importance of hearing when assessing cognition.

It can be hard to convince older people to utilize hearing aids or pay for them. Sometimes the small size and technical difficulties with them cause them to be abandoned. For many, a simple, inexpensive Pocket Talker may be a device that can be used either as an introduction to the benefits of hearing enhancement or may, on its own, solve the problem for an individual to enhance social communication.

Appealing appetizers – on the grill or in the oven

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

Hors d'oeuvres, it is said, are all about stimulating the appetite. Well, nothing curbs your appetite as well as your enthusiasm faster than ho hum, run-of-the mill appetizers. Hors d'oeuvres literally means "outside the work," which gives the hostess the liberty to serve appetizers that have no relation to her main course. Toasted bread slices (crostini, in Italian) are the perfect vehicle to whet your guests' appetites and to stir up some excitement in the kitchen. Better yet, why not make those pretty and tasteful morsels on the barbecue? The following recipes all take advantage of your outdoor grill, although they can easily be made under a broiler or in a preheated 400-degree oven as well.

GRILLED CAPRESE CROSTINI

1/2 ciabbata loaf, cut in half horizontally (about 10-in. long)
1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 cloves garlic, finely minced
3 tbsp. finely chopped fresh basil
2 small tomatoes, sliced
4 oz. fresh Mozzarella, sliced
2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar

Mash together the butter, garlic and basil in a small bowl. Spread evenly on top of each ciabbata half. Arrange the tomato slices in a single layer on top of the butter. Top the tomatoes evenly with the mozzarella.

Grill the loaves directly on a preheated grill set over medium-high heat (or on a baking sheet in a preheated 400-degree oven) for about 6 minutes or until the bread is lightly toasted and the cheese has melted.

Drizzle the vinegar over the cheese. Slice into individual portions. Makes 4 servings.

A PEACH OF A CROSTINI

Fresh peaches last well into Indian summer, so why not feature them at the beginning of the meal. Paired with a sweet and herby Greek yogurt and topped with a peppery sprinkle, these crostini are well-suited to any meal that may follow.

2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
12 slices French bread, cut diagonally
3/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 1/2 tbsp. chopped fresh mint
1 tbsp. honey
pinch each salt and pepper
3 small ripe peaches
cracked black pepper

In a small bowl, stir together the oil and garlic. Brush over one side of the bread slices.

Grill the bread slices, oil side up, on a preheated grill set over medium-high for 3 to 5 minutes or until browned around the edges. Remove from the grill. (Or toast in a preheated 400-degree oven for about 5 minutes.)

In a separate small bowl, stir together the yogurt, mint, honey, salt and pepper. Dollop evenly on top of the grilled bread slices. Cut peaches in half; remove the pits. Slice thinly. Arrange two to three slices on top of the yogurt mixture. Sprinkle with cracked black pepper.Makes 4 servings.

MEXICAN CROSTINI

2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
12 slices French bread, cut diagonally
1 cup surimi or fake crab
3 tbsp. low fat mayonnaise
2 tbsp. chopped fresh coriander
2 tbsp. finely chopped green onions
2 tbsp. freshly squeezed lime juice
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
pinch salt
fresh coriander leaves

In a small bowl, stir together the oil and garlic. Brush over one side of the bread slices.

Grill the bread slices, oil side up, on a preheated grill set over medium-high for 3 to 5 minutes or until browned around the edges. Remove from the grill. (Or toast in a preheated 400-degree oven for about 5 minutes.)

In a separate bowl, stir together the surimi, mayonnaise, coriander, green onions, lime juice, pepper and salt. Mound evenly on top of the grilled bread slices. Garnish each crostini with a fresh coriander leaf. Makes 4 servings.

CROSTINI WITH GRILLED AVOCADO

You may not have thought of grilling avocado before, but I can assure you that this fruit takes exceptionally well to heat. Brushing the avocado halves with a touch of oil before grilling not only ensures they won't stick but helps prevent the avocado from discolouring, much like an acid would.
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil (plus 1 tsp. for the avocado)
2 cloves garlic, minced
12 slices French bread, cut diagonally
1/2 cup prepared red pepper hummus
1/4 cup finely chopped roasted red pepper
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
1 ripe avocado

In a small bowl, stir together the oil and garlic. Brush over one side of the bread slices.

Grill the bread slices, oil side up, on a preheated grill set over medium-high for 3 to 5 minutes or until browned around the edges. Remove from the grill. (Or toast in a preheated 400-degree oven for about 5 minutes.)

Cut the avocado in half, remove and discard the pit. Brush the remaining 1 tsp. of oil over both cut sides. Place the avocado, cut side down, on the grill (or on a grill pan). Grill for 2 minutes or until the cut side has grill marks on it and is warmed throughout.

In a bowl, stir together the prepared hummus, red pepper and feta. Spread evenly on top of the grilled bread slices. Slice the warm avocado into thin strips. Arrange the strips decoratively on top of the hummus mixture. Makes 4 servings.

BRISKET IN COFFEE BRANDY SAUCE

2 lg onions, sliced thin
1 6-7 lb. brisket
1/3 c bourbon
1/3 c molasses
1/4 c apple cider vinegar
1/2 c olive oil
1 tbl pepper
3 tblsp instant coffee mixed with 2 c warm water

Preheat oven to 350°. Scatter onions in roasting pan just large enough to fit meat. Place brisket on top of onions. Combine remaining ingredients in bowl, pour mixture evenly over meat. Cover tightly with foil, bake 2 hrs. Turn brisket over, bake uncovered 1 hr. Transfer brisket to cutting board, allow to rest 10 min. before slicing. Strain cooking liquids into small sauce pan, pressing hard on solids (discard them), reduce on high flame to 2 ½ c. Let brisket cool slightly. Slice thin against grain.

Recipe from: Kosher Scoop

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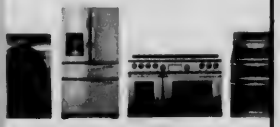
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Skating legend hid her Jewish past

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

For Ellen Burka, figure skating not only provided a lengthy career as a successful coach and mentor, it saved her life.

Recently inducted in the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in Israel, Burka kept her Jewish roots a secret for years. She was lucky to survive the Holocaust, and when she immigrated to Canada in 1951, she found anti-Semitism all around her. As a Jew, she wouldn't have been accepted into the social clubs where top skaters trained, so she opted to pass as a Christian. She had her daughters, Astra and Petra, baptized as Anglicans. Petra went on to become world figure skating champion in 1965.

Ellen, now 92, never told her children of their Jewish heritage, that their grandparents had been deported to the Nazi death camp of Sobibor, where they were murdered, nor that other relatives met a similar fate. Instead, she told them they had been killed in a car accident.

"I did not want to tell my children that their grandparents were gassed. It's a terrible thing to tell them.

"I had to protect them," said Burka, who now lives in Toronto.

Burka would have met the same fate as her parents but for her excellence as a figure skater. Deported from her native Holland to the Westerbork transit camp, she was told to fill out a form setting out her occupation. Brash and proud of her achievements, she wrote, "Figure skating champion of the Netherlands."

It was not an idle boast. Before the war, she had been a tremendous skater, a natural who was pretty much self-taught. Starting out on wooden skates, "I learned it very fast," she said. Copying what she saw others do, she taught herself sit spins, camel spins and other skating moves.

By the time she arrived at Westerbork, she could accurately describe herself as a champion.

Continued on page 14

Holocaust survivor and International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame inductee Ellen Burka, centre, is flanked by her two daughters, Petra, left, who was also inducted into the hall, and Astra.
[Paul Lungen photo]

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Federation endowment funds show big increase

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Endowment assets managed by foundations linked to North American Jewish federations increased by 7.6 per cent to $14.3 billion in 2012, according to a survey released earlier this month.

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) survey compiled figures from 64 communities, including five Canadian cities that all enjoyed an increase in endowment assets.

Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Vancouver and Winnipeg account for more than $690 million of North American endowment assets, which include unrestricted funds, donor-directed funds and legacy gifts.

Five largest in Canada now worth $690 million

"There were a couple of difficult years with the global [economic recession] going on, but right now we're very pleased with our investments," said Andrea Freedman, president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa.

"We are fortunate to have had some thoughtful and purposeful leaders a generation before us who took great pains to plan for the future of the Jewish community," she added.

According to the survey, the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation's endowment assets totalled $67.8 million in 2012, up by $6.3 million over 2011; the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto enjoyed an $8.4 million increase to about $216 million, and the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Vancouver was worth $31.8 million, up $4.3 million.

Continued on page 13

Chayei Sara
Candlelighting: 6:00
Havdalah: 7:02
Greater Toronto Areas

'Fabulous volunteer' to mark 102nd birthday
Please see page 12

Bank of Israel to get first female boss — please see page 18

CANADA

MNA Slams Charter

MONTREAL — The Parti Québécois is guilty of "moral bankruptcy" and of proposing "state-sanctioned discrimination," contrary to both the Canadian and Quebec charters of rights, as well as the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with its proposed charter of Quebec values, Liberal MNA Lawrence Bergman said at his nomination meeting at Montreal's Congregation Adath Israel last week. Bergman, 72, has been the MNA for the riding of D'Arcy McGee since 1994. Bergman, who was acclaimed, will be seeking a seventh term in what is widely expected to be a December election. The proposed charter would prohibit public workers from wearing visible signs of their religion.

WORLD

Canadian Freed

JERUSALEM — A Canadian legal adviser to the UN peacekeeping mission on the Golan Heights was released after eight months in captivity, the United Nations said Oct. 17. Carl Campeau was kidnapped in February while working for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). Syria's state news agency, SANA, said he was kidnapped by "terrorists," the government's term for opposition supporters, in a Damascus suburb. Campeau was stationed at the UNDOF base on the Syrian side of the demilitarized zone separating Israel and Syria until he went missing. He was handed over to the UN, which said he's in good health.

Ex-Mayor Charged

SAN DIEGO — Bob Filner, who resigned as San Diego mayor amid sexual harassment accusations, was charged Oct. 15 in a case brought by three women. He was charged with one felony count of "false imprisonment by violence, fraud, menace and deceit," as well as two misdemeanour counts of battery. Filner, 71, who is Jewish, resigned after San Diego city council approved a deal under which he agreed to leave office by Aug. 30 in exchange for the city paying his legal fees in a sexual harassment suit brought by a former aide. Nineteen women accused him of acting inappropriately and sexually harassing them. Filner was the city's first Democrat mayor in two decades. He had been a 10-term congressman.

Consider Changing Offensive Names: ADL

WASHINGTON — Pro sports teams should seriously consider moving away from "the use of hurtful and offensive names, mascots and logos," the Anti-Defamation League said.

Abraham Foxman

But the final decision to change a team name "should come from the team's ownership with input from the fan base. It is up to them to decide to let go of this hurtful tradition," Abraham Foxman, ADL national director, said in a statement.

The statement was released Oct. 15 as the Jewish owner of the Washington Redskins, Dan Snyder, has come under increasing pressure to change the name of his professional football team.

Other teams have also come under fire, including the Cleveland Indians, whose hook-nosed, red-faced mascot, Chief Wahoo, has been called racist and offensive.

Teams such as the Redskins and the Indians "have a responsibility to be sensitive to the legitimate hurt that offensive names, mascots and logos cause," Foxman said. "Tradition matters, but tradition should not justify the perpetuation of such names and mascots."

The call came after U.S. President Barack Obama said earlier this month that if he owned the Redskins, he'd consider changing the name because it offends some people.

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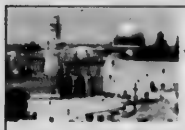

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'Two Live Jews' three-time City Chase winners

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Among all the slimy, creepy, goofy, stomach-turning and ridiculous tasks Michael Miller has been asked to do as part of the City Chase Toronto races, the slimiest, creepiest, goofiest and most ridiculous was having a tarantula creep around his stomach for a full 60 seconds.

Miller has no fear of spiders per se. Regular, garden variety wolf spiders, for instance, pose no problem.

It's the big hairy ones that are somewhat problematic. And even if they weren't, who'd want a giant hairy spider traipsing around their stomach anyway?

Well, if winning the annual City Chase race is your goal, you put aside your fears, swallow your pride and push yourself to the outermost limits of what you're able to endure.

Miller did just that during the 2008 Toronto race in allowing the tarantula to dance a waltz on his belly, but it was well worth it. Along with his partner, Brian Greenwood, he is an intensely competitive individual who loves to win, no matter what the challenge.

Brian Greenwood, left, and Michael Miller celebrate their Toronto Scion City Chase victory.

And win they have. Miller and Greenwood, who go by the nickname "Two Live Jews," are this year's Toronto #1 Scion City Chase champions, beating 600 other teams. Competing together for 10 years, they've also won the 2008 Ottawa championship, the 2012 and 2013 Toronto events and on the weekend, they finished fifth in the Scion City Chase national championships in London, Ont.

Going into the event, they acknowledge they were long shots to come out on top – the winners of the Halifax City Chase are "super-runners" who have represented Canada internationally.

Still, they pledged to give it their best shot and rely on smarts to go along with speed to get the job done.

Continued on page 12

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Tunnels built at Gazans' expense

Israel's discovery on Oct. 13 of an elaborate 2.5-kilometre concrete-lined tunnel, built by Hamas from Gaza emerging close to an Israeli kibbutz 300 metres into Israel, underscores a predicament Israel faces not only with Hamas, but also with the international community.

For years, Israel has been under considerable international pressure to allow more building supplies into Gaza for housing and infrastructure projects to meet the needs of a rapidly growing Gazan population. Much of this material, including cement (used to make concrete), had been smuggled into Gaza through tunnels running between Gaza and Egypt at the shared border town of Rafah.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Some tunnels were sealed by Egypt's former Islamist president Mohammed Morsi following attacks on Egyptian security personnel in the Sinai by extremists believed to use Gaza as an exit and entry point. Since the Egyptian military's overthrow of Morsi in July, the pace of tunnel closures has accelerated dramatically. As a result, Israel has increased substantially the supply of a range of goods to Gaza, including cement. In fact, this is a process that expanded even before as a concessionary gesture to Turkey and as part of the reconciliation effort between Israel and Turkey in the aftermath of the 2010 Mavi Mamara imbroglio.

Still, Israel has long warned that permitting building material such as cement into Gaza would allow Hamas, an organization sworn to Israel's destruction, to siphon it off for construction of military bunkers and tunnels, like the ones dug into Israel. Hamas' aim is to carry out attacks and capture Israeli soldiers, as they did in 2006, killing two Israeli soldiers and capturing Gilad Schalit.

Given Hamas' extreme hostility, Israel's predicament is how to balance its humanitarian obligations to Gaza (still co-ordinated – despite Israel's 2005 withdrawal from there – with the UN at Israel's border crossings with Gaza) against its pressing security requirements.

Strategic and security analyst Ron Ben-Yishai wrote on *Ynet* Oct. 14 that "[Israel's] army revealed the discovery of the tunnel in order to show the international community, including Turkey's [prime minister, Recep] Erdogan, that Hamas is taking advantage of Israel's decision to ease restrictions on Gaza in order to build terror tunnels."

Israel's military has uncovered three tunnels this year alone. How many more are there? And what risks do they pose to Israelis, civilians and soldiers alike, near the Gaza border?

It's also the scale of this recently discovered tunnel that raises concern. According to preliminary Israeli estimates, up to 800 tonnes of concrete consisting of 25,000 custom-designed slabs were used in the tunnel's construction. Buried about 20 metres deep, it allowed people to walk upright between walls lined with electrical and communications cables. It cost millions of dollars to build.

Ha'aretz's Gili Cohen cited the reaction of Maj.-Gen. Sami Turgeman, head of Israel's southern command: "'Hamas is spending tens of millions of dollars on the tunnels instead of taking care of the population and building schools, industry and employment.'"

That's the observation the international community should be paying attention to, though Israeli officials aren't holding their breaths.

Hamas officials, feeling no compunction at all about imposing deprivations on their own people – there's always Israel to blame – have bragged about their devotion to the tunnels. According to Elhanan Miller (*Times of Israel*, Oct. 13) Moussa Abu Marzuk, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, posted the following comment on his personal Facebook page: "The tunnel which was revealed was extremely costly in terms of money, effort and blood. All of this is meaningless when it comes to freeing our heroic prisoners."

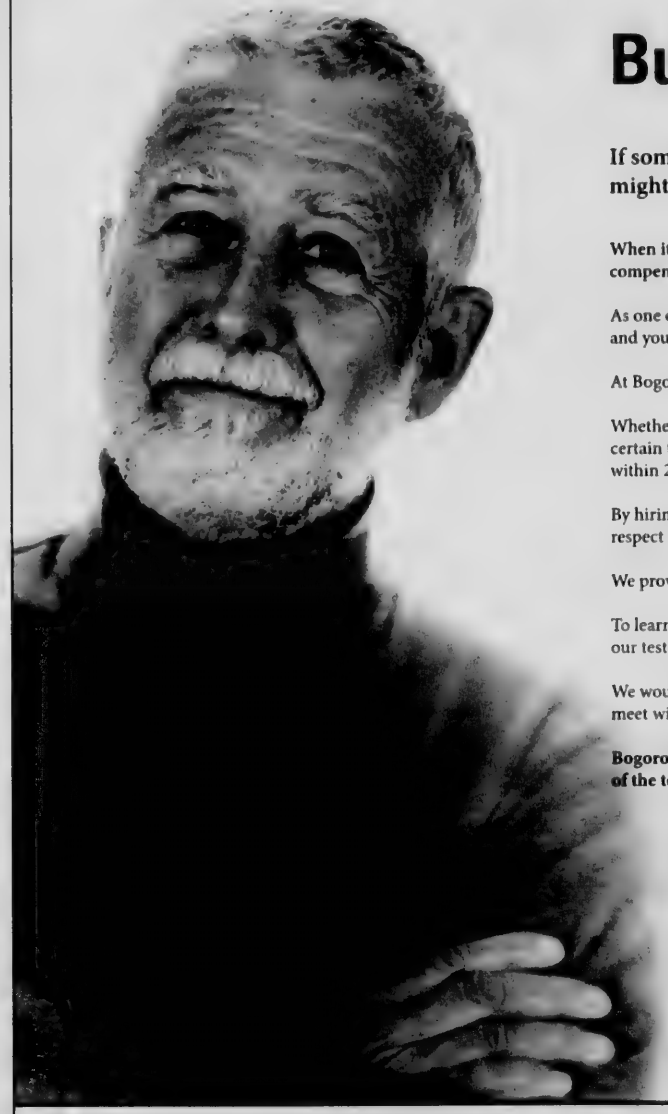
In the meantime, with the organization terribly short of cash, Hamas leader Khaled Meshal has recently visited Turkey for a meeting with Erdogan and plans to be in Tehran this month looking for support including financial aid – this at the very moment Iran is looking to get the West to relieve biting economic sanctions over its nuclear program.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

TEENS GATHER: The Eastern Canada region of United Synagogue Youth (ECRUSY), the middle and high school affiliate of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, held its Leadership Training Institute at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue on Oct. 12-13. Some 30 teens from Toronto, Hamilton, and London attended, and they also took part in ECRUSY's regional opening program, the Epic Pool Battle. They were joined by 30 more USY and Kadima members at the opening program. Pictured, from left, are regional president Jake Pascoe, Israel affairs/executive vice-president Sabrina Craig, religion/education vice-president Gabi Herman, social action/tikun olam vice-president Shira Elsen and membership/Kadima vice-president Josh Shapiro.

You never think you could be worse off leaving the hospital than entering it.



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Pew and the hope of Abraham

The recent Pew Report on American Jewish Identity has been compared to the Flood of Noah. But it's important to recall that Jewish life has not been determined by numbers and mere survival, but by vision and values rooted in the hope that Abraham came to bring to the world.

Looking at U.S. trends may give Canadian Jews a lens to partially anticipate what lies ahead. One-fifth of U.S. Jews identify themselves only by background. The rate of intermarriage remains very high, particularly among those who have little connection to Jewish community. They are less likely to be raising children as Jews than those whose identity is primarily religious.

Guest Editorial

Most say being Jewish is primarily a matter of ancestry and culture. Denominational identification is weakening. About three in 10 say they are "just Jewish." Jews who have day school and Jewish camp experiences have higher rates of commitment and retention than others within the same movements.

Young Jews are rewriting the norms of behaviour that have long characterized Jewish life. They're marrying later, having fewer children, connecting less to Jewish institutions and Israel, and choosing a "sovereign self" filled with pride, but only partially engaged in community.

Abraham, who appears in our Torah cycle as we think about Jewish demography, was counting his descendants from the beginning. He represents a hopeful revolution. The saga of Abraham is about going against common expectations.

Abraham is not only a noble warrior who stands apart from the Mesopotamian culture, he is deeply concerned with building a people from his own flesh. The Pew report points to pride in Jewish identity and attachment to Israel. Although the content of that pride is thin, can we galvanize that pride to construct a more substantive identity?

Pew respondents said that leading an ethical and moral life is essential to being Jewish. These are central values to Judaism, but are not unique to Jews. Can we strengthen the core of home, synagogue, school and camp to enable us to face social integration?

The metrics of intermarriage can't be ignored. But those who do connect to community and tradition are more likely to raise Jewish children. Can we acknowledge the challenges of intermarriage by developing programs for single Jews to meet each other, actively encouraging conversion, and supporting mixed families as they raise Jewish children?

Following the 1964 *Look Magazine* article, "The Vanishing American Jew," Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel declared, "Our community is in spiritual distress, and our organizations are too concerned with digits. The significance of Judaism does not lie in being conducive to mere survival, but in being a source of spiritual wealth and source of meaning to all peoples." Can we draw on Jewish wisdom to bring meaning to our civilization?

Prof. Jonathan Sarna has pointed to many creative reversals, unexpected developments in Jewish life in earlier generations. There are many possibilities for innovation to build a Jewish future. Jewish life is built on the past, but pointed forward. What can we do that will influence the yet to come?

Abraham and Sarah represent hope despite demographics. Rather than despair, can we share a love of living and learning with hope that others might find meaning in the heritage of Abraham and Sarah?

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl

Dry Bones THE TIP-OFF!

Fogel's methods don't work

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, assumes that good advocacy consists of talking to the political elite, keeping your head down, and not offending the public with Jewish and Israeli rights and needs ("We can't have it both ways," *The CJN*, Oct. 3). His method does not work. Most importantly Fogel does not acknowledge that evil propaganda has always been used to soften up the public before the oppression or expulsion of Jews.

Fogel assumes that protesting simply feeds the egotistical needs of neurotics. Courageously standing up and protesting for Judeo-Christian, democratic values and showing the public that he cares does give the protester a good feeling of having done something of value – something for Judaism, Israel and Canada. It is the public, not the "echelons of power" that needs to know about the values of Israel and Judaism.

Fogel's suggestion, that only speaking to political leaders is effective, is shortsighted, wrong, and unfortunately mainly intended to vilify those who disagree with his approach. Fogel is trying to split the Jewish community into competing factions. I expect much more from his unofficial Jewish leadership.

Jonathan Usher
Toronto

• • •

Why publish Joe Oliver?

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

It is baffling that *The CJN* still publishes regular columns by Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver ("Canada-Israel energy ties hold great promise," *The CJN*, Oct. 10). Oliver adds little to the paper with his repetitive adulation of the Conservative government.

Worse is Oliver's support of the government's cuts to refugee health care. Oliver has publicly proclaimed that refugee claimants were previously receiving care "superior" to Canadian citizens and residents – not true. Refugee claimants in various categories who are lawfully within our borders, following the rules, are being virtually denied all care including prenatal care, treatment for heart attacks and chemotherapy for cancer.

Oliver represents a government whose refugee policies stand in contradiction to Canadian values and especially to Jewish values. Jews know well enough the consequences of a government that is hostile to refugees and Oliver's support for the current policies places him outside the natural empathy for refugees arising from Jewish historical experience. Enough of Joe Oliver.

Philip Berger
Toronto

• • •

Public apologies increase interest

A recent letter ("Exhibit caused too much damage," *The CJN*, Oct. 17) on the display of children's art from Gaza display at the Hamilton Public Library is misguided.

Some may prefer to react to this issue by vocally denouncing the library and demanding public apologies. While this may be emotionally satisfying, it has been shown to generate a buzz of controversy that only increases media attention for the anti-Israel exhibit.

In contrast, UJA Federation of Hamilton and its public relations committee undertook a strategic response to the exhibit by pointing out its dubious content (which led to its relocation to the exhibit display area on the 4th floor), ensuring the venue adopted a policy that prevents future exhibits from misusing its premises, and taking the opportunity to share Israel's positive achievements in a way that resonates with average Canadians (who care very little about the Middle East conflict).

I was proud to attend the federation's "Israel: Helping to Heal the World" photo exhibit at the library, and was encouraged to see the presence of 150 local residents (including elected officials), as well as the overwhelming expressions of support from the Hamilton Jewish community. It reminded me that our advocacy should always be guided by strategy and logic – not emotion.

Judy Zelikovitz
Toronto

• • •

Federation does unify

We recently read the letter ("Community divided by JCC closure," *The CJN*, Sept. 18) accusing UJA Federation of Greater Toronto of dividing Toronto's Jewish community by allowing the demolition of the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre.

We were members of the old "Y," and while we were sad to see it replaced, its time had passed. When the Prosserman JCC opened, we enrolled our children in preschool and joined the fitness centre, and we could not be happier with the overall experience. When we look at our community, we see nothing but growth.

UJA Federation has shown great vision by opening the Prosserman JCC, as well as the Schwartz/Reisman Centre in Vaughan and transforming the old Bloor Y into the new Miles Nadal JCC. All told, those three institutions alone engage more than 12,000 individuals. If that's not the definition of unifying the community, we don't know what is!

Jeffrey and Lolly Herman
Toronto

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***Letters to the editor** are welcome if they are brief and in English or French. Mail letters to our address above or to cjninfo@gmail.com. We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's name, address and phone number.*

We must retool our communal agencies to meet new needs

The Pew survey should spur us to action

Seymour Epstein

I readily agree with the comments made in *The CJN* last week by both Charles Shahar and Randall Schnoor that the findings of the recent Pew study of U.S. Jews are not a picture of Canadian Jewry a generation from now. The myth of our being a generation behind American Jewry has been shattered by the experience of the past 20 to 30 years. We don't look like the American Jewish community of a generation ago. The American Jewish sociologist Steven Cohen emphasized that point when he studied the Toronto community several years ago.

Seymour Epstein

However, as much as our historical past and our present situation is different from that of American Jewish communities, there's no reason to be complacent about our future as a creative and contributing part of the Jewish world. There was a time when "Jewish continuity" was the mantra of the organized community, the idea being that Jewish survival was the goal and that the community was best served by identifying Jews who cared enough to live as Jews. If the Pew study teaches us anything, it's that Jewish identity is not enough and that survival is not a sufficient goal for the Jewish People.

The study points to 32 per cent of Jews born after 1980 who consider themselves Jews of no religion. The idea of being a Jew without religion is not new, even though many of these millenials might think it is, given their scant knowledge of Jewish history. Ever since the European Enlightenment, there have been Jews who identified nationally and culturally, even linguistically, without seeing themselves as a religion. The difference is that the early *maskilim* (enlightened Jews) had deep knowledge of classical Jewish sources and knew what they were rejecting. Many of them also attempted to fill the new Jewish vacuum with innovative content other than religion. Political Zionism is a decent example.

When Jews arrived in North America in their varied waves of immigration, the non-Orthodox attempted to accommodate their Judaism to the modern urban settings they inhabited. (Even the Orthodox made compromises that they might not admit to now.) Thus grew the short-lived secular movements, Reform Jewry, the Conservative movement, B'nai Brith, the defence organizations and federated communities. Those were all respectable solutions to Jewish needs of the time. What the Pew survey points to is that these institutions no longer resonate with considerable portions of the current Jewish population. Did you notice that the Conservative movement, which once represented the majority of non-Orthodox Jews in the United States, came in at 18 per cent of respondents?

And this is where we Canadian Jews should take note. We, too, have large sectors of our Jewish population that have no identifying signs. They don't contribute to Jewish charities, don't belong to a Jewish community centre, are not involved in synagogue life, and don't send their children to any form of Jewish schooling.

In a community such as Toronto, they might constitute as much as 60 per cent of the Jewish population. While the Toronto Jewish community is very strong at the centre, peripheral Jews on the edges are weak in Jewish identity. And these Jews who don't show up on Jewish radar are not all Israelis and Russian-speaking Jews. Many of them are natives who are indifferent, disaffected and disenchanted.

A group of children study at a Jewish day school in this undated photo from the Canadian Jewish Congress archives.

Israelis, Jews from the former Soviet Union and natives all require our concern – from where they stand, not from where we preach. Because we at the centre don't see them in our synagogues and boardrooms, we sometimes deny their existence, but the gap between Jews recognized by the census and the numbers in synagogues, schools and UJA records proves their existence. It's a bit like God in our tradition. We never questioned His existence. It was His presence in our lives (or the lack of it) that concerned us.

A creative and developing Jewish life requires both identity and literacy. The great failing of most of the modern modes of North American Jewish life has been in the domain of Jewish literacy. It's frightening how such a highly educated mass of people can be so abysmally ignorant of Jewish literature, history and values. A writer I like once said that the problem with Jewish protests against anti-Semitism is that most Jews don't know too much about their Semitism!

The Pew survey should inspire both American Jews and the Canadian Jewish community to re-think our response to our current situation, which is more post-modern than modern, and to retool our communal agencies to meet new needs. It's likely that organized religion as we know it will only serve a small segment of Jews, and those new modes of identification need to be imagined.

Israelis are slowly rediscovering their literary and historical roots and are reclaiming classical texts from the religious, while remaining secular. There must be fresh portals for those who see themselves as Jews, but lack any content to make that claim authentic.

Seymour Epstein is a former director of the Toronto Board of Jewish Education.

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Maybe it's time to welcome converts

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

It was a perfect Vancouver day for building a sukkah. The Hebrew school dads gathered and began to build it, under the direction of one of the sons.

(Their kids made sukkot out of gingerbread and candy with sprinkles – sort of like a good-witch-in-the-woods house. It was gone before the parents arrived.)

"You know," someone said to me, "not one of the people building that sukkah was born Jewish."

Not one dad born Jewish? Every man a Jew by choice – JBC?

What's going on here?

There's much hand-wringing every time a report on Jewish affiliation comes out. Will North American Jews disappear, leaving only a cadre of haredim to carry the flag, so to speak? Who will save us? Help!

Well, as Fareed Zakaria says every week on his *CNN* show *Global Public Square*, here's my take.

During Second Temple times, Judaism, a licit religion in the Roman Empire, became a vigorous, proselytizing religion. Early Christian authors of what would become the New Testament were aware of this, lamenting that the Pharisees would cross land and sea to convert one proselyte. In other words, Judaism was cutting into their territory.

We know that within the Jewish community, God-fearers were recognized, those – we assume men – who, not going all the way to conversion (maybe because it involved circumcision), were attached to Jewish communities, perhaps through their wives.

It was left up to the rabbis to create, as they wisely did, a mechanism for conversion, since biblical modes of attachment – the wife became an Israelite by marrying into a tribe – was no longer a possibility. What probably brought the expansion to a halt was the destruction of the Temple, the Jewish homeland and the resultant exile.

Today, it's considered necessary to reject initial approaches made by a potential convert, ostensibly to make sure the request is sincere. Given the past 2,000 years of Jewish history, one can see why there would be institutional reluctance to begin anew a process of attracting converts.

But maybe we need to rethink that reluctance. Why be afraid to showcase the attractions of Judaism? Those people putting up the sukkah were certainly enthusiastic. They were also a mixed bag. Some had grown up in a robust Christian tradition, while others came with absolutely no religious experience whatsoever.

Yet all were bound by a commitment they made to a religion, culture and history that's so rich, so inviting and so different from anything else.

It's not that we should begin to propagate a version of Judaism lite, but we could try to find out what, besides a potential or existing mate, brought them to the decision to convert. What have they found that satisfies them? What are their expectations? What do they enjoy learning about in the sea of Jewish thought and life?

Surely there are things we can learn from JBCs that would make our institutions stronger when it comes to meeting the needs of potential intermarriages, as well as those that have already taken place, so that the converting partner can see what wonderful things are available to him or her.

I realize there are many, many problems with probing peoples' personal choices and innermost emotions about such a step. But my goodness, we survey every other little facet of a person's life, and with Facebook, Twitter and such glitter, people are much more open about their personal choices and opinions than ever before.

People come to explore Judaism not just for the sake of marriage. Single folk are also attracted by its sense of a strong community, high ideals and traditions.

As an aside, I see that our rabbi is actively inviting people to explore Judaism via his information and conversion class.

So what holds us back from finding out what attracts people to our community and what our synagogues are doing to meets these needs, or, conversely, what are they doing that repels an approach? We'll be surprised to find out that becoming Jewish is for many people a fine idea, one that would stand them, and any subsequent family, in good stead – and strengthen the existing community in the bargain.

We should be proud of what we have, and open to those who are inquiring, yet unsure. Bring them in. There's plenty of room in the boat – er, sukkah.

Me, MAC and Marois

Norma Raumel Joseph in Montreal

I want to tell you about my experience with MAC. No, not a Big Mac, and not my MacBook Air.

I intend to write this column about my use of cosmetics. I want to use the specific example of MAC cosmetics to explore how much we tolerate xenophobia. Quebec's proposed charter of values and its supposed values are my ultimate target.

I've been a customer of MAC for many years. I like the product, the store is located conveniently near my office and the company makes a series of items that are long-lasting, so I can wear them on Shabbat. Added to all that, MAC recycles and has a very good incentive policy.

However, recently, I decided to stop buying the product. In fact, I won't step into the store anymore. This summer, I received advertisements for new products from MAC that were produced in French only. Why? MAC is willing to sell to anglophones. It wants our money, so why can't it advertise in our language?

I immediately went to the store and told the manager my thoughts. The law in Quebec is clear: the French language must be paramount, but English can appear. Why should businesses be stricter or more restrictive than the law? The minute we go overboard, we yield our political and language rights. We create the platform for further exploitations and misapplications or manipulations.

Eventually, we get a government that feels it can do anything, and big business stands back and complains that it's losing business. What can we do? Stop them at every turn. Not just by signing petitions. I have very little faith in those. And not just by writing letters to the editor. That's just wasteful. We write letters to the *Gazette*. Who reads those letters in the English newspaper? We do, not the Parti Québécois.

I know nobody at MAC cared about my absence as a customer. The store manager asked me to call the main office. I did. I got a phone apology. Nonsense. They don't care. But if more of us stopped buying at stores that only send French flyers and then let storeowners know why we're not shopping there, maybe it would have an effect.

We need to let our voices be heard in a myriad of places, including French newspapers.

What values does the charter represent? To be truly secular, the document would profess freedom of religion, freedom from religious persecution and domination and the freedom to practice religion. This proposal displays none of that. It doesn't indicate any understanding of a democratic secular government, only a fear of one religious community and a misguided sense of gender equality.

If the government truly was worried about women and their place in society, then legislation regarding gender would focus on economic inequalities and not what women choose to wear. Telling women what they're allowed to wear at work is a form of hegemonic control and of denying them agency. Who's to know that the hijab is more dangerous than the stiletto heel or the sheitel? What silliness.

And when the one woman in the Bloc Québécois is expelled because she utters a different opinion, is that a sign of allowing women freedom? Or do we have a government that only allows women freedom if women agree with them. That's not freedom. That's repression. Unacceptable.

Worst of all is the hidden agenda of Islamophobia. The PQ government playbook is anti-Muslim. It's unhealthy, anti-human rights, undemocratic and will lead to further abuses. It represents a monolithic view of who is legitimately a Quebecer, pushing all others out. And we Jews will stand with the "others" no matter how many centuries we have been here, no matter how many inroads we have made to be friendly and co-operative.

Finally, what is it really all about? The Marois government has governed poorly. Her record on education, health and the economy is abysmal. Floating this useless charter now has removed key issues from the political agenda and given her a new discussion platform. We have roads and bridges that are falling apart. Our best universities are failing. Waiting lists in the hospitals are health risks. And we're worried about head coverings?

Something is amiss in Quebec!

Multifaith trip to Israel planned for 2014

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Building on the success of a multifaith trip to Israel in 2011, a group of Jews, Christians and Muslims will travel to the Holy Land next March to gain new perspectives on the three major monotheistic religions, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"The Path of Abraham," so-called because Abraham is seen as a central figure in the texts of all three religions, is a nine-day tour meant to provide opportunities for participants to see each religion through another lens, said Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, spiritual leader of Beth Tzedec Congregation and a co-leader of the trip.

"Because we are seeing it through other people's eyes, or with other people, it opens us up to their experience as well," he said.

Ontario Multifaith Council president Iman Abdul Hai Patel – who is leading the trip along with Rabbi Frydman-Kohl and fellow co-leaders Father Damian MacPherson, director of the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs for the archdiocese of Toronto; Rev. Karen Hamilton, secretary general of the Canadian Council of Churches, and interfaith and diversity advocate Judy Csillag – said this trip will focus on the commonalities in the three Abrahamic faiths, and promote messages of peace.

"The Path of Abraham" leaders, from left, Iman Abdul Hai Patel, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, Rev. Karen Hamilton, Father Damian MacPherson, and interfaith and diversity advocate Judy Csillag, are planning to bring a multifaith group to Israel next March.

"There is not just history there, there is spirituality. For people to visit Israel, it's spiritually uplifting… From the Jewish community, many people go to Israel, but going on this trip is a unique experience," Iman Patel said.

"We also hope to bring a message of peace to Israel and Palestine and show how we in Canada are living together... that we are in harmony with each other."

The itinerary includes visits to Bethlehem, Hebron, Nazareth, the Galilee, the Temple Mount, the Western Wall, the Golden Mosque and Haram al-Sharif, Yad Vashem, the Church of Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Participants will also meet with religious leaders, Holocaust survivors and political figures, including a representative from the Palestine Liberation Organization's negotiations department.

"In this itinerary, we will be going to a [Jewish] settlement and to a Palestinian refugee camp," Rev. Hamilton said.

"So often, when people go to Israel and the Palestinian territories, they see one particular perspective or another," she added.

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said this tour allows Jews, most of whom would not venture into Palestinian areas, to "hear from Palestinians about their experiences and similarly, Muslims and Christians are able to hear from residents of Gush Etzion about why they are there."

Following the trip, participants are expected to attend interfaith dialogues to explore their newly gained perspectives.

"Of course, the conversations are very tough," Rev. Hamilton said.

Recalling the 2011 trip, in which 56 people took part – 23 Christians, 15 Jews and 18 Muslims – Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said there were experiences that highlighted some of the challenges in the region.

"When we were in the Temple Mount area, Christians and Jews were told [they are] not allowed to pray here. Only Muslims are allowed to enter the mosques. Suddenly, there is a real sense of exclusion," he said.

On the other hand, there were other experiences that were unifying.

When the group visited the Kotel for Kabbalat Shabbat, "even those who have serious questions about Israel and the Palestinians found themselves dancing with soldiers," he said.

Rev. Hamilton recalled visiting the Church of Nativity, where it's believed that Jesus was born.

"One of the Muslim women, in a hijab… started to cry. She was just beside herself in the best kind of way because there is more about Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the Qur'an than there is in the New Testament… She was just overwhelmed to be standing in the spot where Mary gave birth to Jesus," she said.

For more information or to register for the trip, contact Csillag at judycsillag@rogers.com.

Student raises awareness of lymphedema

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Leora Nash, a 15-year-old student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto was diagnosed with primary lymphedema in her right leg when she was four.

Leora Nash

"I had to receive special weekly massages that brought the swelling down, so I could wear a custom-made knee-high stocking," Leora tells *The CJN*.

Few have heard of primary or secondary lymphedema, including those at risk for developing the condition. The majority of people diagnosed will have secondary lymphedema and are cancer survivors.

It is rare to have primary lymphedema, and even rarer to have pediatric primary lymphedema, like Leora.

Lymphedema is a chronic infection often associated with excessive swelling, because the lymphatic system fails to drain fluid, cells and protein away from tissues within the body. It is often a complication arising from the treatment of various cancers and melanoma.

Lymphedema affects some four to five million people in North America, including some 300,000 Canadians. If left untreated, there is a risk of loss of limb function, as well as chronic infection. The Lymphedema Association of Ontario receives no government funding.

Treatment consists of compression therapy, bandaging, pressure garments, skin care to prevent infection, and manual lymphatic drainage massage performed by a certified lymphedema therapist.

"I still remember the day Leora got the stocking – I was so worried she would hate wearing it – but she thought it was amazing! 'It gives me super-powers,' Leora said, jumping up and down. That was a big relief for me," recalled Janice Goldberg, Leora's mother.

"Leora began exhibiting episodes of pain starting at age six," Goldberg said. "We noticed that she would have discomfort after a lot of walking or an increase in activity during family outings.

"At age eight, she had a week of increasing, unmanageable pain that resulted in an admission to Sick Kids' Hospital for a lymphedema-related cellulitis infection. The episode triggered the development of neuropathic chronic pain in her foot. She was helped by the chronic pain team at Sick Kids and we also sought care for her at Boston Children's Hospital.

"Over time, Leora learned to manage her pain using a toolbox of strategies. Her neuropathic pain dissipated and she was no longer affected as severely."

When she was 12, Leora received a copy of *The Big Book of Lymphoedema* from England. "This book is for kids, and illustrates what lymphedema is with bright pictures and activities," Leora said.

Today, "The Big Book for Kids" is an outreach program in collaboration with the Hospital for Sick Children's department of rehabilitation services. *The Big Book of Lymphoedema* is provided to each newly diagnosed and follow-up patient to help them understand the changes that will happen to their body and prepare them to cope with this life-long condition.

On the last weekend of September, the Lymphedema Association of Ontario held its annual fundraising five-kilometre walk in five different cities across Ontario and raised almost $23,000 for research.

HURDLER INSPIRES: **Perdita Felicien, centre, Olympian and two-time world champion hurdler, visited Leo Baeck Day School's south campus recently as ambassador for Right to Play, the global organization that uses sport and play to empower children facing poverty, conflict and disease. Pictured with her, from left, are Jennifer Ballon, principal Lauren Sigel, Jason Gould and Right to Play ambassador Josh Willms, who biked 7,000 kilometres across Canada.**

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Pro-Israel transit ads appear in Vancouver

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — The pro-Israel group StandWithUs Canada posted ads in Vancouver public transit stations Oct. 14 to counter anti-Israel ads that have been running since the summer.

Ten TransLink stations will display the pro-Israel posters for a month to counter the anti-Israel posters currently at these sites and on 15 Vancouver buses.

A StandWithUs ad in Vancouver. [*StandWithUs photo*]

"We believe there are many people who will look at the anti-Israel signs and go away thinking that's the truth about Israel, because prior to our poster campaign, there was nothing to refute the lies," said Meryle Kates, executive director of StandWithUs Canada. "And if we've studied history, we know the propaganda campaign can change peoples' minds."

The StandWithUs ads consist of two different posters. The first depicts Jewish loss of land from Biblical times to the present by juxtaposing a map of the ancient Jewish kingdom circa 1000 BCE, a map of the land designated as the Jewish homeland by the League of Nations in 1920 and a map of the much smaller Israel of today.

The second ad shows pictures of Israeli and Canadian children waving their national flags, celebrating the shared values and freedom both countries enjoy.

The controversial "Disappearing Palestine" ads, by contrast, sponsored by a coalition of anti-Israel groups led by the Canada-Palestine Support Network, show what the group says is the shrinking territory of "Palestine" since 1946.

"The anti-Israel ads distort facts," said Roz Rothstein, CEO of the 12-year-old U.S.-based parent group StandWithUs International.

"They presume there once was an Arab country called 'Palestine,' when in fact no such country ever existed prior to the one being considered today. Conversely, there has been a continuous Jewish presence in the land of Israel for three millennia, and the League of Nations recognized the Jews' historical connection to the land, which is why it carved out the Palestine Mandate as the Jewish homeland."

StandWithUs has countered similar anti-Israel ad campaigns over the past six years in a number of U.S. cities.

Rothstein said the anti-Israel posters in Vancouver are pretty similar.

"It's the same junk, the same twisted information that omits important context and distorts the land issues," she said.

"These anti-Semitic campaigns are showing up in books, movies and boycott campaigns, and the people behind them are relentless. They apply the same technique and ideology internationally. There has to be someone saying 'This is not OK, it's inaccurate and it will not lead to peace.'"

Rothstein said she first saw the "Disappearing Palestine" maps in New York and that she believes they were conceived by Alison Weir, the founder of If Americans Knew, a group that describes itself as "a non-profit dedicated to accurately informing Americans."

"This distortion that accuses the Jewish people of having nothing and taking everything away from a Palestinian entity is just an absurdity," Rothstein said. "But people don't know that, so if you let it slide and stand as a lie, then guess what? It gets attention."

Rothstein admits the situation in Israel isn't perfect. "Everyone dreams of peace, but you cannot get to peace with distortion and lies. Nothing said will come of promoting hostility," she said.

Countering the anti-Israel campaigns is expensive, and the coalitions behind the ads seem to have unlimited funds, she added. "Unfortunately, we don't. I would guess they're spending $100,000 a year on all these efforts."

While the anti-Israel posters have a four-month run in Translink stations, StandWithUs' posters will only be displayed for one month due to funding limitations, Kates said.

"We're looking for more funding to be able to keep the posters up longer, and I'd love to be contacted by donors," she said. "If we believe the coalition behind these anti-Israel posters, this is a campaign going across the country. StandWithUs wants to find supporters to be able to put up our truth in each place."

Rothstein also hopes Canadian donors will come forward.

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Participants faced with unusual tasks

Continued from page 3

On the Toronto Scion City Chase website, Miller and Greenwood are described as "wily old veterans." Aged 40 and 43 respectively, they are substantially older than the mostly 20-somethings they regularly compete against – and beat.

They keep themselves in good shape by playing a variety of sports, so they're able to cover ground quickly between clue sites. More than that, they allocate their time wisely – hence the descriptor "wily."

To understand how that plays a part in a race, first you need to understand what a City Chase is.

Billed as an "urban adventure race," it sees competitors embark on a sort of scavenger hunt while deciphering cryptic clues. The clues direct them to locations, called ChasePoints, where there are tasks that must be completed. The first team to complete 10 tasks wins.

In this year's race, held in June, a clue directed participants to a "park [that] shares its name with the Danaus plexippus."

Likely not many competitors are familiar with the scientific name of butterfly species, and that's when a cellphone comes in handy. City Chase rules are liberal. You can walk, run or take public transportation to get from ChasePoint to ChasePoint, and you can call a friend for help in deciphering a clue. In their case, Miller and Greenwood rely on Neil Lipman, Miller's brother-in-law, who's "on call at home for us," Miller said.

"He'll find an address and give advice on the best way to get there," he added, in the case above, to Monarch Park.

That can save a lot of time, which in the end, is the name of the game.

Two Live Jews begin by examining all the clues, figuring out their locations, and plotting a route that will cut the time spent travelling to a minimum.

"Our strength is probably our strategy," said Miller.

When they do arrive at a ChasePoint, they're faced with unusual tasks.

At Yuk Yuks, they were asked to create a sketch and make the judges laugh.

Another task might mean learning a synchronized swim routine, completing a jigsaw puzzle (but running up and down a hill to do so), putting a snake around your neck, holding a baby alligator (its jaws were tied shut), fish in a pool or, as an alternative and to save time, eat a live earthworm.

So what motivates Two Live Jews?

"We just like that we're pushing back a little bit against father time. We compete with those kids and beat them," Greenwood said.

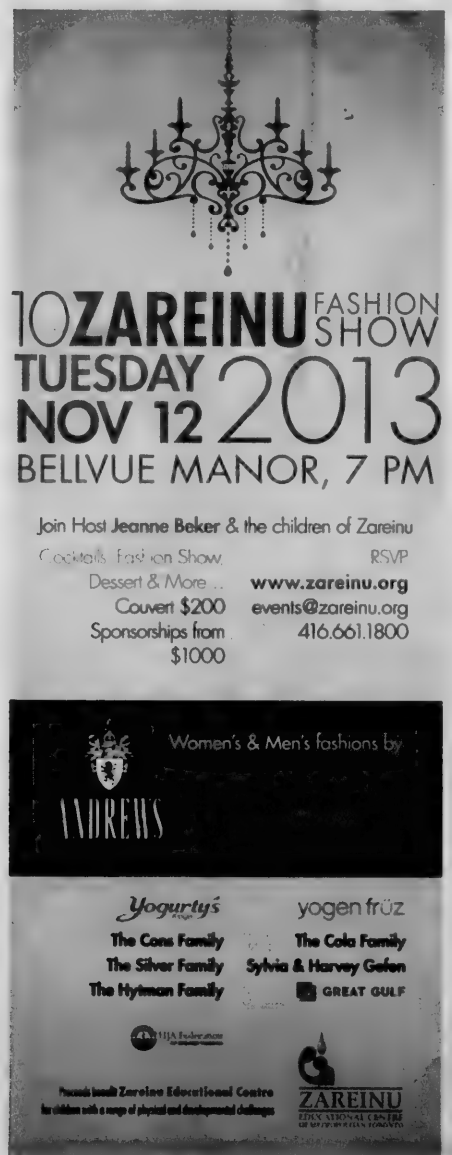
Despite the stresses the competition can put on a team, "we get along great," he added. "We're both highly competitive. We both want to win."

So what was Greenwood's most difficult task? Wearing a snake, holding an alligator?

Nope.

It was a simple golf shot, a 40-yard pitch to a target. Miller, a golfer, quickly completed his part of the task. It took Greenwood "15 to 20 shots, easy" before he did his. Trouble was, his partner had to retrieve the ball each time, making him run over and over again.

It wasn't particularly slimy or goofy, but stressful nevertheless – and followed, said Miller, with "laughter when he finally completed it."



102-year-old's birthday a day late

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

On Nov. 1, Betty Rumberg will turn 102.

With a chuckle and a twinkle in her eyes, she says, "I was really born on Oct. 31, but the midwife changed the date because she didn't think I should have my birthday on Halloween."

At Rumberg's North Toronto apartment, the articulate and attractive centenarian-plus noted that there was much humour in her family.

"My claim to fame is that my two first cousins are Moe and Curly of the Three Stooges. I love theatre and arts and I wrote and directed many plays. I guess it was in our bones."

Surrounded by piles of newspaper clippings, awards and photos, Rumberg noted the honours she received from many charitable and community organizations, where she was touted as "a fabulous volunteer."

Among her memorabilia is a plaque she received from the Bank of Montreal when she turned 100, as well as one from the Canadian Cancer Society and another from the government of Ontario for volunteerism, and many more.

She explains her varied interests. "I belong to everything that was good. It did a lot for me, and I did a lot for them."

Born in Hartford, Conn., in 1911, her family moved to St. Paul, Minn., where she received a teacher's degree at the University of Minnesota.

There she met Joseph Rumberg from Winnipeg, who was studying dentistry. When he completed his degree, they were married and moved to Winnipeg, where he became a prominent dentist and community leader.

While raising their three children, she became a volunteer, serving as president of many organizations, including Hadassah, the Dental Wives Association and the Faculty of Women's Association at the University of Manitoba. She also became involved with Congregation Shaarey Zedek.

Despite her physical problems – including macular degeneration, recurring pneumonia and living with an oxygen tank – Rumberg exudes a joie de vivre that belies her age.

Betty Rumberg

But her cheerfulness disappeared as she spoke of the death of her husband at age 67, the year after they arrived in Toronto in 1976, as well as the deaths of her siblings and two of her children, Hester, 64, a dentist and Ross, 59, the owner of Rumour's Comedy Club and Restaurant in Winnipeg.

But she adds how pleased she is that her daughter, Sue Roadburg, who teaches at Seneca College, "lives nearby and that's the reason I came here."

Shortly after moving to Toronto, she became involved with Beth Tikvah Synagogue, where she attends Shabbat and holiday services. When the synagogue had its first egalitarian service in 2012 and women were called up for aliyot, she received the first aliyah.

She serves on Beth Tikvah's chesed committee and on the tenant's association of her apartment building, and she also helps with a kosher food drive.

She credits her long life to exercise, tennis and skating, adding, "I'm still walking."

Asked what she looks forward to, she replies, "All the things that I am doing and enjoying: my family, my three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren."

Endowments up in Montreal

Continued from page 1

The Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal had about $317 million, an increase of $31 million over 2011, executive director Robert Kleinman told *The CJN*. He said the survey incorrectly reported a $78-million increase.

The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba's 2012 financial statement reported endowment funds worth $80 million, which contradicts the JFNA survey's finding that they were worth $57 million. The foundation's endowment funds were worth $76.5 million in 2011, according to its financial statements.

Ronit Holtzman, vice-president of planned giving and endowments with the Toronto foundation, explained in an email to *The CJN* that a "significant number of [the Toronto foundation's 750 individual] funds were created to support the annual United Jewish Appeal campaign. Each year, income from these funds is granted to the United Jewish Appeal campaign."

Kleinman said that although a portion of the foundations' funds goes to federations to allocate as they choose, most of the money is directed by donors to other charities, both Jewish and secular.

Ottawa's Freedman said the growth the Jewish Canadian foundations are experiencing comes from a new way of doing things.

"What we're doing is taking a donor-centric approach to fundraising, so when we're doing an 'ask' for the annual campaign, we're very often including a 'planned-giving ask' incorporated into that," Freedman said.

Freedman said efforts are being made to accommodate the needs and wishes of potential donors.

"We might look at the donor and talk about a supplementary giving opportunity, so if their particular passion is Jewish education, that's where the conversation is going to take us. I do think fundraising has changed in that it is much more about a personal relationship with the donor, and it's much more about helping them realize their philanthropic aspirations."

Kleinman said it might be the donor-centric approach "that has led to a greater appreciation by our Montreal Jewish community of the possibilities within the foundation. Most of our donors understand that we are going to take care of them, and it's not about us, it's about them."

Montreal Jewish donors might also see the foundation as "a vehicle to help with their philanthropy... We have more people over the last few years who have decided to work with us, I guess, because of our sophistication financially and tax-wise," he said.

Kleinman attributes the foundation's $31-million increase in 2012 to Montreal's "traditional, philanthropic community... We grew up with this, and we've had great leadership and great commitment and a fairly cohesive Jewish community. People feel Jewish, and they feel committed to charity."

In Toronto, Holtzman said that over the past decade, the foundation began working with outside advisers, including wealth managers, insurance professionals, lawyers, and accountants.

"We are networking closely with a larger group of advisers to connect with members of the Toronto Jewish community and talk to them about the opportunities and the benefits of opening a fund at the Jewish foundation," she said.

"The wonderful growth here... bodes well for the future."

Holtzman added that since the foundation began focusing on opening new funds and expanding its planned-giving program, the foundation's assets have grown from about $100 million in 2003 to more than $500 million in assets and planned gifts today.

Holocaust centre launches app

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — The Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC) has launched an app for self-guided tours of its museum, in conjunction with its 16th annual Holocaust Education Series.

The mobile application for iPad and Android devices has been developed to further the MHMC's goal of educating people of all backgrounds and ages about the Holocaust, and sensitizing the public to the dangers of anti-Semitism and other forms of racism, hatred and indifference.

Julie Guinard, co-ordinator of the museum and collections, said the app provides access to three new tours through the collection's images and videos, many exclusive to the MHMC.

This year's Holocaust Education Series, which runs from Oct. 23 to Nov. 4, pays tribute to both armed and "spiritual" resistance. It recognizes those who risked their lives fighting against deportations and mass murders, as well as individuals and communities that preserved their humanity and dignity in the face of annihilation.

Burka performed for Nazi officials

Continued from page 1

To her great good fortune, the commandant of the camp, Albert Konrad Gemmeker, was a skating aficionado. When he was told there was a champion figure skater in the camp, he had her taken aside. Breaking with standard practice, he sent to Amsterdam to retrieve her skates and costumes, and he had her perform for Nazi officials on frozen ponds near the camp.

When she was not performing, she was sent to work on a farm, and later she was given a job as a housekeeper for the camp architect. She never wanted for food.

"I was saved because I was a figure skater," she said.

Ellen Burka
(Paul Lungen photo)

Burka, who still keeps busy mentoring young skaters in Toronto, was later transported to Theresienstadt, and she was there when the war ended.

After walking home to Holland, she resumed her skating career. She won the 1946 and 1947 Dutch women's championships. She also worked as a choreographer and teacher, and she organized the first-ever ice show in Holland.

Life was pretty good, yet her husband, Jan, was nervous. "He was afraid the Russians would invade Holland, and so he shlepped me to Canada."

"I came here and I thought I'd never skate again. I didn't know they had rinks here."

A newcomer to the skating community, she had to start at the bottom. As she entered the Canadian figure skating scene, she brought with her the revolutionary styles she had developed in Holland. A dancer since the age of five, she asked her students to move to the music, to express themselves. That just wasn't done at the time, she said.

Her student Toller Cranston epitomized the Burka style, skating expressively and emotionally and winning an Olympic bronze medal in 1976. With Cranston, Burka originated the idea of "theatre on ice," in which creative dance expression played a prominent role.

Altogether, she coached 26 Canadian world championship and Olympic medalists. A legend in the skating community, she has been enshrined in Canada's Sports Hall of Fame.

All the while, Burka kept her Jewish past a secret. Her daughters learned of it when they were in their late teens. It became public knowledge a few years ago when Astra made a film, *Skate to Survive*, about the first 44 years of her mother's life.

Representing the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame at an event inducting Ellen and Petra Burka, Israel's consul general in Toronto, DJ Schneeweiss, described Ellen as a survivor who had enriched Canadian life.

Injecting a note of humour into the proceedings, Schneeweiss said the Jewish calendar is full of festivals that can be been summed up as, "They tried to kill us, they didn't succeed, let's eat."

In Burka's case, he said, it should be, "They tried to kill us, they didn't succeed, let's skate."

Skating not only saved Burka, it continues to be a centrepiece of her life.

Petra Burka 'a fighter' on the ice
See story cjnews.com

TTC rejects anti-Israel ad

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The Toronto Transit Commission has rejected a proposal by the group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) to run an anti-Israel ad that is "inaccurate and misleading," TTC spokesperson Brad Ross said.

"There are statements in the ad with respect to illegality and international law that the TTC, in its legal opinion, believe are inaccurate and misleading and as could result in a specific group – in this case Israelis and/or Jewish people – being targeted or may lead to hatred or violence against that specific group," Ross said.

The CJPME's proposed ad is similar, but not identical, to the "Disappearing Palestine" ad that began running during the summer in Vancouver's transit system. The ad shows four maps, spanning from 1946 to 2012, that suggest Israel is taking over Palestinian land.

The pro-Israel group StandWithUs Canada posted ads in Vancouver public transit stations Oct. 14 to counter the anti-Israel ad. One emphasized shared Canadian and Israeli values, while the other depicts what it calls Jewish loss of land in the Mideast since biblical times.

Ross said that the CJPME ad submitted to the TTC did contain the four maps, "but there are some statements made [that there has been] Palestinian loss of land, and then it says this is unfair and then there is a statement that it's also illegal under international law.

"We hang our hat on this particular language, and our legal opinion is that there has been no international court finding on illegality," he added.

The decision to reject the ad was made by TTC staff, who reviewed it and determined it was unacceptable under the TTC's advertising policy and the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards.

"The advertisements that run on the TTC must comply with our policy, of course, but also adhere to all applicable laws and any guidelines that are set up by the Supreme Court of Canada," Ross said.

He said that the CJPME has the right to appeal the decision. If it chooses to do so, an advertising review working group made up of three TTC board members will determine if TTC staff applied the policy appropriately.

The CJPME did not immediately return request for comment.

Mideast media monitor launches Canadian branch

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The video of a Muslim cleric railing from the pulpit against foes of supposed Jewish origin and warning Christians in Egypt that "the fire will burn you" was not from Cairo or Tehran.

Canadians were shocked that it was surreptitiously filmed this past August in Edmonton during a Friday sermon by Egyptian-born Sheikh Shaban Sherif Mady.

That such hate-filled rhetoric was being espoused in this country would likely have never been known if such activity wasn't being constantly monitored, translated from Arabic, and disseminated to the media and posted on the Internet.

The organization behind that effort is the Middle East Media Research Institute, known as MEMRI, a Washington, D.C.-based non-governmental, non-partisan organization founded 15 years ago and headed by a former Israeli intelligence officer.

MEMRI relies entirely on private donations, and a Canadian fundraising arm has just been set up under the presidency of Marilee Wexler, who is working with a small Montreal-based board of directors. The group has been incorporated as a charitable organization for tax purposes.

To read full story, go to cjnews.com

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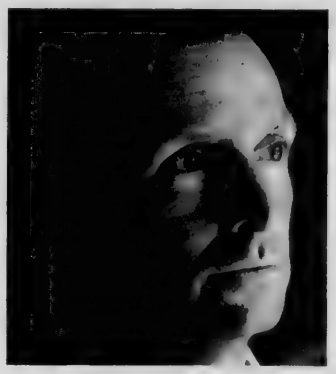
Na'amat hosts fundraiser fit for a prince

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Prince Hermann Friedrich Fernando Roland zu Leiningen, the grandson of King Boris III of Bulgaria, who refused to evacuate 50,000 Jews from Bulgaria to concentration camps during the Holocaust, was the guest speaker at a recent Na'amat membership event.

The prince is the son of Prince Karl of Leiningen and Princess Marie Louise of Bulgaria, but prefers to be called Hermann Leiningen. Through his father, he's a great-great-great grandson of Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom and, therefore, is in the line of succession of the British throne.

The membership event was held Oct. 9 at the Borochov Cultural Centre with a filled-to-capacity crowd of more than 250 guests.



Hermann Leiningen

Event chair Roni Maderer, said Na'amat invited the prince because his grandfather's story "is a fascinating [one] that needs to be told, how one man stood up to Hitler and didn't allow himself to be bullied into submission.

"As we move further away from the Holocaust, it's more and more important to tell these stories so generations understand there were also good people who believed in humanity."

Leiningen, who lives and works in Toronto, combined his speech with humour, genealogy and centuries of history.

Speaking of his connection to royalty, he joked that his connection to royalty is that he attended Queen's University and he works in finance at the Royal Bank. He noted that he is the first royal to be a Toronto Maple Leafs fan.

He said that through his mother, his position in line to the British throne is 131, "but it is always changing with births and deaths."

His parents came to Canada in 1957 and he was born in 1963. He said he had a North American upbringing similar to most children, but he was able to spend summers in Europe with relatives who were members of royal families.

His parents chose Canada, he said, because his father was a prisoner during the war and remembered the kindness of Canadian soldiers in Bulgaria.

Leiningen complimented Na'amat on its work in improving the quality of life for women, children and families in Canada and Israel.

His father moved to Israel and spent the last 20 years of his life there. His funeral was in Israel, and he was buried in Germany.

"My father loved the beauty of Israel, and it was the kindness of the people who kept him there," Leiningen said.

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or
What Can Computers Tell Us About the Torah?
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Why Israel is Winning the Battle Against all its Adversaries

11:05 - 12:00
The Kabbalists of Tzfat
or
Socrates, Aphrodite & Rabban Gamliel
or
The Impact of New Media on the Israeli Palestinian Conflict
or
The Resurgence of Patriotism in Post-Post-Zionist Israel

12:05 - 1:00
Who's Afraid of God?
Why Modern Jews Have Run Away From Jewish Mysticism
or
Hazal's Theory of Probability
or
The Return to Jerusalem: What Exactly Are We Hoping For?

1:00 - 2:55
Lunch and Keynote Panel
Israel as a Religious State: Challenges and Opportunities

3:00 - 3:55
Four Who Entered the Pardes: How Rabbi Akiva Emerged Unscathed
or
Perspectives on Sports & Sports Fandom
or
From Boston to Jerusalem: Covering the News in the Middle East

4:00 - 4:50
Yaakov and Eisav - Symbolic Interpretation of the Torah
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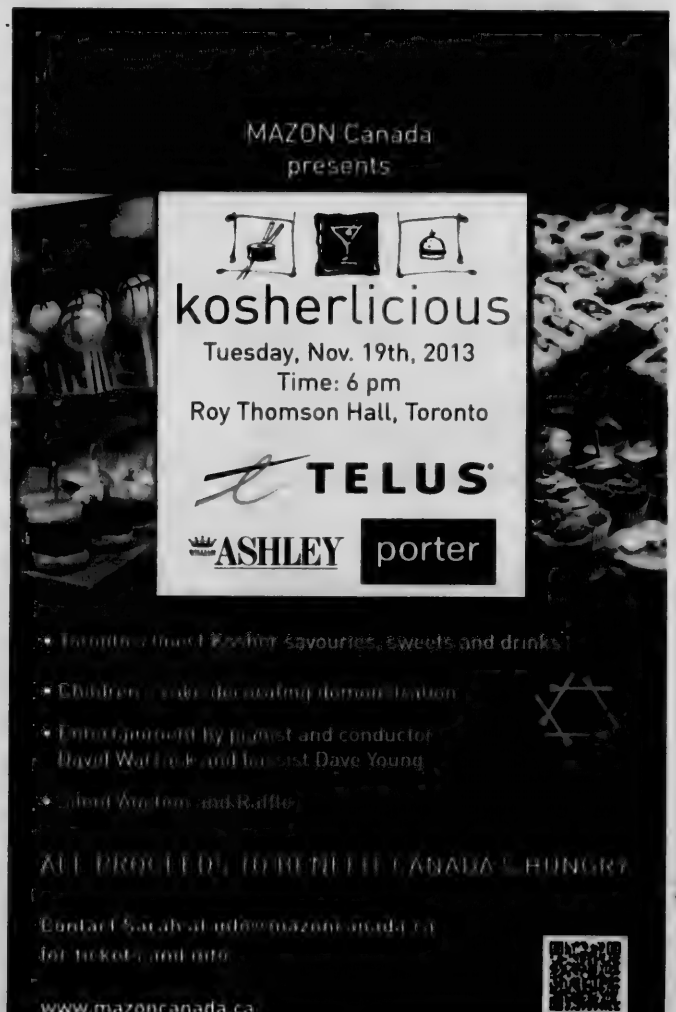

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What a waste

Money Matters
Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

The gall of some people knows no bounds. Even worse is the total lack of concern they display that perhaps their behaviour leaves much to be desired.

Let's start with Canada's former technology darling, a company very possibly on its way to oblivion, BlackBerry. While its leaders have followed an ancient Jewish tradition of changing the name of the "sick" in the hope that the "new" person might get better, BlackBerry is sicker than it ever was when it was known as Research in Motion. And we're not just talking about its financial situation.

Here's a company whose sales are sinking fast and whose CEO "earned" a salary of close to $19 million in fiscal 2013. Yet over the summer, his contract was, quietly, re-negotiated to one that pays up to $55 million if he loses his job due to a takeover. Of course, had the company not fallen off the cliff, nobody would be talking about a takeover. There's nothing illegal about this. It's only a moral obscenity.

A spokesperson had the gall to say that the "compensation was reviewed and approved by the entire BlackBerry board." I have no doubt that it was – adding insult to injury. Sadly, I've heard very little discussion about this, unfortunately for good reason. The list of companies that have given departing CEOs similar golden parachutes is a long one indeed.

Yet one could argue that BlackBerry is a private, albeit publicly traded, company, and no one is forced to buy its shares, so buyer beware. However such cannot be said about the taxpayer-supported Pan Am Games being held in and around Toronto in 2015. The budget for the games was set at $1.4 billion. Whether that's a good use of money is a debate worth having, and few would (or should) argue that those in favour are somehow morally wanting. But the way the budget was presented surely is.

The government recently announced, after it was basically too late to actually do anything about it, that it neglected to include the cost of the athletes village in the budget. After all, that's only a mere $710 million or so. That one can neglect to include such an amount in the official budget speaks to a total disregard for public funds and is a shameful act of deception.

Making matters worse, the same government is upset that the CEO of the Pan Am Games billed it for parking fees of 91 cents. Now that's something worthy of censure – how dare he bilk the public like that. It's just another sad example of wasting time on the petty and missing the truly important issues. What this says about a person who is making close to half a million dollars a year and stands to make hundreds of thousands of dollars more as a bonus if the games come in on budget (is that with or without the $710 million in wiggle room?), I will leave to your imagination.

The Talmud teaches that in the messianic era, chutzpah will be greatly increased. We can thus take solace that the messianic era should soon be upon us.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

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Jewish way with words – Pt. 2

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Today more quotes by Jews, about Jews, and what Jews say to each other when they're having a bad day.

MemorableQuotations.com presents wisdom from a diverse assortment of Jewish personalities, including:

• Anne Frank: "I have often been downcast, but never in despair; I regard our hiding as a dangerous adventure, romantic and interesting at the same time."

• Lillian Hellman: "I like people who refuse to speak until they are ready to speak."

• Oscar Levant: "Strip away the phony tinsel of Hollywood and you find the real tinsel underneath."

And of course, from the Marxes.

• Groucho: "Age is not a particularly interesting subject. Anyone can get old. All you have to do is live long enough."

• Karl: "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce." **[http://bit.ly/jquote7]**

Jews don't have a monopoly on wit or provocative statements. I particular like the sites that feature quotes about Jews by non-Jews.

• "I will insist the Hebrews have [contributed] more to civilize men than any other nation... They are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited this Earth. The Romans and their empire were but a bubble in comparison to the Jews." – John Adams, second U.S. president.

You'll also find the famous 1899 quote from Mark Twain, which concludes, "All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?" The quote is too long to reproduce here, but if you're not familiar with it, do yourself a favour and look it up. **[http://bit.ly/jquote8]**

Are you a Jewish quotes maven? Then it's time to test your mettle. I came across five quizzes based on Torah (or as they put it "Old Testament") quotes. They start off pretty easy and then get challenging. Sample question: who made the following statement to God? "I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."

To find out, take the quiz (or check out Exodus 4:10.) **[http://bit.ly/jquote9]**

Finally, they may call it the "Mamaloshen" but boy can Yiddish dole it out when it comes to nasty (yet clever) quotes.

• *Zalts im in di oygen, feffer im in di noz.* (Throw salt in his eyes, pepper in his nose.)

• *Zol es im onkumn vos ikh vintsh im - khotsh a helft, khotsh halb, khotsh a tsent kheylik.* (Let what I wish on him come true – most, even half, even just 10 per cent.)

• *A kleyn kind zol nokh im heysn.* (A young child should be named after him.)

[http://bit.ly/jquote10]

And you've got to hand it to the members of Congregation Kehillat Israel in Lansing, Mich., who have amassed an incredible 1,171 Yiddish sayings. I'll leave you with three:

• *Loif nit noch dem koved, vet er alain tsu dir kumen.* (Honours will come to you by themselves if you don't run after them.)

• *Nein rabonim kenen kain minyen nit machen ober tsen shusten yoh.* (Nine rabbis cannot make a quorum but ten shoemakers can.)

• *Du kannst nicht auf meinem rucken pishen unt mir sagen class es regen ist.* (You can't pee on my back and tell me that it's rain!) **[http://bit.ly/jquote11]**

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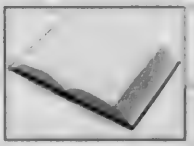
In Judaism, actions trump words

Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky



Rabbinic Reflections

In the late afternoon of a fall day in 1929, Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Bloch arrived in a small town in Lithuania by the name of Ponevezh. His first stop was the local synagogue. As he walked in, he asked the gabbai if it would be possible for him to lead the congregation in the afternoon services and say *Kaddish*, since it was his mother's yahrzeit. The gabbai, being familiar with the train schedule from Rabbi Bloch's town of Telshe to Ponevezh, asked the guest: "If you have yahrzeit today, why were you travelling during the morning service? The train leaves Telshe several hours before the time of prayer."

Rabbi Bloch responded: "The *Kaddish* is a prayer that talks about sanctifying the name of God. Words are indeed very important and thus, the *Kaddish* prayer is quite significant. However, in Judaism, actions are far more important than words. Now, the purpose of my trip is to raise funds for the victims of the massacre that took place in the Land of Israel this past summer. Actions of charity that demonstrate our love and concern for our fellow Jew sanctify the name of God far more than the *Kaddish* prayer."

I think we can all agree that words play a major role in Jewish tradition. The length of the Saturday morning service proves it. Yet despite their significance, we can never allow words to be a substitute for actions. It's important for a parent to teach his children about ethics. Yet the greatest moment of education is when the parent acts ethically in the child's presence.

Rabbi Bloch was indeed the quintessential man of action. In the fall of 1940, he was again on the road to collect funds. This journey, however, was much longer than the one to Ponevezh: he travelled overseas to the United States. In 1941, he realized that the scheduled return to Lithuania would be impossible. As a man committed to the perpetuation of Jewish tradition and learning, he decided to open a yeshiva in Cleveland, Ohio. Over the next few years, he devoted all his time and energy to the institution, despite the fact that he had no sign of life from his wife and children who had remained in Lithuania.

In the winter of 1945, the fate of his wife and 10 out of his 11 children was confirmed. They had been massacred by the Nazis. In the midst of lecture notes that Rabbi Bloch was writing that day, we find: "Having learned of my awful tragedy, my first call of duty must be labouring in Torah. I am indentured in the service of my people... Of what importance are the woes of the individual when compared to the duties of the People of Israel?"

These weren't just words. For the next decade, until his untimely passing in 1955, Rabbi Bloch built the Telshe Yeshiva of Cleveland, an institution of higher Torah learning that produced hundreds of teachers serving the People of Israel.

So next time you hear the words of *Kaddish*, remember that they are indeed important. However, bear in mind that they pale in comparison to action.

Rabbi Milevsky is spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Torah in Toronto.

Time to do more Jewish

From the Bimah
Rabbi Catharine Clark

Based on the Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews released earlier this month, America's 6.6 million Jews know that 76 per cent of them attended synagogue services "a few times" or less in the past year, 32 per cent had a Christmas tree in their home last year, and 31 per cent say they're "not very attached" or "not at all attached" to Israel. The survey is a snapshot of assimilation.

With numbers like these, the American Jewish press and Jewish leaders throughout the United States went, predictably, nuts. The *Forward* and the Jewschool blog can't stop talking about the survey. In response to the finding that 48 per cent of American Jews think that the Israeli government isn't making a "sincere effort" to achieve peace with the Palestinians, Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, went so far as to dismiss half of American Jewry, saying, "You know who the Jewish establishment represents? Those who care... I'm not going to follow this."

Based on the 2011 National Household Survey, we know that 329,500 Canadians self-identify as Jewish by religion and that 20,155 Canadians report that Hebrew was a language they learned at home as a child and still understood at the time of the census.

And that's all we know. There's no current national survey of the attitudes and behaviors of Canada's Jews. Federations in some of the major cities, notably Toronto and Montreal, have surveyed their local Jewish communities, but for Canada as a whole, we have only the most basic numbers about population and Hebrew-speakers.

Do we want to know more? Scholars of the Canadian Jewish community, such as Ira Robinson and Harold Waller, have long pointed out the influence of American Jewry on Canadian Jewish life and the parallel demographic trends between the two Jewish populations, albeit with a couple-of-decades time lag for the Canadian Jewish community. If they're right, our future is a much smaller, less-connected, Jewish community – unless we take action.

Conducting a survey, however, isn't the most urgent action we need to take. In her editorial response to the survey, Jane Eisner, editor of the *Forward*, points out that a Jew is what a Jew does.

It's time for us to "do more Jewish." If you're like the 76 per cent of American Jews who don't frequent synagogue services, it's time to show up. If you could be grouped with the 31 per cent of American Jews who aren't attached to Israel, it's time to visit, or at least have a real conversation with someone who is connected.

If you're a rabbi or synagogue lay leader, it's time to make synagogue services an experience that all Jews will want to attend. If you're a Jewish communal leader, it's time to listen to Jews who don't agree with you, even about Israel.

Demographic studies give us a good picture of the present and the past. They're predictive only if current trends continue. Let's make sure the trends identified in the survey of American Jews don't hold true for our Jewish community. And next year, let's decorate a sukkah, not a Christmas tree.

Rabbi Clark is spiritual leader of Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ont.

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Peace talks have plenty of time: Abbas

JTA

JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said the new peace talks with Israel have plenty of time to bear fruit.

Abbas told the German news service *Deutche Welle* that the peace talks that restarted in July after a hiatus of several years have not reached a dead end, as some have claimed in recent weeks.

"We're still at the beginning of the road," he said in the interview on Saturday. "We have enough time to continue to examine the main and tough issues."

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has said the talks should last about nine months.

Abbas also said during his visit to Germany that any peace deal will be put up for referendum, and that Jerusalem should be the shared capital of both the Jewish and the Palestinian states. He also hinted that the negotiations are based on the pre-1967 borders.

Mahmoud Abbas

Also Saturday, the Hamas prime minister in Gaza, Ismail Haniyeh, called for an end to the division between the Palestinian leaderships in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in order to better negotiate an agreement with Israel.

"Let's have one government, one parliament and one president," Haniyeh said, according to *Reuters*.

He also called for a national strategy that includes "armed struggle, popular uprising and political, diplomatic and media battles."

MULRONEY IN ISRAEL: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, met with former Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney in Jerusalem on Oct. 21. *(Kobi Gideon/GPO/Flash90 photo)*

Bank of Israel to get first female boss

JTA

JERUSALEM — Karnit Flug, deputy governor of the Bank of Israel, was picked to move up to the top spot and if confirmed will be the first woman to be the central bank's governor.

Her appointment was announced Sunday by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yair Lapid. The deputy governor since July 2011, Flug has been acting governor since Stanley Fischer stepped down June 30. Fischer recommended Flug as his replacement.

Her appointment came after two would-be appointees withdrew their names after embarrassing personal information came to light.

Lawrence Summers, a former U.S. Treasury secretary and president of Harvard University, also reportedly turned down the post last week.

Flug had resigned after being passed over to replace Fischer. Her nomination must be confirmed by the Knesset.

Flug earned a PhD in economics from Columbia University in 1985 and worked at the International Monetary Fund before joining the Bank of Israel in 1998.

Karnit Flug

She joins Janet Yellen of the United States as landmark picks to lead the central banks of their countries. Yellen, who is Jewish, was appointed this month as chief of the Federal Reserve and if confirmed would be its first female chief.

Iran offers 'no serious proposals'

The Times of Israel

Iran made "no serious proposals" during the two days of talks on its nuclear program in Geneva this week, senior U.S. officials reportedly told their Israeli counterparts.

The officials said the talks were "exploratory" rather than substantive, Israel's Channel 2 news reported Friday night.

TimesofIsrael.com

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Bloomberg to receive first 'Jewish Nobel'

JTA

NEW YORK — New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg will be the first recipient of the $1-million Genesis Prize, which is being called the "Jewish Nobel Prize."

The award was announced Monday.

The Genesis Prize Foundation was established in 2012 by the Genesis Philanthropy Group, a consortium of mega-wealthy philanthropist-businessmen from the former Soviet Union including Mikhail M. Fridman, Pyotr Aven and German Khan; the office of the Prime Minister of Israel, and the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Michael Bloomberg *[Wikimedia Commons]*

The prize, which will be given out annually, is awarded to an accomplished, internationally renowned professional from anywhere in the world who is a role model in his or her community and who can inspire the younger generation of Jews worldwide, according to the foundation's website.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will present the prize to Bloomberg at a ceremony in Jerusalem in May.

Bloomberg was chosen from more than 200 nominees worldwide because of his "track record of outstanding public service and his role as one of the world's greatest philanthropists," according to the prize committee.

"Many years ago, my parents instilled in me Jewish values and ethics that I have carried with me throughout my life, and which have guided every aspect of my work in business, government, and philanthropy," Bloomberg said in a statement, in which he said he was honoured to receive the prize.

Israeli minister in Ottawa for talks on Iran

CJN Staff

Israel's Minister of Strategic Affairs was in Ottawa earlier this week to enlist Canada's support in persuading the world to keep up pressure on Iran to end its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Yuval Steinitz was expected to meet with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird on Monday as *The CJN* went to press.

In an interview with the *Globe and Mail* published Oct. 20, Steinitz said it would be unwise to ease the pressure on Iran.

"Canada is very influential and can exercise its influence elsewhere – in Europe, in China, in America, in Russia, and elsewhere. It's very important. And I know that the Canadian government is already doing so," he told the newspaper.

Steinitz was expected to fly to Washington Tuesday to be briefed regarding the West's negotiations with Iran.

Yad Vashem honour rejected

JTA

JERUSALEM — A family member of an Egyptian doctor who was the first Arab to be recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations said the family is not interested in the honour.

Mohamed Helmy, who died in 1982, was recognized by the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in a ceremony last month.

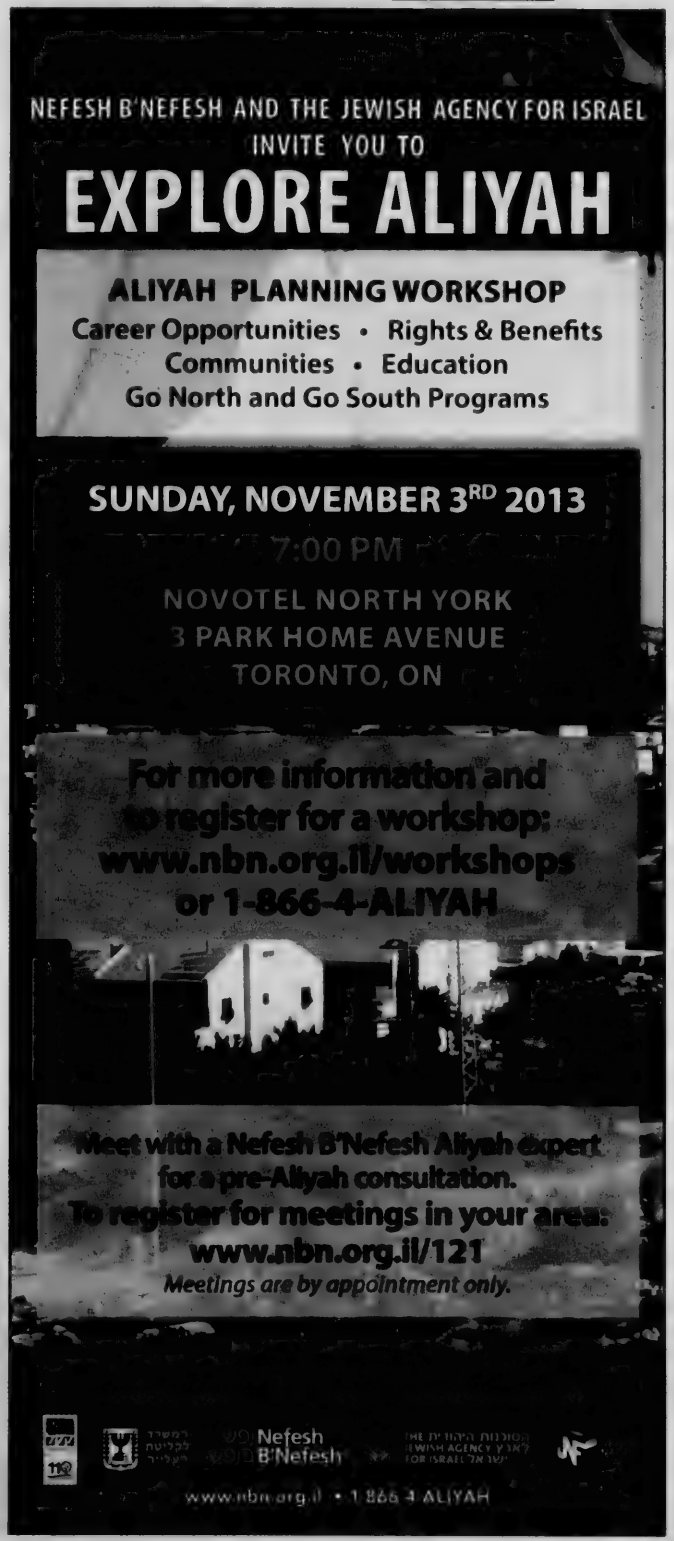
The *Associated Press* tracked down one of Helmy's relatives in Cairo, who told the news service that the family would not accept the award.

"If any other country offered to honour Helmy, we would have been happy with it," Mervat Hassan, the wife of Helmy's great-nephew, told *AP*.

Hassan said the family did not want to accept the honour because Israel and Egypt continue to have a hostile relationship despite a 30-year peace treaty.

She added, however, "I respect Judaism as a religion and I respect Jews. Islam recognizes Judaism as a heavenly religion."

Helmy settled in Berlin after completing his medical studies there, but was forbidden to work under the Nazi regime beginning in 1938 because he was not considered Aryan. He spoke out against Nazi policies and hid a Jewish friend at a cabin he owned. Helmy arranged to hide other members of her family at the home of a German woman who was also honoured by Yad Vashem, Frieda Szturmann, according to Yad Vashem. Letters written decades ago by the Jewish Holocaust survivors on behalf of Helmy were discovered in the archives of the Berlin Senate and recently submitted to Yad Vashem.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European Jews often fear showing identity: poll

JTA

KIEV — A quarter of respondents in a survey of Jews from nine European countries said they avoid visiting places and wearing symbols that identify them as Jews for fear of anti-Semitism.

Fear of wearing a kippah and other identifiably Jewish items was especially strong in Sweden, where 49 per cent of 800 respondents said they refrained from such actions, according to the yearlong survey conducted among more than 5,100 Jews by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

In France, 40 per cent of approximately 1,200 Jews said they avoided wearing such items in public, followed by Belgium with 36 per cent, according to preliminary results from the survey obtained by JTA.

In total, 22 per cent of respondents said they avoided "Jewish events or sites" because of safety concerns.

"The results show that a majority of European Jews are experiencing a rise in anti-Semitism," Gert Weisskirchen, a former representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for fighting anti-Semitism, said Oct. 15 at a conference in Kiev.

The survey, which began on Sept. 3, 2012 closed last month. Along with Sweden, France and Belgium, the survey was conducted online in Britain, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Romania and Latvia. The full report is due to be published next month in Vilnius.

In Hungary, 91 per cent of more than 500 respondents said anti-Semitism has increased in the past five years. The figure was 80 per cent or higher in France, Belgium and Sweden. In Germany, Italy and Britain, some 60 per cent of respondents identified a growth in anti-Semitism, compared to 39 per cent in Latvia.

Figures for people who said they had experienced an anti-Semitic incident in the 12 previous months were 30 per cent for Hungary, 21 per cent for France and 16 per cent in Germany.

Twenty-seven per cent of respondents said the perpetrators were Muslims, while 22 per cent blamed people with "left-wing views" and 19 per cent said the people responsible had "right-wing views."

More than 75 per cent of respondents said they don't report anti-Semitic harassment to police and 64 per cent said they don't report physical assaults, with 67 per cent saying that reporting incidents was either "not worth the effort" or otherwise ineffectual.

"Individual states need to address anti-Semitism not for the sake of the current generation, but to prevent the worsening of the situation for the following one," said Oleksandr Feldman, the Ukrainian Jewish parliament member who organized the two-day conference, titled "From the Beilis Trial to Berlin and Beyond" on the 100th anniversary of the anti-Semitic blood libel trial against Menachem Mendel Beilis, who was acquitted of killing a Christian child to use his blood for rituals.

HIKERS HELP: Some 50 Canadians and more than 30 Israeli victims of terror gathered in Jerusalem recently for the sixth annual OneFamily Cross Israel Hike, a challenging five-day trek to raise money and awareness for Israeli victims of terror. OneFamily (www.onefamilytogether.org) is Israel's only national organization solely dedicated to the rehabilitation of victims of terror attacks and their families. It established the hike as a way for Canadians to show solidarity with terror victims. "For its symbolism alone, hiking is a perfect way to show our solidarity. When we hike, we move toward our goal one step at a time. By supporting victims of terror, we help them heal one step at a time, one family at a time," said Pam Albert, director of OneFamily Canada and a six-time event participant.

Jews and Muslims slam anti-ritual slaughter ads

JTA

ANTWERP, Belgium — A Belgian radio ad that's accused of drawing on Holocaust themes to promote a ban on ritual slaughter has drawn sharp criticism from Jewish and Muslim representatives.

The ad, which the Antwerp-based animal welfare group Gaia produced for airing on national radio and sent Oct. 14 via email to 200 politicians, delivers a mock testimony told from the perspective of a lamb waiting for the slaughter.

"We were asleep when they came for us," the voice-over for the lamb says. "I couldn't understand a word of their foreign language. They hurled us in the truck and took us to a building with blood on the floor. I know what will happen to me but I can only wait."

An announcer then says: "Without stunning, animals are very aware of what goes on in the slaughterhouse. Politicians, change the law and forbid ritual slaughter."

Jewish and Muslim religious laws require animals to be conscious at the time of their slaughter – a practice that some animal rights activists deem cruel.

In a strongly worded condemnation of the ad, Nicolas Zomersztajn of Brussels' Jewish Secular Community Center told the Belgian news agency *Belga* that the ad was "a new example of the trivialization of the crime of genocide by Gaia activists."

The Executive Committee of Belgian Muslims said the campaign "bordered on racism."

A Gaia spokesperson denied the ad contained references to the Holocaust.

"This is an attempt to describe what animals experience now without any religious or historic connotations," the spokesperson told JTA last week. Asked about the "foreign language" element, she replied: "Yes, animals don't understand people."

In 2005, the PETA animal rights group apologized to the Jewish community for its "Holocaust on Your Plate" campaign, two years after the Anti-Defamation League termed it "a project for trivializing the murder of six million Jews."

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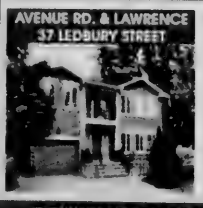

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Low-dose radiation can be beneficial, scientist says

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

Nuclear engineer Jerry Cuttler wants to debunk the radiation scare.

"Low-dose radiation could be employed to delay the onset of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases," said Cuttler, who has more than 50 years of experience in nuclear research.

"Low radiation causes a net beneficial health effect," he said. "Research indicates that the beneficial effects caused by low radiation far outweigh the damage."

Cuttler, 71, received a career achievement award from the International Dose Response Society and was recently the guest speaker at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

He is a graduate of the University of Toronto in nuclear engineering physics, and received a doctorate in nuclear sciences from Technion– Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa.

He led a team at Atomic Energy of Canada Limited that designed and procured the instrumentation for reactor control, safety systems and radiation measurement for three CANDU plants, in Quebec, New Brunswick and Argentina, and then for the Pickering B and Bruce B stations (four reactors each) in Ontario.

Since 1995, Cuttler has been assessing the health effects of radiation and drawing international attention to the beneficial effects of low radiation, since high radiation is known to be harmful.

Jerry Cuttler

"People ask me, 'Since radiation damages cells, how can it be beneficial?' The answer is that low radiation damage 'turns on' many genes that boost powerful, adaptive protection systems that prevent, repair and remove or replace naturally occurring damage in cells, tissues and organisms... So the net benefit is very important."

Low exposures are protection systems in our bodies, curing infections, extending life and reducing the incidences of cancer and congenital malformations, he said in an interview.

"I have urged many oncologists to use total body low-dose radiation as part of cancer therapy."

After retiring in 2000, he formed Cuttler & Associates and served as president of the Canadian Nuclear Society. He was appointed a CNS fellow in June 2000.

Cuttler provides engineering services to the Bruce Power for the restart of Bruce reactors 1 and 2 after 10 years, to Ontario Power Generation for service to Pickering B for extending its life, and to other nuclear stations, as well as doing upgrades to make sure the stations meet the current standards and requirements.

Cuttler lectures extensively and has published numerous research papers and articles for peer review journals.

In a paper about the Fukushima nuclear accident, Cuttler noted the misunderstood effects of radiation. He hopes to change people's attitudes to radiation.

Educational programs to communicate the biology of how radiation affects living organisms in beneficial ways, he noted, would improve social acceptance, allowing the use of nuclear energy for many very important peaceful applications.

Low radiation, he added, allows medical practitioners to carry out X-rays, CT-scans and other tests without fear of cancer. As an example, he said, X-rays have been used for more than 100 years with positive health effects.

"It would also open the path to clinical studies for the use of low radiation to treat or prevent very important illnesses, especially for senior citizens."

For more information visit Jerry Cuttler's web page or call 416-837-8865.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Louis Strauss ז"ל

June 10, 1924 to October 8, 2013

Louis Strauss was born in Budapest, Hungary. He was internationally known as a character actor, comedian, mime artist and director. Louis performed in numerous night club engagements that took him from Budapest to Vienna, New York, Florida, Montreal and Toronto. He performed in several leading and supporting roles on Television. He also established the Accents comedy group, specializing in cabaret type shows. His final curtain call came in the early morning of October 8, 2013. He would want to be remembered for his love of theater and his ability to make people laugh. He leaves behind his beloved and devoted wife, Susan. Their strong union of 59 years endured the Holocaust and many other hardships. Louis will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

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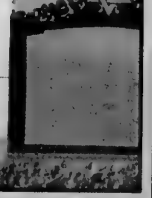

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Company helps advertisers get online presence

Jenny Libman
Special to The CJN

Robyn Beder, founder of Net Margins Inc., a company that provides advertisers with cost effective access to high quality media inventory on the web, was destined for a career in mass communications.

"I studied it in school, before people even had access to the Internet," laughed Beder. "Of course things were a little bit different back then, and I never could have predicted where my career would take me."

After graduating from university, Beder earned a certificate in public relations from Humber College and was able to use her networking skills to turn her part-time position as a sales associate at Roots into a job in their public relations department.

"My official role was to help plan events for the company, but what I was really doing was selling stories to the press," she said.

"I realized I was actually very good at sales, and was bitten by the bug."

Beder left Roots and went to work for a company that sold advertisements for small-town newspapers.

Eventually, in 1995, she left print media and began a new role at a company that sold websites.

"This was a new technology and it made me a little nervous," said Beder.

"It was my mother who convinced me that websites were the way of the future and I should take the risk."

Of course, Beder's mother was right. The Internet became accessible to the mainstream public, and her company was purchased by Microsoft.

"All of a sudden not only were we selling websites, but other companies wanted to sell ads for the websites. This was a very cool time to be working in technology."

In 2003, Beder combined the skills she had developed over the years and created Net Margins Inc. In 2009 she left her job to focus on building her own company full time.

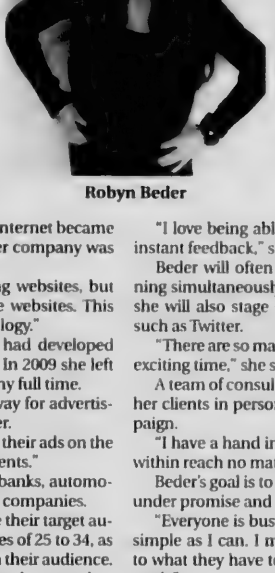
"Net Margins [provides] a cost effective way for advertisers to get into online media," explained Beder.

"We build relationships to help clients get their ads on the web, and make sure these ads get seen by clients."

Beder has a long list of clients, including banks, automotive industries, retailers and packaged goods companies.

"A company will approach me and tell me their target audience, for example mothers between the ages of 25 to 34, as well as the time of day that they want to reach their audience.

"I will then find content on the Internet that matches their ads," explained Beder.



Robyn Beder

The client will design their advertisement and Beder will match the content to the websites.

One example is when she ran an Air Canada ad for a flight to Tel Aviv in *The Canadian Jewish News*.

After the ad is placed, Beder will track how effective it is by monitoring things such as how many links a consumer clicked through on the website, or how many people signed up for a product.

"We can see right away if an ad is working, and if it's not I'll make suggestions to improve it," she said.

Beder is constantly monitoring campaign reports to ensure that they are reaching the largest audience possible.

"I love being able to see the progress right away; it's like instant feedback," she said.

Beder will often have more than 50 ad campaigns running simultaneously. In addition to placing ads on websites she will also stage campaigns on other social media sites, such as Twitter.

"There are so many avenues to explore today – it's such an exciting time," she said.

A team of consultants works with Beder, but she meets all her clients in person and she oversees all aspects of a campaign.

"I have a hand in every project, and my iPhone is always within reach no matter what time it is," she said.

Beder's goal is to say "yes" to whatever her clients want. "I under promise and over deliver," she said.

"Everyone is busy, so I want to make working with me as simple as I can. I make everyone feel important and listen to what they have to say. I will always find a way to make it work."

"ONCE-IN-A-DECADE OPPORTUNITY"

FINANCIAL POST ARTICLE • AUGUST 29 • 2013

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FUND PERFORMANCE - August 15, 2013			
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Facebook nabs Israeli start-up Onavo

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

After losing out on acquiring Waze, Facebook has nabbed another Israeli start-up, Onavo, paying between $100 million and $200 million U.S.

Onavo – which has 40 employees worldwide, 30 of them in Israel – will remain in Israel, with Onavo becoming Facebook's first Israeli research and development centre.

Using Onavo's megabyte-thrifty apps, Facebook will be able to pursue its goal of expanding web connectivity in the developing world.

Established in 2010, Onavo allowed users to save money on their mobile devices' data plans. Before the popularization of unlimited data plans, users were charged a hefty amount if they surpassed the maximum amount of bandwidth they had paid for.

Onavo offered free software to compress the bits and bytes being uploaded and downloaded via the cell network. Similar to the compression offered by applications that download programs, music and video to desktop computers, Onavo applied its patented compression technology to videos and other byte-hogging data, and also showed users exactly how much data – and money – they saved using Onavo with apps such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Onavo Extend, the app released to the iPhone App Store in 2011 and Google Play in 2012, "compresses your data so that you can do more with your mobile device on even the tightest data plan," Onavo said at the time.

Onavo was a top download in the App Store when it was released and won numerous awards. It was even involved in a mini-scandal when it claimed the App Store itself was a major drain on user's data plans. The company found that the iTunes App Store account was "responsible for more than 13 per cent of all iPhone data usage across America. Three-quarters of that data comes from downloads, while 24 per cent comes from search."

By 2012, though, all-in-one plans – which provided a very substantial amount of data – became popular. Although hundreds of thousands of users who had not upgraded their plans could still benefit from Onavo, the app became less relevant.

But with the Facebook purchase, Onavo gets a new lease on life, providing its technology to hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, of people in the developing world that Facebook would like to help connect to the Internet – and turn into Facebook users.

Many cellphone owners in such places as India and Africa pay high prices for Internet access, due to poor connectivity in their areas. With Onavo, Facebook will be able to offer users to keep costs down by compressing data to enable them to get more out of their data plans.

According to many sources, one of the main reasons Facebook lost out on buying Waze was its insistence on moving the company's operations to existing Facebook facilities. Does the Onavo announcement represent a lesson learned by Facebook? Company officials wouldn't say, but industry observers in Israel said it did.

"Everybody in Silicon Valley has an Israeli office or R&D facility," said one observer. "Sooner or later, Facebook was going to have to open one, too. It would look strange if they didn't. The Onavo purchase is a good opportunity for them to do so."

TimesofIsrael.com

Comic book heroes and other men

Reviewed by Norman Ravvin

Canada at War: A Graphic History of World War Two

Paul Keery.
Illustrated by Michael Wyatt.
Douglas & McIntyre.

In the obituaries that followed Alex Colville's recent death, many cited his experience as a 25-year-old war artist, riding through Germany in the spring of 1945 with the Third Canadian Infantry Division.

At Bergen Belsen, which was liberated by the British, Colville encountered emaciated survivors, including some who died in front of him, and heaps of the dead. He did sketches and watercolours, which, in the mode of other war artists hired by the Canadian government, he worked up as oil paintings when he returned home. Some of these are viewable on the website of the Ottawa War Museum, but these paintings aren't generally on display at the museum itself. On the museum's website, you can view a reproduction of the remarkable painting *Bodies in a Grave, Belsen*, in which many of the motifs of Holocaust imagery of later film and literature receive their first masterly presentation. Colville was among the first artists to address Holocaust atrocities.

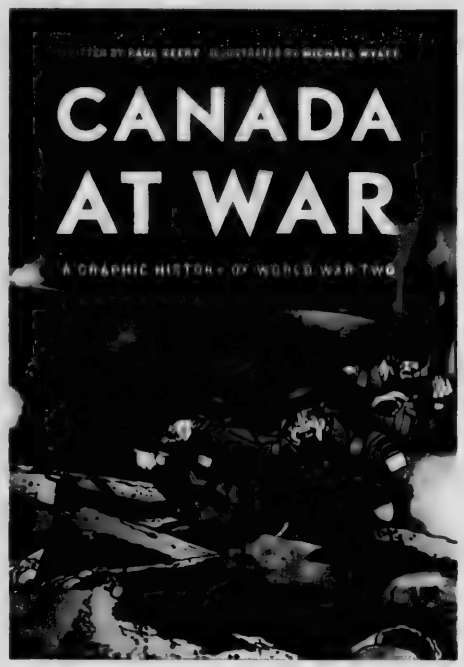
War, as part of Canadian history, has played an increasing role in efforts by the present Canadian government to fund memorialization. Government-funded programs have focused on the War of 1812 as well as the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, asserting the contemporary urge to do something more with events that helped define Canadian identity.

Canada at War: A Graphic History of World War Two is a contribution to this effort. Graphic presentations of difficult subject matter – one thinks always in this context of Art Spiegelman's breakthrough, *Maus* – have become common in popular and educational markets. Although they're aimed, first, at young adults, most adults find things to admire in them. *Canada at War* is lavish, large format, reliant far more on the punch of its images than on the detail or stylishness of its text. Here it differs from *Maus*, which Spiegelman chose to present in black and white, and which tells its story in rich novelistic language through the presentation of colourful characters.

Canada at War presents no characters. There are familiar faces – those of Mackenzie King and Hitler – but these are background figures to the larger patterns of moving fronts, key battles, setbacks and victories. Organized around major contributions by the Canadian armed forces, *Canada at War* outlines disasters at Hong Kong and Dieppe, the Allied advance through Italy, Canadian successes in Germany and Holland, and, finally, the short-lived Canadian involvement in the Pacific. The reader learns how a weak, underfunded Armed Forces was massively increased in size and trained in drastic new challenges in order to aid in the defeat of Germany.

Some undertakings ordered by the Allied leaders are put in a critical light, including the high-casualty advance through Italy, whose military usefulness remains a point of contention. But *Canada at War* avoids any number of difficult issues, including the Canadian government's inaction in response to the German-created refugee disaster in Europe, the impact of French Quebec on King's attitudes toward conscription and the internment of Montreal Mayor Camillien Houde for sedition based on his support for Mussolini's Italy as a Roman Catholic country. Rather, *Canada at War* highlights Quebec-based detachments fighting in Europe – and so it should, but alongside more troubling issues.

The need for war heroes appeared as soon as the war was on. Comic books were popular reading material among the forces, and back home, the Canadian Jewish Congress saw them as a medium well matched to the events in Europe. Prepared in 1944, comics under the title *Jewish War Heroes* told the stories of Col. David Arnold Croll, later the mayor of Windsor; Lou Warren Somers, who flew in the Halifax-based Lion Squadron, and Max Abramson, a native of Calgary, who, aboard the HMCS Prince Robert, was involved in the capture of a German armed merchant ship.



Drawn with a heavy black line, the CJC comics go for an action-packed, heroic look, not unlike that of *Canada at War*, though the latter has a penchant for high-colour images of artillery barrage as it rips through machinery and men. *Canada at War* zeroes in on heroes – winners of the Distinguished Service Order and leaders with visionary plans – much like the CJC's choice of subjects.

The Congress comics were designed for schoolchildren to provide an education on developments in Europe and to lend an upbeat note to the dark events sweeping in on the radio and in newsreels. *Canada at War* is likely headed for history classrooms, where its focus on explosive battles, effective hardware and improved training will go over well. Its imagery is ripely dramatic for the video game generation.

At the War Museum in Ottawa, Colville's postwar paintings present themselves as remarkable and wholly unheroic alternatives to the punch of the graphic story-telling in *Canada at War*.

Colville was always modest and matter of fact in his accounts of his encounter with Belsen. "For me, it was work," he said. "If you're a writer or a painter, your material is life as you see it being lived and that's it. You get to work and do it."

Norman Ravvin is at work on a collaborative book, The Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook, with Toronto book artist and wood engraver George A. Walker.

Col. DAVID ARNOLD CROLL
BORN IN EUROPE IN 1900, YOUNG MR. CROLL CAME TO CANADA AS A BOY OF 5, AND SOON STARTED TO WORK HIS WAY THROUGH LIFE.
CROLL'S RISE TO GREATNESS READS LIKE A TYPICAL HORATIO ALGER STORY, NO HONEST WORK WAS TOO HUMBLE FOR HIM
HE WAS A GOOD STUDENT IN SCHOOL, ATTENDING REGULARLY EVEN THOUGH HE HAD TO RISE EARLY TO SELL HIS PAPERS. HE WAS ACTIVE IN ATHLETICS

Vineyards revive ancient Negev wine route

Abigail Klein Leichman
Israel 21c

Hannah and Eyal Izrael founded Carmey Avdat, one of nine Israeli vineyards established along the path of the old wine and spice routes in the Negev Desert highlands. These farms have brought back to life ancient grape-growing terraces from a forgotten civilization.

"During our travels through the Negev, we came upon a hidden riverbed with remains of an ancient farm and vineyard. We instantly fell in love with the place and decided that we would establish our farm at the site, which had been a vineyard during the Nabatean period more than 2,000 years ago. We established the Carmey Avdat Farm there in 1998," Eyal Izrael says.

They and eight other families were able to realize their dream of cultivating grapes and bottling wine with the help of the Wine Route Project of the Ramat Hanegev Regional Council, which provides the land and access to agricultural expertise.

Mother Nature helps, too: wine grapes thrive on the winter flash floods in the Negev mountains, as well as on the winter cold and summer dry heat.

"In ancient times, there were farms growing grapes for the wine industry in the city of Avdat, and there they found the remains of a winery and cellar," Izrael told ISRAEL21c.

"They'd harvest grapes in the nearby vineyard, put them on the backs of camels and bring them to Avdat, where they would stomp the grapes and store the juice in clay jars in big cellars underground to keep out the heat. They exported some to Europe and some to Petra, so this was actually a known wine region."

The Izraels used to work for the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel. After deciding to start a farm where they could also grow fruit and host guests in cabins they built, Eyal learned the art of winemaking at Ben Shoshan Winery on Kibbutz Bror Chayil and at the Soreq Winery in Tal Shachar. They began with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot grapes, harvested by hand.

"We are producing 6,000 bottles a year," Izrael said. "We have also planted some Chardonnay, Petit Bordeaux, Vilana and Barbera grapes, and will start producing white wines this year for the first time."

The Negev vintners meet periodically to share ideas about making a living off the land. In addition to Carmey Avdat, the wineries in the area include Kadesh Barnea, Ashba, Rota, Sde Boker, Nana, Sdema, Rujum and Derech Erez. Visitors can tour and sample the wines individually, or all in one wine cellar at Boker Valley Vineyards Farm, run by Merlot grower Moshe Zohar.

The Kadesh Barnea Winery, the largest in Ramat Hanegev, produces more than 80,000 bottles annually under the management of founder Alon Tzadok, and his wife, Nira. Their son Gilad handles sales and marketing, while their other son, Yogev, and his wife, Eden, are the winemakers. The couple studied winemaking in Florence, Italy.

The greening of the Negev.

Gilad Tzadok explains that Kadesh Barnea was established in 1997 at Moshav Kadesh Barnea, a bit west of the wine route. "My father wanted to see how the grapes would adjust to the desert heat. He produced 1,000 bottles and everybody liked it."

For a few years, Alon Tzadok sold much of his crop to Barkan Wine Cellars, the second-largest winery in Israel, but beginning in 2003, the business stayed on the farm. At that point, Kadesh Barnea became kosher (meaning that the entire process is handled by religious Jewish employees) because kosher wines find a larger domestic and international market.

They press their own grapes and others from area farms, producing varietals including Petit Verdot, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Mourvèdre, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. "All the grapes are from the desert because that's what we believe in," Alon Tzadok said.

The wines are sold in the United States, and exports will probably be expanded to France and England.

This year, Kadesh Barnea planted five acres of wine grapes at Desert Shanti House Youth Village, a therapeutic refuge in Ramat Hanegev for teenage runaways. The youth village will receive all the profits from the sale of the grapes.

Zvi Remak was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, earned a degree in agronomy from California State Polytechnic University, and moved to Israel's Kibbutz Sde Boker – the retirement

Continued on page 27

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Dan, where the welcome never stops

BACK TO NATURE: Since mining at the Binyamina quarry was discontinued in 2007, plans have been underway to turn this site in central Israel into a recreational park. Here, young teens take a break during a hike through the area last August. *(Moshe Shai/Flash 90 photo).*

Making wine in the Negev

Continued from page 26

home of the first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion – in 1980. For 13 years, he tended the fruit orchards.

"Sde Boker was based on agriculture for many years, but in the early 1990s, the price of fruit had really dropped and there was an idea to try growing wine grapes in the brackish water we have in the area," Remak told ISRAEL21c.

"That gave me the idea of making wine, mainly because I've seen that the people who make the money are those who sell the final product. I wanted my four daughters to meet my family in California anyway, and it worked out to be the right time for a sabbatical. We lived in Napa Valley for a year, and I studied winemaking at a local college."

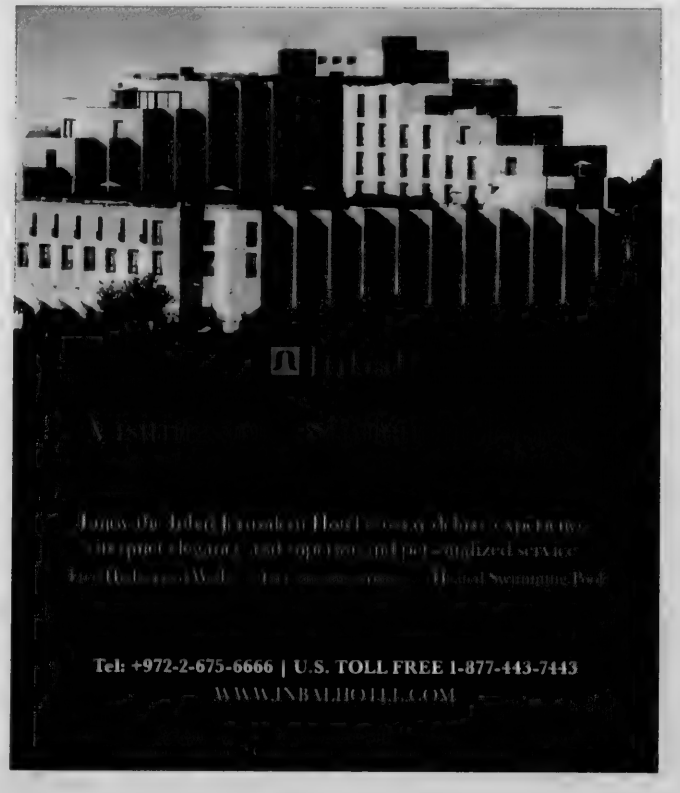
The first bottles from Sde Boker Winery were produced in 2000. Today the kibbutz grows Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Zinfandel grapes.

"The brackish water experiment did not work, so we use freshwater," Remak said. At the region's agricultural R&D centre, agronomists continue attempting to find a way to use the abundant and less expensive salty water for wine grapes, in co-operation with the nine area growers.

Remak remains the winemaker and is in charge of the vineyard. He does not work in the winery itself, which became kosher in 2011.

"We make a few thousand bottles a year," he said. "I realized I wasn't the first person to make wine in the area, and that was exciting, though it was difficult to start something new on a kibbutz, especially when the wine industry was less developed. Every place has its own qualities, and that's what makes wine interesting."

ROOM WITH A VIEW: Ritz-Carlton is opening its first hotel in Israel in the Tel Aviv suburb of Herzliya. Located right on the Mediterranean by the Herzliya Marina, the facility features 115 guest rooms and 82 residential apartments. Ideally located for both leisure and business travellers, it provides guests with an urban resort experience close to the heart of Tel Aviv.



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Toronto-based musician challenges listeners

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Multi-award winning singer/songwriter Noah Zacharin began playing guitar at nine, penned his first song at 13, and has been performing since he was 14.

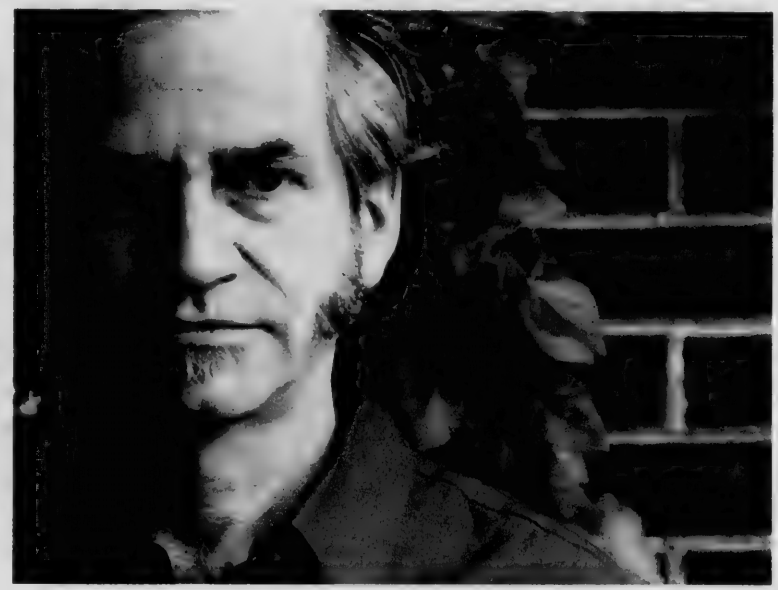
Zacharin's guitar stylings, singing and songwriting have garnered praise from both fans and music critics. He performs regularly in Toronto, including on the first Thursday of the month at The Winchester, the last Wednesday of the month at the Emmet Ray, and semi-regularly at The Local.

His last solo CD, his sixth, *Waiting on Your Love*, garnered critical success. He's currently working with musician Douglas September on his next album, so far untitled, due out in the spring of 2014. It will feature songs he wrote a number of years ago.

September is known for recording electronic sounds, which Zacharin said are wackier than most things he has recorded previously, except for one record he produced at home with a lot of ambient noises.

"I liked him and wanted to work with him and see what would happen," said Zacharin, who was born in Montreal but now lives in Toronto. "Originally, we were going to do just an EP with three or four tracks, but now it looks like we will have nine. This will have a band and will include newer songs, and songs I wrote a decade ago that just never got released."

Zacharin comfortably jumps from one musical genre to another including blues, jazz, folk, country, bluegrass and pop. Although it may confuse some listeners, he said it makes what he does less identifiable and a little more challenging for those coming to hear his music, especially his live shows. He tries to create a flow from one song to another, although he admits he's not above jarring his audiences from time to time.



Noah Zacharin has released his sixth solo CD *Waiting on Your Love*

"When I try to bring all the genres together, I think I can do it because it's still me singing it," Zacharin said. "I have always loved all music, I was never focused on any one style of music to the exclusion of others. Although, I probably came to pop music later in my life...sometime in my 20s, I was playing with people, and I needed to have a bigger repertoire, so I started to listen to music I hadn't listened to before.

"The guitar is a magnificent instrument of expression in all those genres. So I do my best to understand the instrument, [to] go where it wants to go."

Zacharin hopes that after listening to his music, people will have gone on a little journey and enjoyed the journey quite a lot.

"My lyrics are what are most directly influenced by my life as a Jew," he said. "I think about God and His creations – human and animal, vegetable and mineral – and the place we all have, relative to each other. With the words, I try to sort all that out in poems and songs.

"Musically, the influence hasn't been so much on me as an instrumentalist or writer of melody. But as a vocalist, my extensive on-the-job experience leading prayers at the Anshe Minsk Synagogue in Kensington Market has been of great influence.

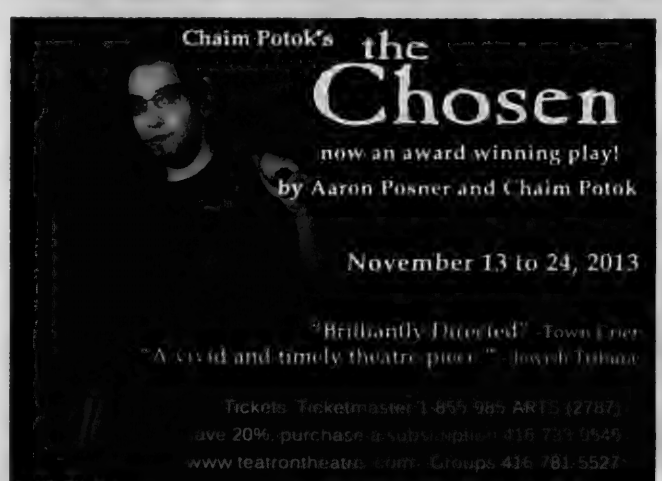
"Over the past decade, I have learned to sing out, to feel what singing is, to reach for some truth when I do it, to trust that the line of melody will carry what it is. I need to express, whether light or dark. I have also become more grateful to be able to sing. As my mother, bless her heart, once said: 'The more I meet people who speak, the more I love people who sing.'"

As a guitarist, Zacharin has recorded and performed with Penny Lang, Steve Payne, Danny Marks, Bruce Murdoch, Lucien Francoeur and Rick Fielding, to name a few. In addition to performing and recording with them, he has also collaborated on songwriting with Laura Fernandez and Jeff Barnes.

Last February in Montreal, Jason Levy filmed Zacharin's performance at the Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill – the DVD will be released later this year. Also to be released soon is a collection of songs recorded years ago at his home that he recently unearthed.

Zacharin has hosted both radio and live shows, and he's a published poet. He is currently working on a number of children's books. Some of his poems were translated into Hebrew by Israeli poet Moshe Dor, and were subsequently published in major newspapers in Israel.

For more information, go to noahsong.com.



Author of interfaith love story remembered

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The author of what has been called a lost Canadian classic, a novel about the then-taboo subject of a Christian-Jewish romance, is finally getting some recognition in her adopted city.

Tribute was paid to Gwethalyn Graham, who won the Governor General's Award for *Earth and High Heaven*, published in 1944, when the Montreal Writers' Chapel Trust unveiled a commemorative plaque in the Anglican Church of St. James the Apostle on Ste. Catherine Street in the heart of downtown.

The guest speakers were Norman Ravvin, chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies, and Montreal writer Claire Holden Rothman, whose best-selling novel *The Heart Specialist*, was long-listed for the Scotiabank Giller Prize in 2009.

They spoke of how courageously and sensitively Graham tackled the prejudices of her time (and her own milieu) with regard to Jews, as well as French-Canadians.

They lamented, as does the Writers' Chapel Trust, that Graham and her provocative book are all but forgotten.

Earth and High Heaven certainly did not go unnoticed in its day. Besides the Governor General's prize, it was the first Canadian novel to reach no. 1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list, where it remained for 37 weeks. It sold over a million copies, was translated into 18 languages, and was almost made into a Hollywood movie.

Mogul Samuel Goldwyn paid the then-astronomical sum of $100,000 for the rights and Katherine Hepburn was picked to play the female lead, but the film was never made.

The novel also won the Anisfeld-Wolf Book Award in 1945, which was established to recognize books that expose racism or celebrate cultural diversity.

Graham died prematurely at age 52 in 1965, having never published another novel.

Graham knew of the world she wrote.

Born into a well-to-do Protestant family in Toronto, she moved to Montreal in 1934

Gwethalyn Graham

and lived in Westmount, where *Earth and High Heaven* is set during the first three years of World War II.

It unflinchingly describes the genteel anti-Semitism that comes to the surface when the fictional Erika Drake, daughter of a prominent Westmount family, falls in love with the Jewish Marc Reiser from northern Ontario.

This was a time when Jews and gentiles rarely mixed in society, let alone wed. For the Drakes, Reiser was objectionable both for his religion and his humbler origins. Love triumphed, but not without its price for a headstrong young woman.

There was resistance on the other side, too: Reiser's folks were not happy about the union either.

Graham, an early feminist, bore some of the character traits of her protagonist. She defied the conventions of her day. She deplored anti-Semitism, not only in fiction, but also in her journalism, and she spoke out for the admission of Jewish refugees.

Her first novel, *Swiss Sonata*, which, in 1938, also won a Governor General's Award, was set at a girls' finishing school in Switzerland on the eve of World War II (Graham attended such a place). It portrays the horrors of the Nazi rise to power, including the worsening persecution of Jews.

According to the Writers' Chapel Trust, *Earth and High Heaven*, not only "captured the hearts and minds of its generation," it "helped shape the more diverse and inclusive culture we have today."

Ravvin said the novel's popularity is all the more remarkable because non-Jews rarely read about Jews at that time, let alone stories that ran so counter to prevailing attitudes. Montreal's anglo elite of that era was not used to such an unflattering mirror being held up to them – especially by one of their own.

Graham herself said of the book that it was "a plea for the individual, that he or she may be regarded and respected as such, and not be judged arbitrarily according to a category."

The plaque, unveiled on the 100th anniversary of her birth, places Graham alongside previous late Montreal-based authors honoured: John Glassco, A.J.M. Smith, F.R. Scott and Hugh MacLennan.

In 2004, *Earth and High Heaven* and *Swiss Sonata* were reprinted by Cormorant Books of Toronto, and there has been renewed scholarly interest in Graham.

Holden Rothman admitted she had never heard of the book until she was asked to review the re-issue. Describing herself as the daughter of a Protestant mother and a Jewish father, who grew up in Westmount, albeit in a much later period, she found *Earth and High Heaven* resonated with her.

Gala concert celebrates 150 years of Toronto cantorate

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

The Toronto Council of Hazzanim celebrated 150 years of the city's cantorate by holding a gala concert at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue last week.

Hundreds of people attended the Oct. 15 musical evening, which raised more than $50,000 for the Reena Foundation, which helps people with developmental disabilities; the Canadian Friends of Akim, which assists Israeli children and adults with intellectual disabilities, and the Toronto Cantorial Trust Fund, which provides scholarships to aspiring cantors.

The Toronto Council of Hazzanim consists of local Reform, Conservative and Orthodox cantors. Its goal is to preserve and support the cantorial art and profession, and offer a forum of networking and education for its members.

This year's anniversary concert was organized by Cantor Eliezer Kirshblum, who retired in 2008 after serving for 42 years at Adath Israel Congregation. It featured powerful and moving performances by Cantor Benzion Miller of New York, as well as by local cantors David Edwards, Tibor Kovari, Marshall Loomer, Beny Maissner, David Rosen and Alex Stein.

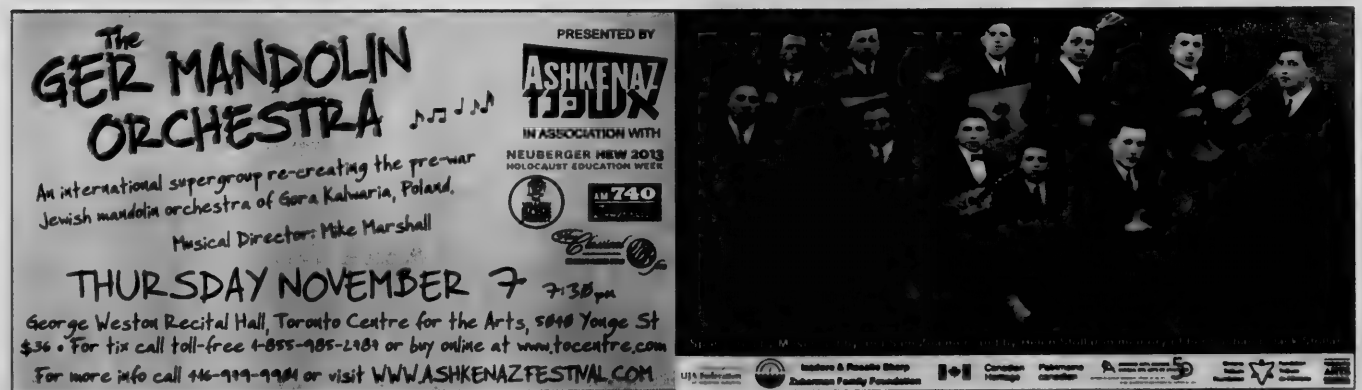
They were accompanied by Danny Gildar on the piano and an instrumental ensemble including Shelley Miller, Daniel Barnes and Doriann Forrester.

The event, which is usually held every two to three years, brings cantors together from across the city to share their love of spiritual music, Kirshblum said.

"The cantors donate their services in concert form. It's a special evening, because each cantor in his own right has a following at his own synagogue, but when you put them all together on one stage, that's a draw for the community."

Kirshblum, who was master of ceremonies, extended thanks to concert chairman Alex Eisen for his efforts in promoting the concert to the community and personally collecting funds for the cause.

Some of the evening's highlights included performances of classic melodies such as *Ani Ma'amin*, *Pitchu Li* and *Tzadik Adoshem*.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'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING
The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS TO OPEN NEW DOWNTOWN HOME

The Koffler Centre of the Arts will soon open its new downtown headquarters at Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St., just north of Queen Street. The 4,600-square-foot space will be the new home of the Koffler's administrative offices and the Koffler Gallery.

Koffler's offices and gallery have endured a nomadic existence for nearly five years since they vacated the old Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (BJCC), which was demolished about 2009. Koffler's off-site exhibitions have been shown in parking lots, bargain emporiums, abandoned houses, ferry docks, city sidewalks, hotels, clothing stores, synagogues and other locations.

The original plan was for the BJCC to be rebuilt on the same site within a short time, but the project has been delayed for the foreseeable future. "We've decided that it was to our advantage to have a permanent home, and that's why we moved downtown," said Tony Hewer, Koffler's head of communications and marketing. (The Koffler Centre's classes, however, still continue at the Prosserman JCC on Bathurst Street north of Sheppard Avenue.)

The Koffler Gallery will open its new space with the exhibition *We're In The Library*, featuring new works by seven Toronto artists about the history and context of the new space, which was formerly the library of the Shaw Street Public School. Artscape Youngplace and the new exhibition open with a public reception, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 5 to 9 p.m. www.koffler-arts.org

• • •

Royal Conservatory Highlights: Menahem Pressler, pianist and founding member of the **Beaux Arts Trio,** celebrates his 90th birthday with a performance. Pressler is joined by the **New Orford String Quartet** in a program of **Beethoven**, **Brahms** and **Murray Schafer** (in celebration of the composer's 80th birthday). The Royal Conservatory concert takes place at Koerner Hall, Sunday, Nov. 24, 3 p.m. $35 to $75. Also, Israeli conductor **Lior Shambadal** leads the **Royal Conservatory Orchestra** in a program of **Beethoven** and **Hindemith**, Koerner Hall, Nov. 22, 8 p.m. $25 to $55. www.performance.rcmusic.ca, 416-408-0208.

• • •

Names in the News: Brother-and-sister writing team **Jesse** and **Samantha Herman**, who are both lawyers, drafted a screenplay that they then produced into the short film *Let's Rap*. The 15-minute comedy follows a pair of hapless siblings who realize their only marketable skill is a gift for pop culture-infused banter, and embark on a quest to get their own talk show. The film, which stars **Rachel Wilson** and **Jefferson Brown**, was shown earlier this month at Innis Town Hall in Toronto. It was produced by Landed Entertainments, a 10-year-old Toronto-based film production company that is currently attempting to place *Let's Rap* in film festivals.

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series of talks with film clips on "The Enigmatic Genius of **Robert Altman**." Miles Nadal JCC, Mondays 7 to 9 p.m. On Oct. 28, the topic is "The Western – *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*." Drop-in $11.25, students and Toronto Jewish Film Society subscribers $6. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• The launch of **David Goldstein's** new poetry collection *Laws of Rest* takes place at the Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday, Oct. 29, 7:30 to 9 p.m. Free admission.

• Art Appreciation – Power and Symbolism in the Art of Georgia O'Keeffe and Matisse. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesdays, Oct. 29 and Nov. 5, 1:30 p.m. Series $20, $12 drop-in. Register at 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• • •

At the Galleries

The Posthumous Landscape – Jewish Sites of Memory in Poland Today is an exhibition of photographs by Toronto-based **David Kaufman**, of synagogues, former Jewish neighbourhoods, ghettos, cemeteries and other sites. "Rejecting a narrow view of post-Holocaust Poland, his work reveals the striking complexity of a place slowly embracing its Jewish past and present." Guest curated by **Evelyn Tauben**, at the Beth Tzedec Reuben & Helene Dennis Museum, 1700 Bathurst St., Oct. 29 to Feb. 2, 2014. Opening reception, Tuesday, Oct. 29, 7 to 9 p.m.

• *Rhythm Distributed*, an exhibition of works by **Bernice Eisenstein,** is on view at the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery, Oct. 29 to Nov. 18.

• Working in bronze, Greek-Orthodox sculptor **Anastasia Sarioglu** has created life-sized figures that depict the life of the Jews in the Diaspora and during the Nazi persecution. Her exhibition, *Sculptures of the Holocaust*, features 23 pieces and is dedicated to the 75th remembrance of Kristallnacht. Co-sponsored by the Chenstochover Aid Society as part of Holocaust Education Week, the exhibition opens at Beth Torah Congregation, 47 Glenbrook Ave., on Nov. 7, 7 p.m. with the artist in attendance. Public viewing hours begin Nov. 3. School and group tours by appointment. 416-782-4495, ext. 27 or rsvp@bethtorah.ca

• • •

Out of Town: Winnipeg's Rady JCC presents the fourth annual Tarbut Festival of Jewish Culture, Nov. 16 to 24. The lineup includes a tribute concert to **Barbra Streisand** (Nov. 16), a screening of the Israeli spaghetti western *The Ballad of the Weeping Spring* (Nov. 17), a performance by Israeli jazz artists the **Omer Avital Quintet** (Nov. 19), a conversation with *The Imposter Bride* author **Nancy Richler** (Nov. 21) and more. Details at www.radyjcc.com.

Restored synagogue in Bobowa, Poland, July 2012. From the exhibition *The Posthumous Landscape* by David Kaufman

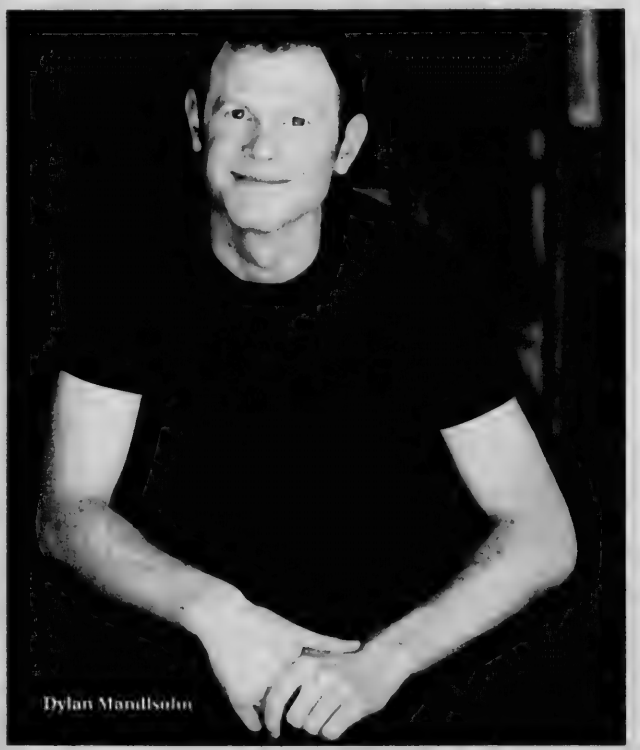
More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca HEEBONICS

Rubber-faced comic gets juiced on stage

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Dylan Mandlsohn's drug of choice is adrenaline, and his favourite dealer is the audience at his comedy shows.

"It's nerve-wracking before I do it, but once I'm on stage and I'm doing well, all those nerves turn into a high. It's the biggest adrenaline rush ever," he said.


Dylan Mandlsohn

The Toronto native, 33, has taken his show on the road to most provinces in Canada and almost all 50 U.S. states, including Alaska, where he performed on a Disney cruise ship.

"Disney audiences are a little challenging, because they're really conservative, scared to laugh at anything edgy, so I had to clean things up for them," he said, describing the experience as "the mother of all corporate gigs" and almost like a form of church comedy.

By that he means there was often a delay between the jokes and the laughter, and he's convinced it's because audience members were asking themselves, "Would Jesus laugh at that?"

"I always thought I was bombing and they would laugh three seconds later. 'Yes, Jesus would approve,'" he said.

It was tough for this edgy comedian to come up with a completely clean act, but he said it helped him prepare to do other corporate gigs, and it helped him go from completely broke to earning six figures for a while. And that means he's able to take more risks these days.

Mandlsohn said he's always known he's wanted to be a comedian since he was a child. He would watch stand-up comedy shows with his father, and he found himself inspired by comedians such as Jim Carrey and Rich Little.

"I was fascinated that they could make people laugh, [even though] I never understood what they were saying at the time," he said. "I started memorizing these jokes that made no sense to me."

Early on, he figured out that his face was super flexible, he said, demonstrating his "rubber face."

When he was 17, he began developing his act, and soon he took part in amateur night at Yuk Yuk's. He got his start touring around the United States when he was a student at the University of Windsor, where he studied theatre. There were two comedy clubs in Windsor: Yuk Yuk's and Leo's Komedy Korner.

"They really took me and gave me a lot of stage time," he said.

With a bit of help, he was introduced to the comedy scene of nearby American cities, and soon enough, he was on the road performing fairly regularly.

The only states he could think of where he hasn't performed are Texas, Hawaii, Utah and Kansas.

He described American audiences as being more political and passionate than their Canadian counterparts. In fact, he said some comedians could get away with simply preaching to the choir, and the audiences would love it.

"If I was going into a town that's really Republican, I could just talk about 'those damn Democrats' and get these applause breaks and they think I did a great job even if it maybe wasn't that funny," he said.

Although he loves comedy, acting is another one of his loves. He went to teacher's college to cement the back-up plan that if things don't work out, he could always teach theatre and English. While he waits for his really big break, he does substitute teaching all around the city. That gives him the freedom to travel and take off for auditions as they come.

In addition to giving him the credentials to teach, teacher's college also gave him plenty of fodder for his act.

But he loves show business, and that's where he hopes to stay, even if it's not in stand-up comedy. He said one of his goals is to break into TV and film. He has some credits to his name – for example, a guest-starring role on the American TV series *Nikita* – but he's always looking to do more.

Yet he knows it all takes time.

He's met other comedians, include world-famous Russell Peters, who have given him that advice.

"'Don't worry about being better than all the headliners because you're not at that level. Just be the best guy at that level and you'll move up,'" he said Peters told him, back when Peters would perform in Windsor, before he became a mega-star.

"I thought that really helped me, because it made things not so overwhelming," Mandlsohn said. "It helps me focus more on what I need to do."

And he knows he's slowly making his way to the big leagues.

"I think it'll happen," he said. "I think pretty soon, things will start popping up in a really big kind of way."

Go to Heebonics.ca to hear part of The CJN's interview with Mandlsohn.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Oct. 28 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 7. Nov. 4 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 14. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Oct. 24

FOUNDATIONS OF PRAYER

Rabbi Shlomo Gemara teaches a 3-week course on "The Foundations of Prayer From Abraham to Present," 8 p.m., Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $54. 416-877-2050, or email info@mekorot.ca.

CHARTER OF VALUES

Rabbi Jarrod Grover and **Prof. Salim Mansur** discuss Quebec's proposed charter of values, 7:30 p.m. Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Saturday, Oct. 26

TORAH CLASS

Lou Vandelman teaches the Torah class this week at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

BOOK LAUNCH

Zichron Yisroel Congregation celebrates the publication of *The Diversity of the Divine: Rabbinic Insights into the Richness of the Torah*, by **Rabbi Charles Grysman**, 8:30 p.m. at the DANI Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill.

AM SHALOM CELEBRATES

Am Shalom Congregation in Barrie marks its 10th anniversary with a celebratory evening starting at 7:30 p.m. at the synagogue, 767 Huronia Rd. Tickets $25. RSVP 705-792-3949.

WRITERS AND VE'AHAVTA

Pat Schneider reads from her new book *How the Light Gets In, Writing as a Spiritual Practice*, 7:30 p.m., Native Friendship Centre, 16 Spadina Rd. Sponsored by the Toronto Writers Collective and Ve'ahavta Street Academy. RSVP to www.torontowriters collective.ca.

SINGLES GAMES NIGHT

Games night for Jewish Singles (50+) will be held at 8 p.m., at the Lodzer Centre Congregation, 12 Heaton St. Hosted by **Rabbi Moshe Meirovich** and **Judith Weinroth.** $10.

Sunday, Oct. 27

POLITICAL SCANDALS

Lorrie Goldstein discusses "What makes a good political scandal?" with Singles in the Park, a group for Jewish single, divorced and widowed people over 50, Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. Doors open at 7 p.m. $10. RSVP required. Email debbygo@rogers.com, or call 416-631-0005.

ISRAELI CONSUL SPEAKS

Israeli Consul General **DJ Schneeweiss** discusses "The Peace Process and Israel's Security and Diplomatic Challenges," 7:30 p.m., First Narayever Congregation, 187 Brusnwick Ave. Free admission.

OPEN HOUSE

Kamin Education Centre, Associated Hebrew Schools, 300 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, holds an open house for prospective parents, 10 a.m. To register, email pgreenspan@ahschools.com, or call 905-889-3998, ext. 337.

IRVING BERLIN

Cantor Charles Osborne and **Avery Saltzman** explore the life and work of Irving Berlin, 10:15 a.m., Temple Sinai.

NIGHT OF LEARNING

Rabbi Baruch Weintraub discusses "To the End of the Earth?" 7 p.m.; the movie *Making the Crooked Straight*, about physician **Rick Hodes**, will be shown at 8 p.m.; **Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner** discusses "Advertising God in the 21st Century," 8:30 p.m. Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto, 613 Clark Ave. W. info@torontotorah.com.

FASHION SHOW

Beth David Synagogue holds a fashion show. Boutiques at noon, show at 2 p.m.

INTERFAITH FAMILIES

Rabbi Eva Goldfinger invites intercultural families to discuss "Overcoming Barriers to Full Participation in the Jewish Community," 10 a.m., Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, St. Andrew's Junior High School, 131 Fenn Ave. RSVP 416-385-3910.

Monday, Oct. 28

BIBLICAL BOOKS

Rabbi Wayne Allen presents a 4-week series on biblical books. Mondays 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue. Tonight, "The Book of Job: How to respond when bad things happen to good people."

WOMEN IN FOLK MUSIC

Gerry Gray discusses "Women in Folk Music," 2 p.m. Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880.

Continued on page 33

Toronto Jewish Male Choir
presents
Tragedy to Triumph:
A Musical Celebration
Sunday, November 3 @ 7:00 pm
Benefit Concert at
Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue
470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto, ON
With Guest Performers
Cantor Yaakov Motzen
& Beyond the Pale
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Shalom Hartman Institute President and the Director of the Engaging Israel
FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE
November 1st | Services at 5:30 pm, dinner following
Members: $30 per adult, $15 per child
Non-members: $40 per adult, $18 per child | By reservation only
SHABBAT LUNCH AND LEARN
November 2nd | After services |
$20 for member $25 for non-members | By reservation only
MOTZEI SHABBAT (Saturday Evening)
November 2nd | 8 pm | No registration required
TBA Topic: "The Holocaust and the Creation of the State of Israel"
This weekend is generously sponsored by
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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
National Narratives Giving Voice
23rd Annual Holocaust Education Week
November 3 - 9, 2013
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Continued from page 32

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents a panel discussion on "How to save money and conserve kilowatts in your home and office," 8 p.m. RSVP 416-633-3838.

THE GATEKEEPERS

Beth Sholom Synagogue shows the movie *The Gatekeepers* at Canada Square, 7:30 p.m. RSVP naomi@bethsholom.net.

Tuesday, Oct. 29

LET'S BE BLUNT

Jewish Family and Child sponsors a panel on teens and drug use featuring family therapist **Joe Rich,** 7:30 p.m., Schwartz/Reisman Centre. Free, but registration required. Call **Glenda Gomperts** 416-631-5707.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Elizabeth Leggie discusses the landscapes of William Turner and John Constable, noon, Temple Har Zion.

PATHOS-FILLED EVENTS

Loretta Tanenbaum discusses "Pathos-filled events, from Esau to Sisera's mother," 10 a.m. Beth Tzedec Congregation. To register, 416-781-3514, ext. 234, or mlaba@beth-tzedec.org.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Jerry Zeidenberg discusses "The Trial of Jonathan Pollard," Beth Tikvah's Lunch and Learn series. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

YORK JAZZ BAND

National Council of Jewish Women presents lunch and music from the York Jazz Band, noon, 4700 Bathurst St. RSVP 416-633-5100.

JEWISH INDIA INFO NIGHT

Learn about the City Shul's planned trip to Jewish India, November 2014. 7:30 p.m. RSVP for meeting details to rabbi@cityshul.com or 647-799-3557.

Wednesday, Oct. 30

FAMILY FEUDS IN THE BIBLE

Hana Werner discusses "The Sacrifice: Jepthah and his Daughter." Dessert, 1:30 p.m., lecture at 2 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. $10. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

SILENT ART AUCTION

Zareinu hosts a silent auction fundraiser featuring the work of **Lee Lessem,** 5-9 p.m., RSVP www.zareinu.org or 416-704-5253 for details.

HOSPICE CONCERT

Jacques Israelievitch and the Richmond Hill Festival Orchestra perform in a fundraiser for the Richmond Hill Hospice, Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. 905-787-8811.

KENSINGTON MARKET

Edra Bayefsky and **Dara Solomon** discuss "Documenting Kensington," 7 p.m., Lillian H. Smith Branch, Toronto Public Library, 239 College St. Sponsored by the Kensington Market Historical Society.

A TASTE OF ISRAEL

Gil Hovav and **Bonnie Stern** discuss spicy stories and delicious food, 7 p.m. Sponsored by City Shul and Canadian Friends of Hebrew University. To order tickets, call 647-799-3557, or email gilhovav.eventbrite.ca

Other News

JEWISH RITUAL ART

Sacred Stitches: Beauty and Holiness in the Needlework of Many Faiths is on display at St. James Cathedral, 65 Church St. Oct. 25-Nov. 1, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

RUSSIAN CAREGIVERS

An educational support group for Russian-speaking caregivers whose loved ones have dementia will be held for 6 weeks, starting Nov. 5, 6 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or 477.

HEBREW CLASSES

Beth Emeth Synagogue is running a 5-session Hebrew reading crash course (beginner's level) starting Nov. 3, 9:15 a.m. Free. Register at 416-633-3838.

Conversational ulpan method. Learn modern vocabulary and discuss current events. $150/10 weeks, Call Pride of Israel Synagogue, 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

The Challenge of Anger for Women: A 6-session group for women to learn to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Starts Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lebovic JCC, 9600 Bathurst St.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Starts Oct. 29, 1 p.m., 35 Madison Ave.; Nov. 6, 7 p.m. at Lipa Green.

Adult Child Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.; Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m.

One Family, Two Homes: A 6-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Starts Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m.

Understanding Executive Functioning in Children With ADHD and Learning Disabilities: A workshop for parents and professionals, Oct. 30, 7 p.m.

Successful Step-Parenting: 4-session group for couples living in blended families, starts Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario presents a panel discussion and healing service on "The Loss of a Child," Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. No cost, but RSVP: lmarmer@jfandcs.com or 416-638-7800, ext. 6312.

FAMILY FUN DAY

Jewish Family and Child hosts a Family Fun Day, Nov. 10 at the Prosserman JCC, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For tickets, visit www.jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333, or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Oct. 29, **Gerald Ziedenberg** discusses the 1950s (Part 3), 10 a.m.; Oct. 30, **Dr. Robert Butcher** discusses "Health-Care Decision Making," 1 p.m.; Oct. 30, **Amanda Shubert** discusses "Imagination & Technology in Film," 7 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Dance with live music, Nov. 3, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, line dancing, 10 a.m.; social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Oct. 31, 1:30 p.m., **Chanah Sargon,** discusses the gift and power of chesed. Register for art appreciation classes Oct. 29/Nov. 5. The art of Georgia O'Keefe and Matisse.

Edithvale Community Centre, 416-665-9050. Feldenkrais Awareness through Movement, Mondays 10 a.m. $60/5 classes.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Prosserman JCC Daycare and preschool hold an open house, Nov. 17, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Call **Kailah Rubin**, ext. 4250.

A beginner bridge class runs Nov. 4-Dec. 23, 10 a.m. Beginner bridge level 2 at 1 p.m. Call ext. 4235.

Living Rhythm music program for preschoolers, starts Nov. 6, 4 p.m.; Mommy and Baby fitness starts Oct. 21, 10:30 a.m.;

Amnon Zohar leads a discussion on the Middle East, Tuesdays until Dec. 3. Call ext. 4235.

Women only fitness classes now offered. Call ext. 4000.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Oct. 28, The Western. Ext. 606.

Learn more about making Shabbat (recipes, crafts, blessings, music and more) with **Belinda Keshen** and **Sharoni Sibony.** Oct. 27, 11:45 a.m. Email principal@djcs.org.

Family Fun Fair, Oct. 27, 1-3 p.m. Crafts, games and prizes for kids, while adults can learn more about community resources. Ext. 388.

Book launch for *Days of Rest* by **David Goldstein,** Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574.

MELT Method: Self-treatment techniques to help prevent pain and heal injury, Wednesdays 11 a.m.; Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m.; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays, 6:30 p.m.

Rhythm Distributed, works by **Bernice Eisenstein,** are on display in the gallery Oct. 29-Nov. 18.

Eli Rubenstein discusses "Tales of Courage from the Shoah," Nov. 3, 11 a.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב

Mazel tov Sandy & Shawn Blankier, and sister Charlotte on the birth of Delilah Fara. Grandparents Larry & Jillian Grupp, Marilyn & Issie Blankier, great-grandmother Belle Applebaum.

Mazel tov to a special lady, Molly Ash, on this milestone birthday. We love and admire you! Best wishes, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Helen & Milton Goodman on celebrating your 60th wedding anniversary on November 1st. Love, your proud family.

Happy 75th birthday Mommy Bubbie Gloria. All our love always, Sherry, Steven, Terry, Joey, Lynn, Andrea, Josh, Tyler, Shaun, Jordan, Sydney, and of course Norm

Mazel tov to Louis & Liz Levine on celebrating your 40th wedding anniversary on November 4th! Love, your family and friends.

B'H' Happy Birthday pour vos trois ans à Jacob et Elsa. On vous aime - Laurence et Alain.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Is social media a job killer?

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Ella,

When it comes to academics, my son Zack is very smart, but when I think about how irresponsible he is about his future it makes me cringe.

Zack graduated with a degree in business, but he's not prepared to enter the job market.

He was among a pool of kids who were out to find a place for themselves in the working world, and the percentage of his classmates who actually succeeded in landing a position was smaller than we expected.

After a close friend of the family intervened and got him the lead, he had a very promising interview with a financial firm. Zack didn't get the position. We found out later that it wasn't because his marks were inadequate – in fact, his grades were excellent – or because he didn't interview well, but because the employer went to Zack's Twitter account and saw tweet after tweet about partying, accompanied by Instagram photos of Zack and his friends holding beers in the air and horsing around.

The interviewer told our friend off the record to tell this young man to clean up his social media accounts.

"Sure everyone in university parties, but not everyone is stupid enough to share it with the world in cyberspace," is what our friend was told.

The job was offered to someone with the same qualifications who didn't advertise his social indiscretions.

Zack maintains it had nothing to do with that. "Everybody has photos like that," was the answer I got when I confronted him.

There's no talking to him. He knows it all. On top of that, do you think he learned anything from this experience? Zack continues to enjoy his young adult years with his friends and share his experiences on social media sites.

He comes home at all hours, then sleeps in late, and when I ask him how the job hunt is going, he tells me he's doing his best.

I'm frustrated and angry, but what can I do? He's too old and won't listen to his mommy any longer.

Dangers of Social Media

Dear Dangers of Social Media

Social media can be a very powerful tool in the job market. In Zack's case, if he's truly serious about his job hunt, he needs to learn how to use social media to help him along, not ruin his chances.

When he posts a status update, he's not thinking about his future, he's connecting with his friends. His inability to understand the consequences shows Zack's lack of maturity and priorities.

At this stage in his life, Zack should be examining every word he shares with the world. Social media sites give a false sense of anonymity, but social media is anything but anonymous.

It's all about networking smartly. What greater way is there to reach firms and people who have a presence on Linkedin, Facebook and Twitter?

Zack may have a degree, but he hasn't shown a serious interest in finding a job. For starters, his interview was set up by a friend. Has he set up anything on his own? Has he had any other bites other than the arranged one? If Zack were serious, he wouldn't let his Facebook and Twitter photos stand in his way of finding work. As the old saying goes, you can lead a horse to water…

Employers want the complete package. There are plenty of excellent candidates to choose from. Besides looking for someone who is qualified, they look for a person who is well-rounded, well-spoken, passionate, bright (with common sense) and can think outside the box.

Perhaps Zack isn't hungry enough. You may have to look at his current living situation to see how comfortable you're making things for him. I'm sure Zack will come into his own, but in the meantime, you don't have to do his laundry and put three squares on the table every day.

When he begins to see his friends moving on, it will light a fire under him. He's an adult, and other than controlling his immediate environment in your home, you have little say in what he chooses to do with his life. You've done your best. Now take a back seat and let all the work you've put into your son have a chance to flourish.

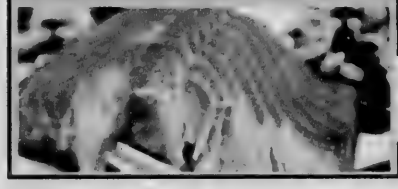
Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Build Your Own Burger

CHUTNEY ROASTED SALMON

1 c bottle chutney of choice
1/4 c olive oil
1 side boneless skinless salmon

Preheat oven 450°. Mix chutney and oil, brush all over salmon. Place salmon in baking pan. Bake 25 min. Serve hot or at room temperature.



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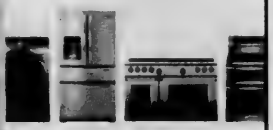

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Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Think back to the best hamburger that you ever had. You needed two hands to hold it and a lot of napkins to wipe away the juice. You will remember it had a toasty bun and was piled high with all the toppings you desired and topped off with your very favourite sauce. Can't wait to have one again? Well follow along with me, and together we will build your choice burger.

Pick Your Protein
fresh ground beef 20-30 per cent fat
fresh lean ground beef
fresh ground chicken or turkey
veggie – black beans, mushrooms, tofu

Pick Your Mix-ins
crushed Rice Krispies
crushed Corn Flakes
egg
fresh minced garlic
fresh finely chopped onion
black pepper
fresh chopped herbs
favourite steak spice
soy sauce
cumin (especially for black bean burgers)

Pick Your Bread
hamburger bun
kaiser bun
onion bun
ciabatta roll
brown, rye or white bread
multigrain bun

Pick Your Hot Toppings
fried caramelized onions
sautéed mushrooms
fried egg
grilled pineapple rings

Pick Your Cold Toppings
avocado or guacamole
pesto
lettuce
sliced tomatoes
sweet pickle relish
sliced coloured peppers
coleslaw
roasted red pepper
fresh onion slices
sliced pickles
sliced olives
crunchy potato chips, wide chow mein noodles or corn chips

Pick Your Sauce
mustard or honey mustard
ketchup
barbecue sauce
Buffalo wings sauce
pizza sauce
Thai sweet chili sauce
teriyaki Sauce

Hamburger Guidelines:

Make sure your meat is fresh. Keep meat cold until mixing and cold until cooking.

Combine your choice of mix-ins with the ground meat. Consider using eggs or egg whites to help bind the mixture together.

Make uniform-sized patties, about four ounces each, for diner-style burgers cooked on a griddle or frying pan, and about five ounces each for barbecued burgers.

After the patties are made, gently push one finger into the middle to create a small indentation. This will make certain that your burger will cook evenly.

Sprinkle salt over the outside of the patties, then spread a thin layer of oil over the patty. This will help sear the meat, keep moisture inside and reduce sticking to the grill or griddle.

Grill burgers three to four minutes on each side for medium-rare, five to six minutes on each side for medium-well. Remember, it depends on the thickness of the burger – it doesn't hurt to check the doneness along the way by cutting into a burger. Better safe than sorry.

To cook on a griddle, lightly oil griddle, add burgers when griddle begins to smoke. Gently press them down and cook about 4 to 5 minutes per side.

With either method of cooking, don't squish the meat with the spatula, or you will have dry burgers.

Flip burgers only once.

To toast buns or bread on the grill, brush with extra virgin olive oil and place on grill or griddle for 1-2 minutes and set aside.

That's all there is to it. Not bad, eh? So take some time to create your new hamburger memories.

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Famed developer was known for tzedakah

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Paul Reichmann was remembered as a giant in the real estate field, who, along with his brothers, earned billions from their innovative and ambitious projects, but who also gave tens of millions to a wide range of community organizations.

Reichmann, a Hungarian-born developer and philanthropist, died late last week at 83. He had been ill and bed-ridden for some time.

A senior staff member at one of the Reichmann-supported Orthodox institutions in Toronto compared him to a modern-day Rothschild.

His passing was noted by a variety of business publications and dailies for leading his family's Olympia & York Developments Ltd. in designing and constructing landmark projects, including London's Canary Wharf and New York's World Financial Center.

Paul Reichmann

According to author Anthony Bianco, who wrote a book about the family, Olympia & York was "the greatest property development company in western history."

At its height in 1988, the cumulative wealth of the Reichmann brothers – Paul, Albert and Ralph – was estimated at $9.2 billion by *Forbes* magazine. Reichmann purchased eight Manhattan office buildings in 1977 for more than $300 million (all figures US). Ten years later they were worth $3 billion.

According to *JTA*, the company built nearly 100 buildings in the Toronto area during its first 15 years of operation. Among the family's projects was First Canadian Place, the tallest bank tower in the world at 72 storeys when it was completed in 1975.

By 1992, Olympia & York was forced to seek bankruptcy protection when loans to finance Canary Wharf came due before tenants could be found for the development.

The crisis affected the family's ability to support a number of philanthropic projects, which, at their height, amounted to some $50 million a year, according to the *New York Times*.

The Reichmanns were instrumental in founding Kollel Toronto, a community learning institution and adult education centre.

"It was his idea and his family's to start the Toronto kollel," said a senior staff member who asked that his name not be used.

"He came up with the idea of having a kollel and getting the younger crowd to stay in town. People were moving to New York or perhaps Israel," he said.

When the kollel was founded in 1970, "it was kind of an experiment. It was a first. There was no such thing."

"The idea was to bring a group of young scholars to town, and that would attract younger people, [and] the schools would get larger and attract more people."

The kollel proved successful in stemming the outflow of young Orthodox people, he added.

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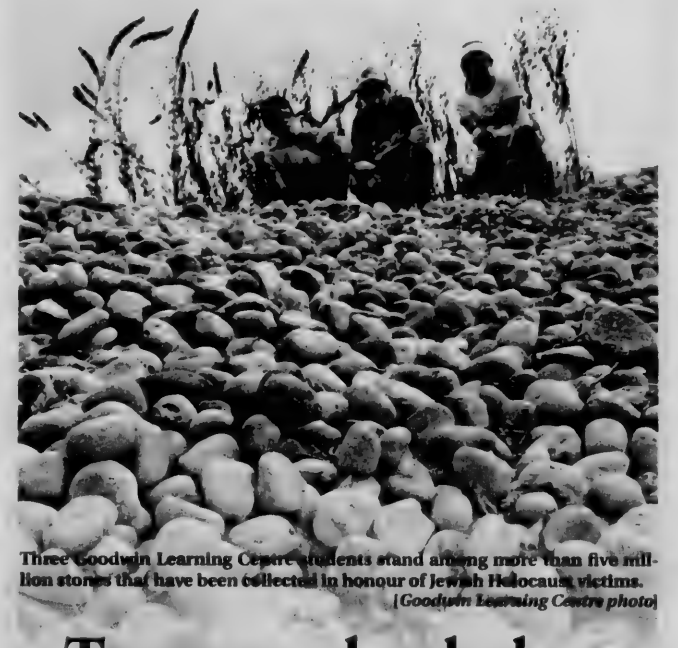

Three Goodwin Learning Centre students stand among more than five million stones that have been collected in honour of Jewish Holocaust victims. *[Goodwin Learning Centre photo]*

Trenton school plans ambitious Shoah memorial

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

As the Pebbles for Peace project in Trenton, Ont., nears its goal of collecting six million pebbles to represent the number of Jewish Holocaust victims, the project's leaders have embarked on a $2-million fundraising initiative to build a memorial and community theatre for their town.

Inspired by *Paper Clips* – a documentary about a campaign led by the staff and students of Whitwell Middle School in Tennessee to collect six million paper clips in honour of Jewish Holocaust victims – staff and students at the Goodwin Learning Centre in Trenton have spent the last six years working on a similar project to help students understand "what six million looks like."

When teacher Melissa Mikel and Linda Goodwin, the principal and founder of the private school that currently serves 42 students – none of them Jewish – spoke to *The CJN* in 2007, the project had just been launched, and the nearly 5,550 pebbles they had collected were being kept "neatly in a bin."

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Toldot
Candlelighting: 5:51
Havdalah: 6:52
Greater Toronto Area

CHAT teacher innovates with technology *— Please see page 16*

Rocker Lou Reed was coy about his Jewishness — please see page 26

CANADA

Mtl. Le Mood Fest

MONTREAL — More than 1,000 participants are expected at Montreal's third annual Le Mood Festival of Unexpected Jewish Learning, Arts and Culture on Nov. 3. Among the marquee speakers are Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, environmentalist David Suzuki and Jewlicious.com founder David Abitbol. Inspired by the 30-year-old annual Limmud in England, Le Mood is part of the growing network of 58 similar festivals in 28 countries.

WORLD

Bomb Iran: Adelson

NEW YORK — U.S. philanthropist Sheldon Adelson, a top backer of Republican and right-wing pro-Israel causes, advocated bombing Iran with a nuclear device as a means of negotiation. "You pick up your cellphone and you call somewhere in Nebraska and you say 'OK, let it go,' and so there's an atomic weapon [that] goes over, ballistic missiles in the middle of the desert that doesn't hurt a soul, maybe a couple of rattlesnakes and scorpions," Adelson, a casino magnate, said Oct. 22 at Yeshiva University. "And then you say, 'See? The next one is in the middle of Tehran.'" Adelson, a major backer of Birthright Israel who owns the newspaper *Israel Hayom* and is close to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, was criticizing the Obama administration's readiness to negotiate with Iran on its nuclear weapons program.

New Micro-grants

WASHINGTON — A new micro-grants initiative will award funding of up to $1,000 each for 50 different project ideas. The #MakeItHappen micro-grants initiative, for creating Jewish experiences in communities around the world, was announced last week by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Philanthropic Network. Submission deadline is Dec. 6 and the ideas will be selected on a rolling basis. Anyone 18 and older can submit a project idea. The project must occur before May 31. Five of the ideas could receive funding of up to $5,000.

Israeli Schools Sign Deal With U de M

MONTREAL — Memorandums of understanding were signed between the Université de Montréal (U de M) and two Israeli universities: the Technion and University of Haifa.

The signings took place during U de M's first mission to Israel, led by rector Guy Breton, earlier this month.

Guy Breton

These preliminary general agreements were described as a first step toward future academic co-operation, such as in research or faculty/student exchange, by Miriam Azogui-Halbwax, associate director of community and university relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which organized the trip.

The Technion and U de M's medicine faculties inked a separate agreement.

The U de M also entered into discussions on collaboration with Hebrew University, Tel Aviv University, the Weizmann Institute, Ben-Gurion University, and Bar-Ilan University.

Azogui-Halbwax said the delegation was impressed by the dynamism of Israeli society and the importance Israel places on higher education.

CIJA views the mission as an important milestone in the relationship between the Montreal Jewish community and the U de M, which has been the training ground for many of Quebec's leading business, professional and civic leaders.

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Bathurst Street landmark Daiter's up for sale

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Daiter's, the family-run deli and market that has been a fixture on Bathurst Street since 1964, will be closing its doors.

The Daiter family announced last week that it has put the building up for sale. According to the multiple listing service of the Toronto Real Estate Board, the asking price for the property is just under $5 million.

The family will be selling the building but not the business, said Stephen and Joel Daiter, the brothers who operate the market. Though they are the third generation of their family to run a retail outlet under the family name, none of their children are interested in continuing the family legacy.

"We're the third generation, but we don't have a fourth," said Joel.

The family is not intent on turning over the business to someone else to carry on.

"My dad worked very hard, he was a hard-working man," said Stephen. "He said, 'Don't sell the name because you don't want someone to harm the name.'"

The store is a landmark in the Bathurst Street corridor. With 3,000 square feet of retail space it provides traditional Jewish fare, including blintzes, gefilte fish, schmaltz herring, locally crafted cheeses, pastry, and more contemporary items such as salads and sandwiches.

Though the brothers are closing the retail outlet, the Daiter name will continue to be associated with the food business. Stephen and Joel said they want to devote more time to catering and wholesale sales, though from a new location.

Selling prepared foods such as soup and other items to big box grocers has become an important part of the business, they said. In addition, their catering business for simchahs and shivahs has grown as well.

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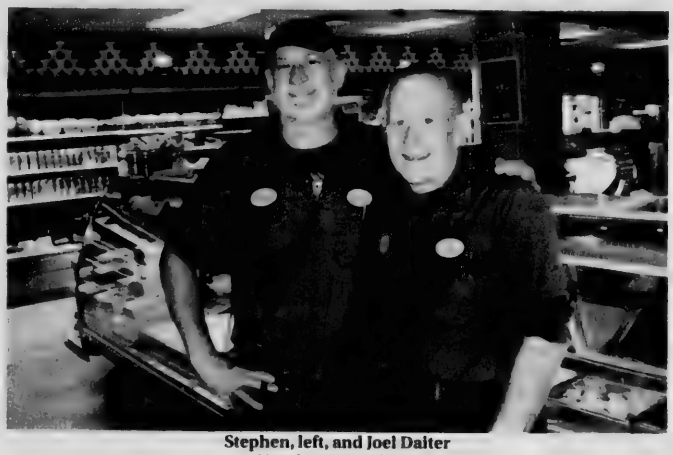

Stephen, left, and Joel Daiter
(Paul Lungen photo)

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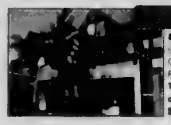
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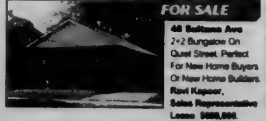
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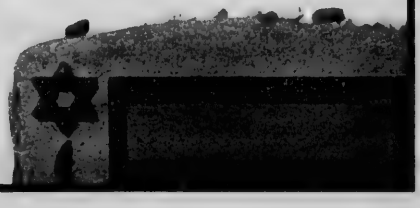

Iran more likely to ape North Korea than Libya

Early last month, following Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's "charm offensive" at the UN, this column noted widespread media skepticism about Iran's nuclear intentions.

The influential *Economist* magazine led the way, saying (Sept. 28) that "No matter how friendly Iran suddenly appears, any talks [about its nuclear program] will be protracted and theatrical," fuelling the suspicion that Tehran "is merely buying time for its centrifuges."

According to Reports
By PAUL MICHAELS

Nonetheless, just a couple of weeks later, when nuclear talks were held in Geneva (Oct. 15-16), and reports circulated of western enthusiasm for signs of Iranian flexibility (although no official details were released), even the *Economist* shifted its line to what it called in its Oct. 19 editorial "mild optimism."

That seemed to set the tone for a number of other media outlets that had previously shared the magazine's pronounced skepticism.

It's not that the *Economist* and other publications all suddenly shifted 180 degrees. Yet, as the *Economist* put it, although in Geneva "[t]here was no breakthrough… the atmosphere was good enough to create hope that a deal of some sort could be done next year."

The word "hope" is key. We've heard it many times in the past few years to describe events in the broader Middle East – first the hope that the Arab Spring would lead to liberal democracy, then the hope that the illiberal Islamists who rose to power would be tolerant and pragmatic, then the hope that Iranian-backed Syrian President Bashar Assad would be removed from power. The list goes on. But in each case, the hope has been dashed.

Now the latest manifestation of hope is that Iran is truly ready to cut a deal with the West and give up the nuclear weapons program it swears it has never been engaged in (even in the face of evidence of systematic deception about its intentions). Although Rouhani himself has played a central role in this past deception, many are now willing to trust what they see as his sincerity. Iran, after all, is desperate for relief from biting economic sanctions, and Rouhani has been tasked with finding a formula on the nuclear file that will lead to the end of sanctions.

Israel (along with Saudi Arabia) is the odd country out in insisting that Iran, once again, is not to be trusted, even though it accepts that, ideally, a negotiated resolution of the nuclear problem would be preferred – preferred, that is, to the use of force.

In his Oct. 19 *National Post* column "A second chance to strike first," Robert Fulford recounted remarks on the Iranian nuclear issue by well-known Israeli writer Yossi Klein Halevi, who met with some journalists earlier this month in Toronto.

This is the 40th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War and, as Fulford put it, "For many Israelis, it's a piece of history that carries important lessons for the present."

In 1973, faced with imminent threats from Egypt and Syria, then-Israeli prime minister Golda Meir "decided against a pre-emptive strike, fearing a negative response from Washington… Now, with the looming possibility of an Iranian nuclear bomb, Israelis face another danger of falling asleep. A pre-emptive strike is constantly debated," Fulford wrote.

In conversation with Steve Paikin, host of TVO's *The Agenda*, Klein Halevi argued that Iran has two models to consider: be like Libya's Moammar Gadhafi who, having given up his nuclear weapons program, was attacked and ended up dead, or follow North Korea's lead, deceive the international community, develop nuclear weapons, and become "essentially untouchable."

As Klein Halevi said: "The notion that negotiations are going to convince Iran to give up a nuclear program that has been the centre point of its ambitions for the last 30 years, right at the moment when it's so close and say, 'Okay, we're going the route of Gadhafi'…' I think is an example of willful naiveté that so much of the West has adopted and which, frankly, from where I sit in Jerusalem, is inexplicable."

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

TORAH DEDICATED

Rabbi Elie Karfunkel of the Temmy Latner Forest Hill Jewish Centre dances with a new Torah on Spadina Road in Forest Hill Village at an event attended by more than 500 people Sunday. The new scroll was dedicated in memory of the late MP and cabinet minister Robert Kaplan and his wife, Estherelke.

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Opening the doors

In 2011, Gershon Hundert, Derek Penslar and David Novak were inducted into the Royal Society of Canada, the first Jewish studies professors to receive this honour. For many, including the honorees, the event highlighted the fact that the academic world has been paying more attention to Jewish scholars than the Jewish community itself.

The fact that Judaism can be studied at universities alongside all the great disciplines is an amazing development that our ancestors could never have imagined and one that eludes many Jewish communities in the Diaspora even today.

Guest Editorial

It is self-evident that research done by Jewish studies scholars has yielded great insight into our culture and has opened the doors of Jewish learning for people who would have never dared engage with it in more traditional forums, such as yeshivas and synagogues. At a time when many such forums struggle to appear more pluralistic in order to attract disaffected Jews, university departments of Jewish studies have long modelled true pluralism by simply providing a space where all are welcome to study without being judged.

Students find that the academic study of Judaism provides an exciting vantage point. They are delighted at their encounter with the totality of Jewish civilization, having grown up in institutions that could only provide limited vistas. When sources are studied without prejudice, new truths emerge about the great movements and figures of Jewish history. The broader historical and cultural contexts provided reveal how Judaism has always been in dialogue with the world, open to and affected by its surroundings, even as it maintained its unique character and made its own contributions.

Some feel that Judaism is in some way diminished by academic treatment, which demystifies it. But many more ask why they were not given the keys to its fascinating insights earlier. Jewish studies at universities also makes Jews and Judaism more accessible to non-Jews, who take these courses in notable numbers and learn to appreciate the Jewish experience. In this way, the academy fosters the type of mutual understanding that is so painfully absent in other realms of society.

For all these reasons, the Jewish community should support, nurture, and take advantage of departments and programs of Jewish studies. It should aim to have more elementary and high school Jewish studies teachers study Judaism in university, as well as encourage people to attend Jewish studies public lectures when they are offered, buy and read the books produced by scholars, invite more scholars to speak in synagogues, schools and community events, and write and read more articles about groundbreaking developments in the field of Jewish studies.

The community should strongly back Jewish studies programs and departments financially as well. These courses will never attract as many students as Economics 101 or Introduction to Psychology, so their position on campus is always fragile, especially in these times of unprecedented cutbacks and tight budgets. Visionary community support can ensure the field of Jewish studies remains on campus with exciting and broad course offerings, opening the widest possible doors to our timeless heritage.

Eric Caplan

Dry Bones AMERICAN SURPRISE

U.S. MILITARY AID TO EGYPT IS BEING STOPPED
WHICH THEY AGREED TO SEND AS PART OF THE EGYPT/ISRAEL PEACE TREATY.
WE ALWAYS KNEW THAT SOMEONE MIGHT BREAK THE PEACE AGREEMENT BEWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT
BUT WE NEVER EXPECTED IT TO BE AMERICA.
POLITICALCARTOONS.COM
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Remember the FSU Shoah survivors

It is as though the Iron Curtain was never lifted. Another year, another Holocaust Education Week (HEW) in the offing, another lost opportunity for it to bring its formidable expertise to examine the fate of tens of thousands of Holocaust survivors still living in countries of the former Soviet Union.

Surely this vast constituency is worthy of study, and not only objectively as a scholarly inquiry, but subjectively to explore the puzzling paradox of a caring people who neglect their own.

Our lack of engagement personally and communally with them is an issue we should confront now, while they are still with us.

Overwhelmingly we bundle these survivors with the needy poor, a catch-all that dodges their status as a people whose plight is a direct result of what we absolutely and directly share with them: being Jews.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

May the next HEW conference include the survivors living in the former Soviet Union in its scholarly embrace. No longer out of reach, behind an Iron Curtain that's no longer there, these patient people have been waiting to tell their stories.

Dov Harris
Toronto

• • •

Library exhibit was a success

The Hamilton Public Library's recent exhibit showcasing two of Israel's charitable programs with an international reach that have benevolently touched the lives of so many, without regard for race, religion or nationality, were motivated only by an unconditional desire to help those who face the darkest moments of their lives ("Exhibit caused too much damage," Letters, *The CJN*, Oct. 17).

As members of Hamilton Jewish Federation's public relations committee, which helped put on the exhibit, my colleagues and I are well aware of one repeated criticism of the federation and of library officials regarding the initiatives we took related to last year's Gaza exhibit and our subsequent recent library exhibit. However, it is important to be aware that this isolated complaint stands alone against a backdrop of overwhelming support and accolades received from so many in our Jewish community, and from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

Leonard Ritter
Hamilton, Ont.

• • •

We must speak with unity

I concur with Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs CEO Shimon Fogel when he says, "We can't have it both ways" (*The CJN*, Oct. 3). Truer and more important words have never been uttered.

We should have it one way – meaning, that the Jewish community from the grassroots level and up should speak with one united voice, at least on major issues.

Too often, most dedicated groups, selfless and tireless individuals and small organizations are seeking guidance, struggling for much-needed support from the mainstream organizations, when taking a stand, whether by open protest or lectures, are ignored, alienated and barely listened to.

We are fortunate to have the Stephen Harper government on our side, but in many cases we must fend for our own interests, i.e., combat the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, Israeli Apartheid Week, and the demonization of Israel in the media, academia and some religious institutions.

We, the Jewish People, must take a united stand and act and speak with one voice, at least on issues of major concern for all of us.

Goldi Steiner
Toronto

• • •

Parents do not become children

We do not become parents to our parents ("Parenting the parent," *The CJN*, Oct. 10).

We do not reduce them to children. We remain the children and they the parents, regardless of their infirmities. The role we adult children take on is filial maturity.

The Torah tells us to honour our parents and not to consider them as burdens. This is not the Jewish way of behaving. Honour thy mother and father.

When life does not go the way we want it to, it does not mean that life is not fair. Life is full of ups and downs, and God is not in the business of what is fair, not fair or unjust. He gives us life and we are responsible for doing good.

Just live and do the best you can with what you have been given.

Etta Ginsberg McEwan
Toronto

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Search for lost pre-WWII art bears fruit in Toronto

Fern Smiley

Elizabeth Rynecki has always wondered what the watercolour, *Prayer*, painted by her great-grandfather, Moshe Rynecki, looked like in its entirety.

At a talk she gave earlier this month at the University of Toronto's Centre for Jewish Studies, titled "Chasing Portraits: a Great-Granddaughter's Search for her Lost Art Legacy," she displayed a slide of the watercolour.

The intense energy of the congregants praying the Shema in the soulful painting abruptly halts on two opposite corners. One third of her image was missing, twice diagonally slashed as if amputated to save the rest.

Later, following her presentation, in a remarkable turn of events, Rynecki would find out just what the original watercolour looked like.

Rynecki's efforts to find her great-grandfather's paintings that were lost in the Holocaust are partly affected by her graduate work examining the voice of the second generation within Holocaust discourse.

Through the art of her great-grandfather and its assemblage, Rynecki would find for herself meaning in the recovery of memory, a responsibility she has fully embraced in recent years through social media and documentary filmmaking.

Rynecki, who earned a master's degree in rhetoric and speech communication at the University of California, Davis, and now lives in Oakland, Calif., knows little about her family's story of survival.

Elizabeth Rynecki and Prof. Barry Walfish go over the letters and photos from the Otto Schneid archives.

Elizabeth Rynecki's slide of the watercolour *Prayer*, painted by her great-grandfather Moshe, was missing around one-third, slashed diagonally on both corners.

What she does know is that at the outbreak of World War II, Moshe Rynecki became concerned about preserving his life's work – more than 800 paintings and sculptures – and that in the early days of the war, he divided his oeuvre into bundles and hid them in and around Warsaw in an effort to protect them.

Moshe perished in Majdanek, and after the war, the family recovered approximately 100 paintings in the cellar of a home in Warsaw's Praga district.

His works – each depicting Jewish spiritual, communal or commercial life in prewar Poland – have seeped into museums and private hands.

One story she told was of partisan fighters who, on their walk back into Poland from Russia, bought a bundle of paintings from a farmer who had stored the works during the war, which is why she came to Toronto – to visit the home where four of her great-grandfather's paintings hang, beautifully framed, and treasured by a family who feel fortunate to have them.

Rynecki described the difficulties facing most heirs around the issues of asserting claims and talked about her choice to take a different route – not as a claimant, but as a historian.

While it's possible that much of Moshe's extant oeuvre has been stolen, this can't be easily proven. Since Moshe's work was never recorded or catalogued, it's impossible to prove whether paintings that surface at auctions, for example, came from the bundles.

As an art historian, Rynecki can search for her great-grandfather's paintings, establish relationships with those who have his pieces, and potentially learn the stories that tie all of those who have experienced the work into a larger narrative.

In return, she receives gifts, and that night at her talk, Prof. Barry Walfish gave her several more.

After the questions ended, he raised his hand and explained to Rynecki and the audience that the University of Toronto Library, where Walfish works as a Judaica specialist, holds handwritten letters of her great-grandfather as well as more than a dozen photographs of his paintings. Among them was a photo of the damaged painting she showed during her talk.

In the rain, after a long lecture, Walfish accompanied Rynecki to the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, where he opened two archival boxes from the Otto Schneid archives.

Schneid, a European-born Polish painter, sculptor and historian, wrote a book on modern Jewish art in the Diaspora. In his research, he solicited autobiographies and photos of artwork from dozens of Jewish artists in Europe, including Moshe.

In 1938, after Germany's annexation of Austria, the printing of his authoritative book by his Viennese publisher was halted by the Nazis. Schneid fled Poland for Palestine, but never saw his book in print. A Hebrew version that he prepared in Israel and was ready for publication in 1957 also never saw the light of day. The unpublished manuscripts, in German and Hebrew, along with all the background material he collected, were gifted to the Fisher Library by his widow, Miriam, in 2002.

The photograph of the original painting (Courtesy of the Thomas Rare Book Library, University of Toronto)

Out of the boxed archives came more than a dozen photos of paintings Rynecki had never seen before, including one called *Kabbalist* and one haunting deathbed scene of Moshe's own father, as well as the intact photographic reproduction of his watercolour *Prayer*, and a handwritten letter in Yiddish from Moshe to Schneid, introducing himself, which begins: "I was born an artist…"

"I am delighted I was able to help Elizabeth in her quest for information on her great-grandfather's artistic legacy," Walfish said later.

"The Schneid archive is a wonderful resource for the study of Jewish art in Europe in the interwar period. Many of the artists included in it perished in the Holocaust. I hope that this discovery will help get the word out and bring more scholars and seekers to our door."

You can find out more about Rynecki and her search for her great-grandfather's works on her website, www.rynecki.org.

Fern Smiley is an advocate for Holocaust-era art restitution and was an adviser to the former Canadian Jewish Congress.

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Lost (and found) in translation

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

One long ago semester, as a student, I earned pocket money by cataloguing books at my university's international affairs library. At the time, countries paid off part of their foreign debts by sending newly published books to designated libraries, and the library where I worked received quarterly shipments of volumes from the Middle East. My job was to integrate these new books into our library. In the non-digitized environment of the time, this meant integrating Hebrew and Arabic books into the library's card catalog system.

This was simpler than you'd think, as each shipment came with translated and transliterated author and title listings, and some limited information on each volume. My knowledge of Hebrew allowed me to add useful information to the library's record. For the Arabic books, I could only utilize the data provided, as I had studied spoken Arabic, but not written Arabic. On slow days, I used my cataloguing chores to teach myself the rudiments of written Arabic, matching the curvy shapes of Arabic letters with their transliterated representations. The knowledge gained was neither supple nor lasting, alas, but for a while I could make out some basic textual information.

The static format of the time has long since given way to the fluidity of electronic media. My students have never shredded their cuticles flipping through card catalogs. Except for those with a penchant for antiques, I doubt that many even know what a card catalog is. One of my favorite hotels in Manhattan is the Library Hotel, so named because of its proximity to the New York public library. The hotel's decor picks up playfully on this association, with rooms numbered and decorated according to the Dewey decimal system. Behind the reception desk is an old, wooden card catalog chest. The first time I checked in, I asked the hotel agent if was being used for anything. "No," he responded. "It's merely a vestigial remnant."

Today we find information – about books and anything else – much more efficiently. And the technologies that help us to do so also shield us from struggling through encounters with unfamiliar languages. In online search results, for instance, webpages in languages we can't read can be instantly translated, pre-empting a gaze at incomprehensible symbols. On computers, tablets and even phones, we can feed in words, even paragraphs, in almost any language and almost instantly receive a translation. Those translations are awkward, non-idiomatic and sometimes amusing, but they give us the gist of what we want to know.

I harbour no secret yearning for the card catalogue days, but something important is lost when language unfamiliarity is so smoothed over as to be erased. Encountering foreign and familiar tongues simultaneously and in tension with one another stretches us, teaches us and broadens us in unique ways. One way where technology helps that encounter is by making foreign, subtitled media easily available for viewing.

My family, for example, keeps up with current spoken Hebrew when we're not in Israel by watching Israeli films and TV series at home, on DVDs or via the web. We hear different registers of language – formal, informal, slang – as well as nuanced differences of various socio-economic, ethnic and professional groups.

Most difficult for us to catch are IDF-slang and teen-speak. IDF slang proliferates faster than an Israeli jet, based on acronyms, command terms, and general bawdiness. Even reservists confess to sometimes needing a refresher course. Teen-speak, too, evolves quickly. Just as elsewhere, Israeli teens speak quickly, mumble, swallow syllables and baffle their elders. In addition, current Israeli movies and TV series often feature extended dialogue in other languages, such as Arabic, Yiddish or Russian. That's where subtitles come in – sometimes in Hebrew, sometimes in English – allowing viewers to simultaneously encounter the unfamiliar and the familiar.

Subtitles are less a science than an art. Like most translations, they're rarely perfect. But experienced together with the original, they facilitate language learning. Even more importantly, the meeting of original and translation highlights the rich cultural texture that language carries and transmits.

What should we do about intermarriage?

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

A growing number of members of our community are terminal Jews. Even if their children and grandchildren are halachically Jewish, their commitment to Judaism may be waning. One of the main reasons is intermarriage. As individual Jews, we've never had it so good, yet the threat to our collective survival is formidable, although – or because – we now live in freedom and relative prosperity.

That's how I read two articles by Prof. Jack Wertheimer of the Jewish Theological Seminary in the online magazine *Mosaic*. A subsequently published and much debated report by the Pew Research Center about Jewish life in the United States can be seen as confirmation of his bleak prognosis: the intermarriage rate there between 2000 and 2013 is 58 per cent.

Though we'd like to believe that the situation in Canada is less acute, the trend is the same.

Wertheimer points an accusing finger at American Jewish leaders, among whom "any concerns are swept under the carpet and the talk is of cherishing 'diversity' and doing everything to foster 'inclusiveness.'" He believes the organized community can do much more to help Jews to marry Jews by providing better opportunities for socializing and by making greater efforts to encourage non-Jewish marriage partners to embrace Judaism.

But he's critical of the practice in liberal communities of trying to accommodate intermarried couples. He implies that in the not-too-distant future, only the Orthodox will survive as Jews in the Diaspora. Though currently in the United States only some 10 per cent describe themselves as Orthodox, their number - particularly among haredim – is likely to remain steady or increase, because their children marry Jews, marry early and have large families.

One of the respondents to Wertheimer's original essay was Rabbi Eric Yoffie, immediate past president of the Union for Reform Judaism. He's refreshingly optimistic about the future of the Jewish People, despite the intermarriage rate, because he has faith in the outreach efforts of his movement.

Rabbi Yoffie argues that the liberal stance is the best way to integrate non-Jewish spouses, if not by conversion then at least by encouraging them to bring up their children as Jews. Castigating and isolating them is bound to have the opposite effect to become a self-fulfilling prophecy of doom and gloom.

Other respondents presented variants on the same theme in the endearing, yet perhaps naive, American belief that every problem must have a solution. Those who celebrate the freedom and the opportunities that Jews nowadays have in the Diaspora in general and the United States in particular have no desire to return to any form of ghetto, even if it would reduce intermarriage. Some think that such a return, even if it were possible, would greatly inhibit Judaism from flourishing as it does now.

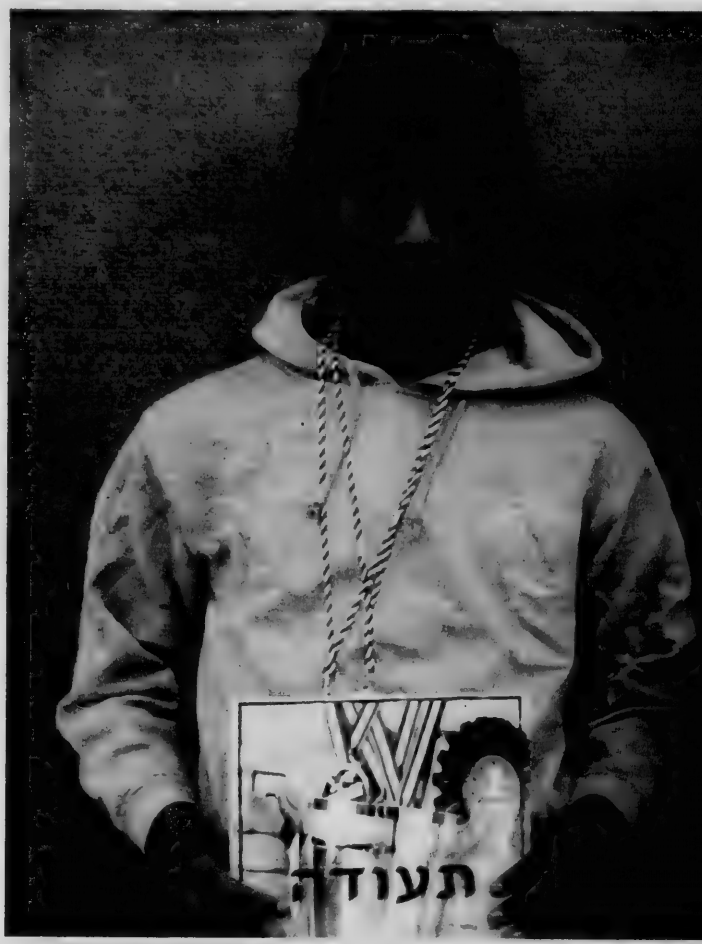
After all, the Pew Research Center report shows that there are, in fact, many more Jews in America today, at least by self-definition, than previously thought. Opportunities for serious Jewish studies at universities and other institutions in the Diaspora, coupled with the rich and varied activities in the major Jewish centers, provide much of the encouraging evidence.

Thus Doug Rushkoff, author of *Nothing Sacred: The Truth About Judaism*: "As I see it, Judaism is in the midst of one of its greatest-ever renaissances. The quality and depth of Jewish worship and study has never been stronger or more varied than today. Anyone who wants to learn, find a community, or engage in the world Jewishly can do so – and on his or her own terms."

Perhaps if we were more enthusiastic about the achievements in contemporary Jewish life and less obsessed by its problems, we might find it easier to attract those who at present manifest their marginality by marrying "out." The best way of responding to the challenge of intermarriage may be to agonize less and celebrate more by way of positive reinforcement.

A story has it that the biblical Abraham, on his way to obey God's command to sacrifice his son Isaac, is intercepted by Satan, who, in his clever way, tells Abraham that if he kills Isaac, it'll be the end of the Jewish people. To which Abraham replies: "My task is to do God's will. Jewish survival is God's problem."

The best way to deal with intermarriage may be for us not to preach against it, but do God's will as best we can – and leave the rest to God.



In the three short years since he and his family made aliyah, 12-year old Tzasfahon Aginahu has learned the fundamentals of Hebrew and mathematics, all without any previous formal education.

Currently attending elementary school, Tzasfahon is one of many Ethiopian-born students who benefit from participating in UJA Federation supported initiatives including a hot lunch program and the Moriah Literacy Program. Through Moriah, students in Israel, particularly new immigrants, gain strong Hebrew literacy.

"Through the literacy program, and the extra help and instruction it provides, Tzasfahon has learned necessary skills that will be useful to his future," says his teacher, Yehudit. "The program helps us keep kids motivated, and ensures that no student falls behind."

At home, Tzasfahon resides in a small 2-bedroom apartment with his parents and five siblings. As second eldest, he often helps his mother cook, clean, and prepare for Shabbat.

Tzasfahon represents the myriad of new immigrants arriving in Israel without any education, who, through UJA-funded programs like the Moriah Literacy Program, are able to close education gaps and prepare for a bright and successful future.

Tzasfahon Aginahu [illegible] shares

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United Jewish Appeal

Programs will continue in North York and Vaughan

Koffler Centre gets home in downtown Toronto

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

For the first time in four years, the Koffler Centre of the Arts will have its own home.

The centre's gallery and administrative offices will move into their new downtown location at Artscape Youngplace, at 180 Shaw St., in the former Shaw Street Public School, just north of Queen Street West, on Nov. 19.

Tony Hewer, Koffler's head of communcations and marketing, said that since the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre closed about four years ago, the centre's gallery exhibits have been displayed at various locations around the city.

"The gallery closed when the BJCC closed, and we've been homeless since then. When the opportunity for a five-year lease was presented to us, we were happy for the chance to have a stable home for at least the next five years."

Hewer stressed that the eentre will continue to offer its instructional programs, such as visual arts and ceramics, at the Prosserman JCC in North York and the Schwartz-Reisman Centre in Vaughan. Multi-disciplinary programs, such as concerts, literary events and artist residencies will continue at off-site locations.

Artscape Youngplace is a community cultural hub project developed and managed by Artscape, which describes itself as "a leading practitioner in multi-tenant space development for the arts and culture sector."

Other arts-based organizations in the building include SKETCH, the Luminato Festival, the Centre of Indigenous Theatre, the Intergalactic Arts Collective and the Small World Music Society.

The gallery will open its new space, Nov. 19, from 5 to 9 p.m., with the inaugural exhibition *We're in the Library*, featuring seven Toronto artists who have created new works in response to the context and history of the Koffler Centre's new space, which was formerly the school library.

The artists examine the notion of the school library as a place of exploration, intellectual inquiry and social interaction. Projects included print, sculptural, sound and video installations.

Upcoming exhibitions in the new space include Sigalit Landau's *Moving to Stand Still*, Feb. 6 to April 14. The exhibition is a retrospective of Landau's major video works that offer a poetic investigation of the political and environmental realities of her native Israel.

The Koffler Centre's new home

The Koffler exhibition is the only North American showing on an international tour that includes Moscow, Johannesburg, Be'er Sheva, Rome and Gdansk.

Hewer said that to coincide with its move downtown, the Koffler Centre has refreshed its brand identity with a new quarterly program and exhibition booklet, as well as a redesigned website to be launched next month.

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Refugee numbers inflated by bogus claims

UN agency promotes Palestinian agenda: scholar

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

It is pretty much accepted that around 650,000 to 700,000 Palestinians became refugees during and after creation of the State of Israel. Whether they left on their own or were pushed out remains an issue that's hotly contested.

It turns out there's also plenty of disagreement as to how many Palestinians should be considered refugees today.

According to the figures compiled by the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the figure stands at some seven million, or more.

Asaf Romirowsky

Not so, said Asaf Romirowsky, an adjunct scholar at the Foundation for the Defence of Democracies and Middle East Forum. That figure is wildly inflated by bogus claims, by those who want to benefit from funds allocated to refugees and particularly by the very definition of "refugee" itself.

Of the number of people who might have been considered refugees 67 years ago, only about 30,000 remain. The others would not be refugees under any standard definition of the term, said Romirowsky, a former Israel Defence Forces international relations liaison officer in the West Bank and Jordan.

Romirowsky was in Toronto and Hamilton last week to address audiences as a guest of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research (CIJR). He said UNRWA "has the most expansive definition of refugees in the world today." It includes any Arab living in the area from 1946 to 1948, including temporary workers, as well as their descendants.

It's the latter that really inflates the refugee numbers. Nowhere else are the children and grandchildren of refugees considered refugees. Under the definition employed by the UN's main refugee agency, UNHCR, which is mandated to assist all the other refugees in the world, refugee status is not something that can be inherited, he said.

UNHCR attempts to settle refugees in host countries, something Palestinians and UNRWA have long rejected. Palestinian identity is wrapped up in self-perception as refugees and Israel's foes long ago recognized that as a way to keep the conflict at the boiling point, Romirowsky said.

"It is the main ingredient for ensuring the longevity and continuation of the conflict from generation to generation," he stated.

UNRWA is something unique unto itself, he continued. Its 30,000 employees – UNHCR employs only around 6,000 people – are highly sympathetic to the Palestinian narrative, which isn't surprising, given the vast majority of UNRWA's staff are Palestinians.

UNRWA advances the Palestinian agenda: its school textbooks are rife with calls to violence and the denial of a Jewish link to the Land of Israel, and it has adopted the Palestinian claim of a "Right to Return," which links any peace with Israel to the return of million of "refugees" to Israeli territory.

UNRWA long ago gave up any hint of neutrality in the conflict, he maintained.

Romirowsky noted that Peter Hansen, the former UNRWA commissioner-general in Gaza, stated in 2004: "I am sure that there are Hamas members on the UNRWA payroll, and I don't see that as a crime... we do not do political vetting and exclude people from one persuasion as against another."

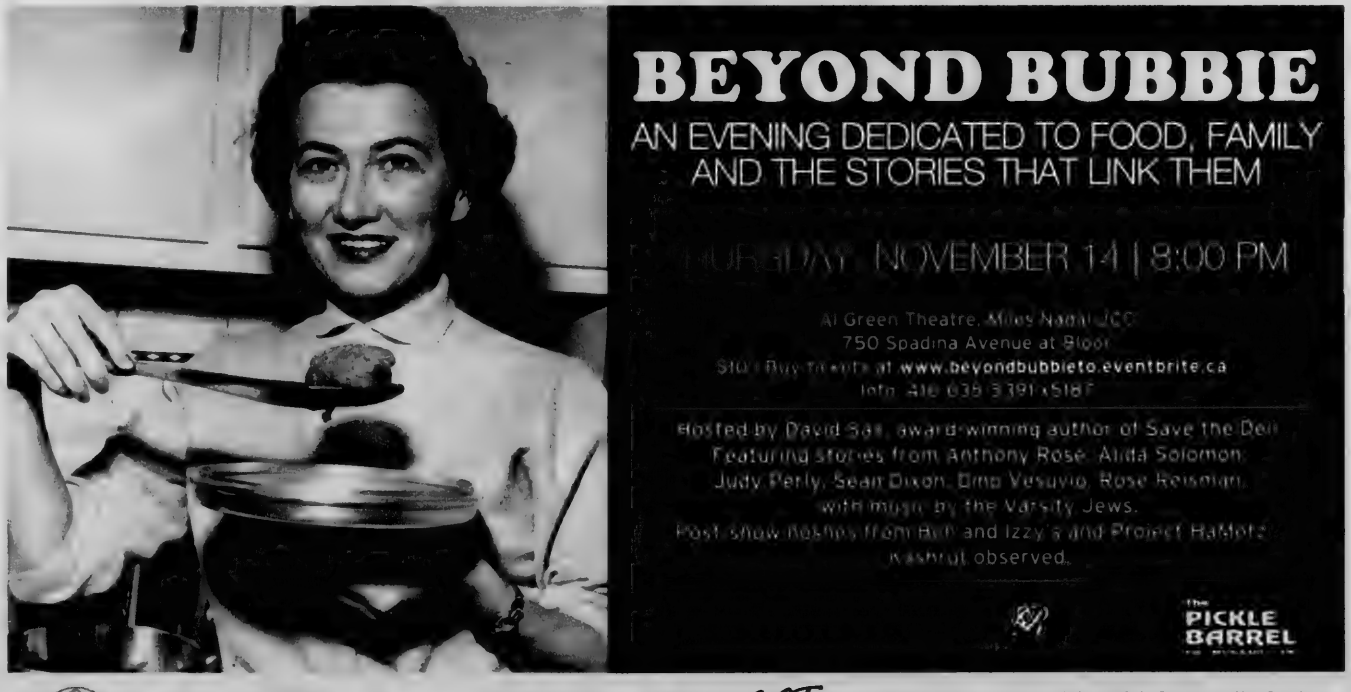
Furthermore, UNRWA is a self-perpetuating bureaucracy. It subsists on donations from private and state contributors.

"UNRWA learned since its inception that there's always a need for more and more money. It learned that the Arab world would give the money as long as it became the voice of the Palestinian people," Romirowsky stated.

Canada has de-funded UNRWA because of its lack of accountability and transparency, though the United States and the European Union continue to send it money every year. The U.S. contribution runs to some $230 million (US), but recently, Sen. Mark Kirk has initiated calls for more accountability for those funds.

"They asked for an audit and [UNRWA] went ballistic," Romirowsky said.

Steps have also been taken by individual U.S. members of Congress who have called for "an end date for the right of return." Based on the way UNRWA defines refugees, the number is bound to expand indefinitely, a situation that's ultimately unsustainable, he suggested.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Rose and Sam Pacht, centre, are flanked by their children, and, at left, York Centre MPP Monte Kwinter, and Ward 10 City Councillor James Pasternak, York Centre MP Mark Adler, along with Beth Emeth spiritual leader Rabbi Howard Morrison, far right.

Shul named community hub

CJN Staff

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue recently dedicated itself as a "community hub" for Bathurst Manor after making a number of upgrades to its building.

The project, made possible with a $130,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant, $75,000 grant from the Canadian government, and donations from Beth Emeth donors, includes an accessibility elevator, named Shelley's Elevator; a ramp, named the Sam and Rose Pacht and Family Accessibility ramp; electronic doors, and an emergency generator.

The Ruth Kelman Centre, located on the synagogue's lower level, has been renamed the Rabbi Joseph and Ruth Kelman Centre, and is now accessible by elevator.

Rabbi Kelman, the synagogue's founding spiritual leader, was an advocate on behalf of people with special needs. The centre has been used for more than 50 years by the Kadima Centre, the synagogue's program for adults with special needs.

Michael Kerzner, the synagogue's chairman of the board, said that "this is only the beginning of the expanded service we can provide to the community. We look forward to many more opportunities to serving the community at large."

He said that the synagogue has witnessed an increase in the number of special needs individuals served on a weekly basis. "Out of the Cold volunteers have used the elevator to transport many donated items, and Gan Yeladim Day Care Centre has used the elevator to avoid trips and falls on the stairs.

"During the power outage as a result of the rain storm on July 8, Beth Emeth was the only beacon of light in the neighbourhood."

Eva's Initiatives, which provides safe shelter and a range of services for homeless youth, has signed an agreement with Beth Emeth to formalize the synagogue as its safe haven in times of evacuation. Claire Horowitz, the shul's director of financial development, said that Beth Emeth has always been known as a leader in the community, "and this cements our role."

CANCER SUPPORT: For the fourth year in a row, L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women, a project of National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section, was honoured to have been named the recipient of the Shoppers Drug Mart Tree of Life campaign at the Shoppers Drug Mart at 1115 Lodestar Rd. in Rimrock Plaza. The campaign is a four-week program held every fall in support of leading women's health organizations across Canada. Pictured are L'Chaim co-chair Elizabeth Erlich, and pharmacist Alan Rais.

Now it's her turn to be served

For Lola Faivish, serving others has always come naturally. "I believe in helping others as much as possible," says Lola. Married for fifty years, Lola raised two children and spent many hours volunteering at the Branson Hospital. She knows first-hand what dedicated service means. When the time came to enjoy the retirement she deserved, Lola chose Kensington Place.

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Holocaust Education Week:

Number of key anniversaries marked this year

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

The theme of this year's Holocaust Education Week, to run Nov. 3 to 9, is "national narratives." If the world-renowned series of programs, speakers and cultural events wanted to add a line, it would be "before it's too late."

The 33rd annual HEW will explore, as its website explains, "different national, generational and cultural narratives of the Holocaust and its aftermath... the personal and collective narratives of individual survivors and communities who rebuilt themselves elsewhere in the world."

To that end, the program will feature at least a dozen sessions of direct conversations with individual Holocaust survivors, and others highlighting first-hand accounts and testimonies.

"One Story at a Time," the opening night program on Nov. 3 at the CNE's Queen Elizabeth Theatre, co-sponsored by the Azrieli Foundation, will see the release of five new survivors' memoirs published by the foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, and the screening of five accompanying short films.

This year's HEW "is about giving voice to the survivors," program co-chair Joyce Rifkind told *The CJN*. Why now?

"Survivors are aging and dying," she said. "We wanted to give an opportunity to focus on them and their stories while we still have them."

The program also takes note of Canada's chairmanship of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, an intergovernmental body comprising state officials and experts from 31 countries. It supports Holocaust education, remembrance and research. Canada is chairing the IHRA in 2013–2014.

This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the nationwide Nazi pogrom against prewar German Jews. Both will be commemorated in the closing program on Nov. 9 at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, with a candlelighting service to mark the milestone of Kristallnacht, which happened Nov. 9-10, 1938.

Also observing an important anniversary is *None is Too Many*, the groundbreaking book by professors Irving Abella and Harold Troper that chronicled Canada's dismal war-era record of admitting – or more like not admitting – Jewish refugees fleeing Europe.

Marking 30 years since the book's publication, HEW offers two programs with Troper (who is serving as the week's scholar-in-residence): On Nov. 4 at Beth Tzedec Congregation, he'll lead a discussion on his latest research: the Canadian Jewish community's failure to move the 1936 Nazi Olympic Games from Berlin, and its attempted boycott of the event.

And on Nov. 5 at Ryerson University's Heaslip House, Troper will appear on a panel alongside Jacqueline Celemencki (HEW's educator-in-residence) and Rochelle Rubinstein (its artist-in-residence) to discuss "Holocaust Legacies: The Canadian Connection." The program will examine how we understand the historical significance of the Holocaust in a modern context.

HEW's central theme – the individual's narrative – is "an incredibly important resource for historians," Troper told *The CJN*. But – and it's a touchy point – how accurate are survivors' memories? How do they stack up against the hard historical record?

"This is a major discussion point among historians," Troper replied, and he supplied a few questions of his own: "Is a survivor's testimony enough? Should we also, as historians, try to reach out and gather testimony, not just of survivors, but of bystanders, perpetrators... all those who had some direct connection to the events?"

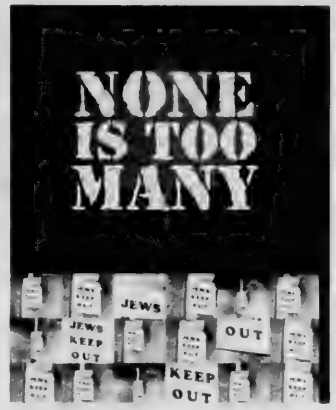
He has still more questions: What is the impact of the intervening years? How does memory change? Does it become selective? "And of course," Troper adds, "how much do you balance the memories against the kind of traditional historical record that historians are used to?"

Ultimately, he relies "a lot" on oral or memory history, "but always with a full awareness that it is only one source. But it's an incredibly important source, because, while the testimony that a survivor gives us may be short on peripheral vision – they may have not known what was going on in the neighbouring town or inner sanctums of the Nazi machine – they can give us historians all of a kind of intimate knowledge of what the human experience was like.

"It gives a picture or understanding of things we won't get any other way."

One session, on Nov. 5 at Shaar Shalom Synagogue, will examine a new development that has jarred survivors and Holocaust academics alike.

Last March, the *New York Times*, in a story headlined "The Holocaust just got more shocking," reported on the results of research by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, which 13 years earlier, began tabulating all the ghettos, slave-labour sites, concentration camps and killing factories that the Nazis had set up throughout Europe.



HEW marks 30th anniversary of the publication of *None is Too Many*.

The reality was much worse than anything imagined.

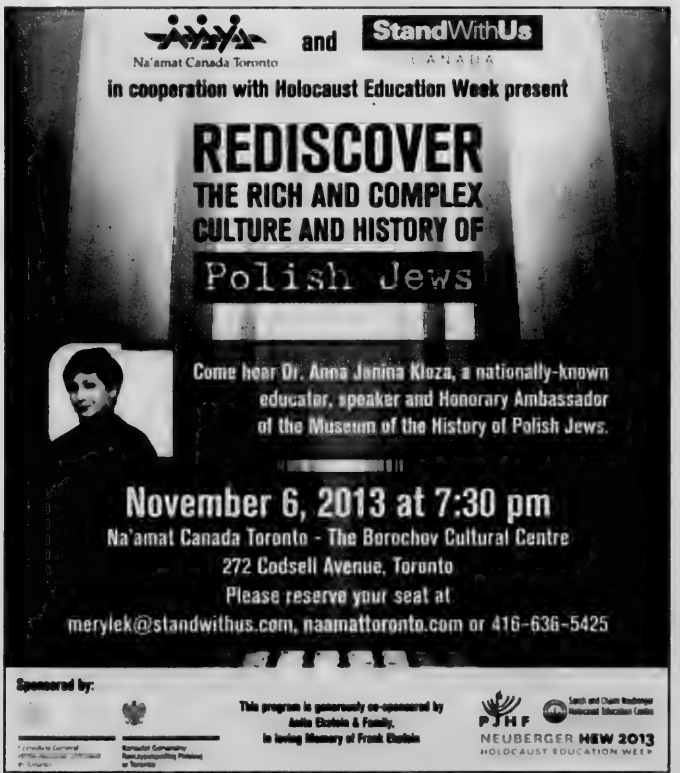
The study found there were more than 42,500 Nazi ghettos and camps throughout Europe from 1933 to 1945. Among those were 30,000 slave-labour camps; 1,150 Jewish ghettos; 980 concentration camps; 1,000 prisoner of war camps; 500 brothels filled with sex slaves; thousands of other transit and re-education camps, and centres for euthanizing the elderly and infirm, performing forced abortions or transporting victims to their deaths.

The overall figure of 42,500 ghettos and camps was "so staggering," the *Times* reported, "that even Holocaust scholars had to make sure they had heard [them] correctly." The story quoted one scholar as saying: "The numbers are so much higher than what we originally thought. We knew before how horrible life in the camps and ghettos was, but the numbers are unbelievable."

Historian Robert Jan van Pelt of the University of Waterloo and University of Toronto will examine the research and provide some of his own at the program, which starts at 8 p.m.

Troper said he's not surprised at the new research unearthed 70 years after the fact. After all, he said, summoning an old nugget about the Third Reich's fanatical record-keeping: "The Nazis committed genocide in triplicate."

HEW is presented by the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. For a full listing of programs, go to holocausteducationweek.com.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Shuls supplement classes with online lessons

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

For many families, between school, extracurricular activities, their social lives – not to mention parents' busy schedules – it can be hard to fit supplementary Jewish studies into their lives.

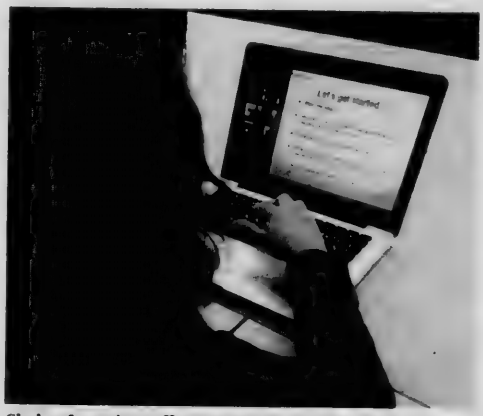
Starting this year, two Canadian synagogues are hoping to offer a more flexible option with the introduction of a program that partners with ShalomLearning, an American company that provides a system of online education.

Although the program has existed in the United States for two years, this is the first time the company has targeted a Canadian audience.

"We're reaching out globally," said Sarah Steinberg, CEO of ShalomLearning. The former executive vice-provost of Johns Hopkins University said she spent years focusing on online education, examining the differences between online and in-person studies.

The learning outcomes have proven to be identical, if not better in secular studies, she said.

"In some cases [the results are] better when you're learning online, because you have the advantage of being able to slow down a recording or take an extra time to look at something again," she said.



ShalomLearning offers online lessons for Hebrew and Torah study.

She said although she isn't aware of any studies focusing on faith-based education, "I have no reason to doubt that the findings are exactly the same."

Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto added the program this year for congregational school students learning Hebrew in grades 4 and up.

Daniel Silverman, the shul's director of education and family programming, said the school is hoping it will make it easier for students to take the class, despite their busy schedules.

For a number of years, the school has offered an option of having teachers come to students' homes if they couldn't make it to class, but this meant the teachers were driving to several houses a week.

Now with the online option, the teachers can teach two online classes, cutting down on the number of in-home tutorials.

"It's really amazing that basically you're running the same sort of class," Silverman said. "It may even be a little more interesting to the students, to students who are tech-savvy and like to have that relationship through the computer."

In Montreal, Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom also began using the program this year for its Grade 7 bar and bat mitzvah class. Like Beth Tzedec, the online lessons at the temple are only one component of the class.

Ali Maislin teaches both in class and online at that synagogue, and she said that so far, the two are not so different.

"We're all online together. We can all see each other. In that sense it's like sitting together," she said.

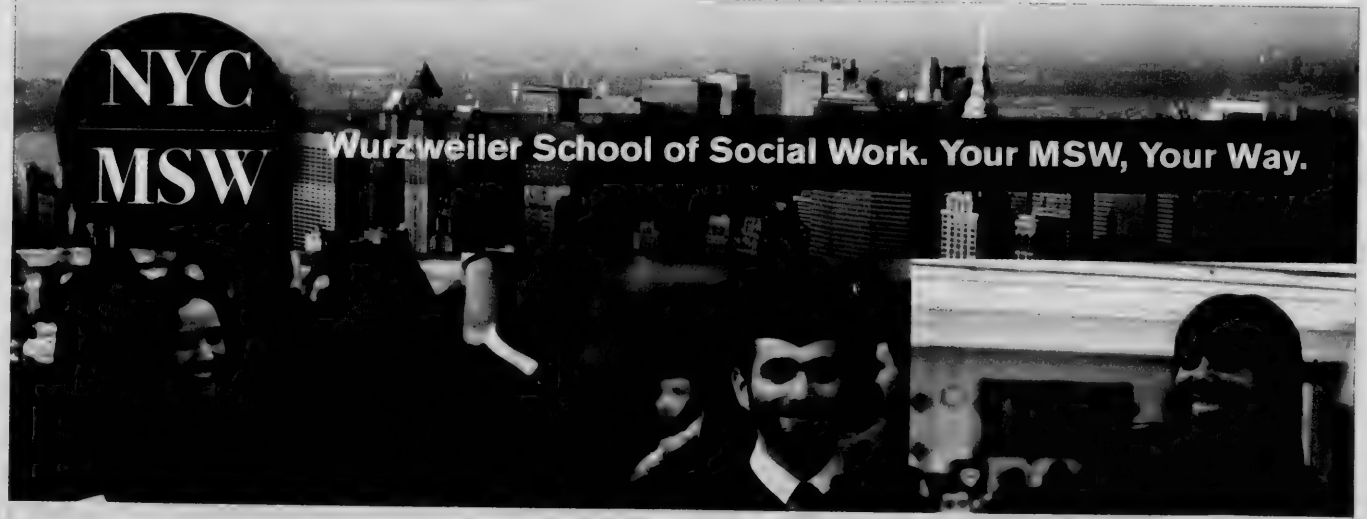
The biggest hurdle for her was learning the system and finding ways to help students who might have technical difficulties while trying not to let it affect the other students. But she noted that multitasking is a big part of teaching in the classroom, too.

Theoretically, if synagogues were to expand their online course offerings, it could offer the opportunity for Torah study to people who don't have a synagogue in their city, Steinberg said.

But there's still a while to go before the shuls are ready to tackle that audience.

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow, the temple's spiritual leader, said that although the classes enrich the program, she's adamant that the online classes could never replace in-class instruction.

"It's all a balancing act. You want to have an open door, and sometimes that means flexibility and accommodating where you can, but you want there to be substance, and part of the substance is community," she said.



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CHAT teacher wins award for tech innovation

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The world-renowned TED organization, which promotes "ideas worth spreading," has recognized a Jewish Toronto high school teacher for successfully implementing a revolutionary teaching approach in his classroom.

Jamie Cohen, a Grade 9 English teacher at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Vaughan campus, is one of three teachers – and the only Canadian – to win an international contest that challenged educators to create a SOLE, a self-organized learning environment.

The SOLE Challenge, created earlier this year by a U.K.-based educational technology professor who received $1 million in seed money from TED to create a virtual "School in the Cloud," called on educators to create a learning environment that relies on the use of technology, collaboration and encouragement as the basis for 21st-century learning.

"It takes students on an intellectual journey to investigate the big questions," 39-year-old Cohen said.

"What I like about SOLE is that I can structure the class so that hands-on learners, auditory learners, and visual learners are all stimulated and engaged."

Cohen, who has a background in filmmaking and spent years in New York working for Saturday Night Live creator Lorne Michaels, said the contest appealed to him because of his interest in the way media can be used to teach universal lessons.

Cohen based his SOLE on a novel study of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*, which follows a young man on a spiritual journey of self-discovery during the time of the Gautama Buddha, in the 6th century BCE.

His students were asked to access a digital version of the novel on Rap Genius, a website that allows students to analyze, discuss and annotate the text line by line.

The students could post questions, make comments on the text, and expand on another student's question or explanation of a passage, which encouraged collaborative online discussions.

"The students were asked to complete specific tasks, such as ask a question in an area you don't understand, or find a visual link of what India looked like in that region," Cohen explained.

The Rap Genius website also allows students to send questions directly to Cohen as they studied the chapters.

"Once they'd complete the tasks for each chapter... I would collect all the [students'] questions from Chapter 1, I would go to the tech room... and answer their questions on film. Instead of spending class time answering fact-based questions, I would answer the questions in front of a green screen, with the Taj Mahal in the background, and I would post the video that night and embed it into the online chapter," Cohen explained.

"I did that for every chapter. I either answered the questions through video or a podcast."

A SOLE is meant to encourage students to do their own investigation. Cohen said the teachers take on more of a facilitating role, rather than one that can be compared to "a guru on stage."

A SOLE also allows students to benefit from international guest speakers through Skype or Google Chat.

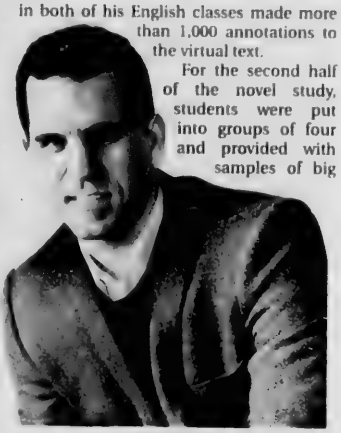
"You don't always need an expert in the room. In today's world, you can talk to someone in Israel or India," he said.

When Cohen first introduced his SOLE to his students last year, he was met with some resistance.

"This website, Rap Genius, is only two years old and it's the big new thing in education, and I was one of the first to do this using a novel," he said.

"I think at the beginning, it was so different, that one of my challenges was explaining why we were doing it this way."

But by the end of the unit, the 42 students in both of his English classes made more than 1,000 annotations to the virtual text.



Jamie Cohen

For the second half of the novel study, students were put into groups of four and provided with samples of big questions (such as, "What is a leader?") from the SOLE toolkit.

Each group was asked to come up with their own big question, investigate it using online resources and guidance from mentors, before discussing their findings with the other groups in the class. Cohen said when he conducted a survey for the students who took part in the SOLE, about 90 per cent of the students said the new approach made the novel study less boring and more meaningful.

"The feedback was amazing," he said, adding that his ultimate goal is to help change the way information is presented to students in a traditional school setting.

"I feel like the SOLE has revolutionized my approach in creating a student-driven, 21st-century learning environment that reaches all learning styles in class," he said.

Cohen and the other SOLE Challenge winners will be flown to New Orleans on Nov. 15 for the 2013 TED Youth Conference, where he will be presented with an award for his project.

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GIRLS HELP: Students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School recently participated in a fundraiser in support of Polished Girlz, an organization of youth volunteers who give manicures to girls who are hospitalized frequently or have special needs. Danilack members of Polished Girlz – including, from left, Talia Cohen, Jordana Ansel, Cayley Nahum and Zahava Fortinsky – painted nails and sold chocolates, jewelry and custom-made nail polish bottles for the cause.

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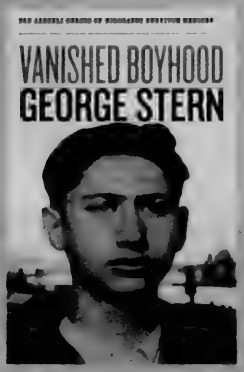

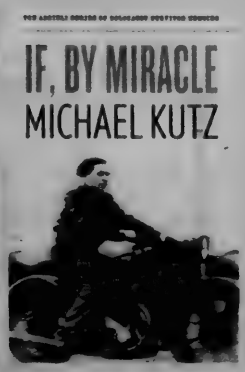

The Neuberger's annual signature event, Holocaust Education Week 2013 gives voice to different national, generational and cultural narratives of the Holocaust at more than 150 multi-disciplinary and multi-lingual events across the Greater Toronto Area and surrounding region.

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NATIONAL POST

Canada asked to maintain pressure on Iran

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Yuval Steinitz, Israel's minister of strategic affairs, visited Canada last week bearing a message: don't let up on Iran. "Strong pressure will [boost] the chances for diplomacy," said a spokesperson from the Israeli embassy in Ottawa.

Steinitz met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird before shuttling to Washington, D.C., where he participated in "strategic dialogue" with American and Israeli defence and intelligence experts, including Vice-President Joe Biden, the embassy spokesman said.

The U.S. meetings had long been scheduled, and the side trip to meet Canadian officials "shows you how close the relations are.

"The fact he met the prime minister even briefly is a sign of the warmth of the relationship," the embassy source said.

Israel considers Canada among its strongest allies and a respected power whose voice is heard in western capitals.

Iran is currently in talks over its nuclear program with the P5+1 group, which includes the United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany. Iran wants to see crippling economic sanctions eased, while its interlocutors are concerned about its nuclear weapons program.

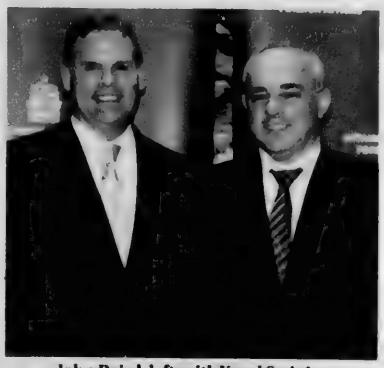
During his visit, Steinitz told reporters "the greater the pressure, the greater the chances for diplomacy to succeed."

"He wants Canada to continue support to ensure that the international community maintains the sanctions and keeps strong pressure on Iran," said the embassy spokesperson.

Any negotiated solution "has to be the right deal, where Iran does not have the capacity to create nuclear weapons," the spokesperson said.

Following the talks with Steinitz, Foreign Affairs issued a statement saying Baird's meeting was "to discuss the ongoing Middle East peace process, reinforce Canada's excellent relations with Israel and discuss the situations in Syria and Iran.

"Canada's strong and multifaceted relationship with Israel is based on shared values, common interests and strong political and social ties between the two countries."



John Baird, left, with Yuval Steinitz *(Department of Foreign Affairs)*

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

A HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK EVENT

Reena is hosting an event for the 33rd anniversary of Holocaust Education Week on Nov.7, 2013 at our new Reena Community Residence Building and site of our Holocaust Education Centre and the Maxwell and Ruth Leroy Holocaust Remembrance Garden.

"Euthanasia: The First Victims"

This presentation will focus on the extermination of over 200,000 persons with disabilities who were among the first victims of the so-called "Euthanasia" program during the Holocaust. **Dr. Beth Griech-Polelle** will discuss the rise of the Eugenics Movement; provide historical information on the T-4 program, criteria and process used to determine who was deemed "inferior."

The lecture will examine how communities were manipulated through propaganda to believe that people with mental and developmental disabilities should be seen as "life unworthy of living." The presenter will also talk about those who spoke out against the atrocities.

Dr. Beth A. Griech-Polelle is Associate Professor (PhD, Rutgers, 1999) and Undergraduate Advisor in the Department of History, Bowling Green State University, Ohio. Dr. Griech-Polelle researches and teaches modern German history, modern European women's history, and the history of antisemitism and the Holocaust. She has developed such courses as "Women and the Nazis," "The History of Antisemitism and the Holocaust," and "Nazi Policy History."

Co-presented by Itanu Toronto.

WHEN: November 7th, 7:00 pm
WHERE: The Reena Community Residence: 49 Lebovic Campus Drive, Vaughan
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First store opened in 1937 in Kensington

Continued from page 3

Altogether catering and wholesale accounts for half the business.

The store is not losing money. "We're not locking and walking," said Joel, adding it's unclear how much longer the store will be open for business.

Retail sales are still important, but the business is so demanding that they don't have time to grow the wholesale and catering aspects of the company, they said.

Working in a cash business means they have to be at the store for long stretches at a time.

"I started today at 5:30 a.m. and will go to 1 or 1:30. That's a half day," said Joel. Stephen also started at 5:30 and will go to 7 p.m., and the next day, the shifts will be reversed, with him working the long day, Joel said.

At their ages – Stephen is 54, Joel is 58 – they don't want to put in the time anymore.

"We find we're both getting older. It's hard to work the hours," Joel said.

The sale of the building will mark the end of a family retail business that traces its roots back generations.

The Daiters' grandfather, Harry, opened the first store in 1937 in Kensington Market. A graduate of the agriculture program at what's now the University of Guelph, he started out renting a dairy and producing his own cheeses. He sold them out of a baby carriage, but that enterprise was closed down by provincial authorities. He then opened Kensington Creamery, selling the cheeses he had manufactured.

Daiter's is still known for its Lana Brand Cheeses, made in small batches without fillers or preservatives, in the traditional European style.

In 1959, Joel's and Stephen's father, Ron, moved the family to Bathurst Manor, which was then largely farmland. Seeing a large Jewish population north of Lawrence, he opened a store at 3519 Bathurst, where Tov-Li is now located, just down the street from Daiter's current location.

Joel began working in the store at age nine, storing items and packing customers' parcels.

The brothers learned the business from the ground up. Their mother, Rene, was also an important fixture in the family enterprise. She could be found in the kitchen, adapting family recipes for such items as gefilte fish from 12 portions to 300. "She had to tweak it," said Joel.

The business continued to grow and in 1964 Ron Daiter, Joel and Stephen's father, acquired the current property at 3535 Bathurst Street, which includes a parking lot in the back. At one point, Daiter's boasted eight retail locations, but without the hands-on presence of family members, service was not up to their standards, the brothers stated.

"Nobody is like an owner," Joel said.

What will follow at 3535 Bathurst, the brothers can't say. Addressing those customers, who no doubt will miss the traditional items available at the store and the "*Cheers*-like" atmosphere, where shmoozing is part of the shopping experience, Stephen said: "Nothing is around forever. Everything has its time."

A Bathurst Street institution will soon be coming to an end.

PLAYGROUND DEDICATED: Representatives from Associação Cultural 25 de Abril, Leo Baeck Day School, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and elected officials came together earlier this month to unveil the newly designed Sousa Mendes Playground and plaque. Sousa Mendes was a World War II diplomat and humanitarian who issued visas, enabling thousands to escape the Nazi invasion of France in June 1940. Pictured, from left, is MPP Jonah Schein, MP Andrew Cash, city Councillor Joe Mihevc, Ligia Nobrega, president of Associação Cultural 25 de Abril, Portuguese Consul General Julio Vilela, visa recipient Ben Schlesinger, Councillor Ana Bailao and Councillor James Pasternak.

Islamophobia is the 'elephant in the room'

Muslims real target of charter, law prof says

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Muslims are the real target of the proposed charter of Quebec values, while kippot and turbans are "collateral damage" in the provincial government's plan to eliminate religious symbols from the public service, a McGill University law professor says.

Speaking Oct. 20 at a panel discussion on the issue at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, Daniel Weinstock said Islamophobia is "the elephant in the room" in the push to secularize Quebec.

"We are not at the centre [of this debate], but as Jews, according to our ethical tradition, we have to stand up resolutely for our Muslim brothers and sisters," Weinstock said, receiving widespread applause.

Weinstock, who was an adviser to the Bouchard-Taylor commission on reasonable accommodation and until 2012 was head of the Université de Montréal's Research Centre on Ethics for many years, said the charter is "a response to a problem that does not exist and has no sign of becoming one in the near future" – and "a fairly extreme" response at that.

Weinstock is optimistic the charter will not go forward. He sees "deep fissures" starting to appear among its three main proponents: "laïcité [church-state separation] perfectionists," who not only want the state to be neutral, but to help everyone get over religion; feminists, and nationalists who think the sovereignty movement has become too inclusive.

Mukhbir Singh, left, Victor Goldbloom and Rabbi Lisa Grushcow confer during a panel discussion at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom on the proposed Quebec values charter. *[Janice Arnold photo]*

If the charter, as now envisioned, did become law, Weinstock thinks it would not "pass constitutional scrutiny."

"The government is playing a dangerous electoral game," he said. "I think it may be underestimating how much Quebecers are attached to the values in the charters, both federal and Quebec's own. I think they are more sensitive to these issues than the government gives them credit for."

Fellow panelist Leila Bedeir, of the Collective des féministes musulmanes du Québec, concurred: "Let's call a spade a spade. It's Islamophobia," and in particular a fear of visible Muslim women.

The Vanier College teacher, who was not wearing a hijab, said the government has "hijacked the equality of the sexes for its political goals."

"Muslim women have become the principle threat to the secular nature of Quebec society, to the nation," she said, and the target of fear of a community that has rapidly grown to more than 200,000 people, an increase of 500 per cent in 20 years.

She deplored that certain feminists support a "paternalistic" attitude on the part of the government, while condemning it in the Muslim tradition.

Muslim women wear head scarves "for as many reasons as there are women: religious, cultural, familial," Bedeir said. Although there is a "strong recommendation" that they do so from religious authorities, "it's a discussion that's been going on for 1,400 years."

"If the bill passes or not, the damage is done," she said. "Those who are different will not feel like an integral part of society unless they erase everything about themselves and assimilate."

But, it's a double-edged sword, Bedeir suggested. Muslims like herself who are not visible and are engaged in public life are "accused of being infiltrators, of trying to Islamicize institutions, of pushing a pro-hijab agenda."

To be labelled an Islamist, as she has been, certainly discourages civic involvement at the very least and can be ruinous, said Bedeir.

The temple's Rabbi Lisa Grushcow commented that the event's organizers, indeed, "had to scramble" to find a Muslim representative for the panel.

Weinstock added that the 2008 Bouchard-Taylor recommendation that people representing state authority such as judges and police officers should not be allowed to wear religious symbols – a compromise echoed by former PQ premiers Jacques Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard – is not the answer either.

This middle ground is itself a curtailment of individual rights and must be justified to be overridden, he said.

Considerable time was given to commentary from the near-capacity audience. One of the most affecting remarks was from a woman who described herself as the daughter of Holocaust survivors who was born in Poland and has been living here since early childhood.

"I'm frightened, even if the bill is not passed. What will the ripple effect be?... Will there be violence?"

Alice Herscovitch, executive director of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC), a co-organizer of the event, responded that, "This is not the Holocaust. There is no persecution, but there is a real anxiety among people who were identified as Jews in Europe and North Africa, and died for it. There is a fear of being seen as the other, of new stereotypes about the differences of being a Jew here."

Other panelists were Micheline Milot, a Université du Québec à Montréal sociology professor and author of *Laïcité sans frontiers*, who argued that the French model of secularism is not applicable in North America; Mukhbir Singh, a vice-president for Quebec of the World Sikh Organization, who said the turban is an essential part of an observant Sikh's attire; Father John Walsh, a Catholic priest who noted that he has not worn a clerical collar for 45 years, but nevertheless opposes restrictions on fundamental rights, and Victor Goldbloom, past president of Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region, and a former Quebec cabinet minister, who said public servants' attire must remain a personal choice.

The latter two men have spent decades in interfaith dialogue and pleaded for people to make a greater effort to understand those of different beliefs and customs.

The discussion was moderated by McGill law professor Shauna Van Praagh, and closed with remarks by Rev. Diane Rollert, minister of the Unitarian Church of Montreal.

The event was held in collaboration with the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, as well as the MHMC.

Film Screening and Discussion

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'Jewish' orchestra plays Wagner

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A "Jewish" orchestra from Germany devoted to reviving the music of composers who were victims of the Holocaust makes its Canadian premiere – and plays Wagner.

"I like to provoke people," said Daniel Grossmann, founder, artistic director and conductor of the Jakobsplatz Orchestra, based in Munich, where he was born in 1978.

Jakobsplatz gave a concert at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' Bourgie Hall on Oct. 23 to a sold-out audience, the last stop on the chamber orchestra's first North American tour. It had earlier performed at colleges in Maine and Kansas, and at New York's Symphony Space on the Upper West Side.

Daniel Grossman

At the first three venues, the youthful orchestra drew from its signature repertoire: classical pieces by Erwin Schulhoff and Gideon Klein, both brilliant Czech composers who died in the camps, as well as earlier Jewish greats such as Mendelssohn and Mahler.

Grossmann, the son of Hungarian immigrants and grandson of Holocaust survivors, changed the program in Montreal at the request of the museum, he said, but he also welcomed the chance to play Wagner.

The museum's current exhibition *Splendore a Venezia* celebrates the golden age of the city-state in art and music. Venice led Grossman to think of Richard Wagner, whom he loathes as a person, but whose music he adores.

Wagner lived in Venice for some years and died there, and this year is the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Playing Wagner is something Grossman and his orchestra, which he founded in 2005, cannot do in Germany, and that irks him.

The day before the concert, Grossman appeared at a public talk on the state of Jewish culture in Germany today with Concordia University anthropology and history professor Erica Lehrer, an expert in the renewed interest in Jewish culture in Europe.

Grossmann disclosed that three days earlier, his request to play Wagner at the Munich Jewish Community Centre, where the orchestra is based, was turned down, even though he had proposed including quotes from the composer's anti-Semitic pamphlets in the program.

The orchestra is independent from the centre, he added later. (Jakobsplatz is the name of the centrally located public square in Munich where the centre opened in 2006.)

Grossmann believes the interdiction is misguided, and, at least partly, based on the German Jewish community's solidarity with Israel, where there is an understanding that Wagner not be performed.

He feels that playing Wagner provokes audiences – and almost all of his orchestra's listeners are non-Jews – "to think about the person of Wagner" and his contradictions. Grossmann agrees that Wagner the man was more than a hater of Jews – his writing "maybe was the starting point of Hitler…"

"I love his music, but on the other hand, he was a horrible man. People say they hate his music, but I don't believe them," Grossmann said.

"I understand they have bad feelings, but it's not a solution to say the music was bad. He was a genius."

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2:00 pm / Tova Raz – Time Machine Immersion Exhibit
3:00 pm / Aubrey Davis – A Hen Escapes from Hitler (Kids and Families)
• Monday, Nov. 11 – 6:30 pm / Storytelling in English with Michael Hirsh
• Tuesday, Nov. 12 – 6:30 pm / Storytelling in Hebrew with Rivka Cohen
• Wed. Nov. 13 – 6:30 pm / Storytelling in Russian with Mariana Rakityanskaya
• Thursday, Nov. 14 – 7:00 pm / Tova Raz – The Many Faces of Esther (adults)

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Backed many Orthodox institutions in Toronto

Continued from page 1

The ability of the Reichmann family to support the facility was compromised by the family's financial woes, but even afterward, their support contributed to more than half the institution's budget, the staffer said. Over the years, they gave "millions and millions of dollars" to the facility, which now boasts more than 40 full-time scholars and a few hundred who study part time or worship at the centre.

The kollel was not the only Toronto institution to benefit from Reichmann's support.

"Until [the bankruptcy], he was one of the main funders of Orthodox institutions [in Toronto]," said the staff person. Even when the family could no longer maintain the same level of funding, "he was the driving force behind it and he got other people behind it."

Reichmann was born in Vienna, the fifth of six children. His father, Samuel, was a successful businessman who had left Hungary in 1928.

According to Bianco, the family fled Austria after the German annexation in 1938, moving first to Paris and later to Morocco, where Samuel made "a second fortune" as a currency dealer.

As a young man, Paul devoted himself to studying Torah. According to Bloomberg News, from 1953 to 1956 he worked in Casablanca as educational director of Ozar Hatorah, which operated Orthodox schools.

He moved to Toronto in 1957. He expanded his brothers' import business, Olympia Floor & Wall Tile, and turned to real estate development.

Despite his success, Reichmann never forgot his roots. Their offices and businesses were closed on Saturdays as the Reichmann family remained committed to their Jewish heritage.

A memorial service attended by 1,000 people was held at the Bais Yaakov girls school on Saranac Boulevard, which he had supported. He was interred in Jerusalem. The funeral service "was very sad," the kollel staff person said. Reichmann's generosity affected many worthwhile charities. "There's almost no one who wasn't touched," he said.

Paul is survived by his wife, Lea, and five children, Vivian, Rachel, Libby, Barry and Henry.

$2-million centre adds to project

Continued from page 1

Today, the pebbles total more than five million, and Mikel anticipates hitting the six-million mark by June.

The pebbles are temporarily on display in the school's peace garden. The pair had intended to use them to create a memorial path, but now they have bigger plans.

"We started piling the pebbles... [but] our eyes have been open to the enormity of the project, and it has moved much farther beyond the school. It's turned into a community project, to a Canadian project, to a global project," Mikel said.

Since the project's launch, pebbles and letters from all over the world – from 58 countries, from each Canadian province and territory, and even from the sites of concentration camps, including Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek and Bergen-Belsen – have been mailed in.

Marion Blumenthal, a Holocaust survivor and the author of *Four Perfect Pebbles*, as well as Canadian authors Robert Munsch and John Koning, have contributed pebbles to the project.

"We need to make it much more than a peace garden for the school. The school will never be separated from it, and it's a huge component of it, but because of the reaction, we're in the process of starting our own charitable organization, the Pebbles for Peace organization."

Through the charity, Mikel hopes to raise enough money, about $2 million, to build a memorial on the 50-acre school property, as well as a theatre to host human rights speakers, diversity conferences and film festivals.

"The goal is to build a Holocaust memorial that will commemorate the victims, that will celebrate the survivors, that will celebrate the righteous."

The pebbles will be moved from the school's peace garden to be displayed in the memorial.

Mikel said she hopes the memorial will open up the conversation to other human rights abuses.

"While the project started with the Holocaust, we all know that the violation of human rights didn't end with that, so within the school, we teach about genocide, about racism and all kinds of human rights issues, and we want to create a space where that discussion can continue outside of the school as well."

Mikel said the hope is that they'll be able to break ground for the memorial next spring, but she anticipates that it will take anywhere from five to 10 years to build both the memorial and the theatre.

"The children have really put their hearts into this," Goodwin said.

"When you see the smiles on their faces and you see what they have to say and the stories they tell, it's wonderful."

"One the parents of our graduates summed it up well," Mikel added.

"She said, 'We often talk about making a difference and we all have a voice, we can do it, but it's not very often that the kids actually get to see the difference that they're making and that's what the pebbles project has done.'"

Goodwin said the project is also about "believing in yourself, believing that each of us can make a difference and do something that can help this world."

In addition to incorporating Holocaust education into its curriculum, the Goodwin Learning Centre also hosts a Holocaust Education Week event every year.

On Nov. 7, Holocaust survivor Faigie Libman will share her story with the Trenton community, followed by a presentation by students about the latest plans for the pebble project.

For more information about Pebbles for Peace, visit www.goodwinlearningcentre.ca.

CHW

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E-mail: info@chw.ca
Web: www.chw.ca

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW)
Notice is hereby given that the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of the above organization will be held on
Sunday, November 17, 2013 (9 a.m. to 12 noon)
Hotel Novotel Toronto North York - 3 Park Home Avenue, Toronto

Agenda will include:
Audited Financial Statement
National President's Report
National Executive Director's Report
Board of Directors since the last Annual Meeting
Such other business as may properly come before the Meeting

Annual and Life Members are invited to attend.
Please register by calling the CHW National Office toll-free at 1-866-937-9431 ext 104.

Marla Dan, CHW National President

PLAYGROUND BUDDIES: The buddy program of the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School and the Thomas & Marjorie Schwartz Preschool Centre (formerly the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre nursery school) continued its semi-monthly pairings with a romp through the JCC's playground, as Grade 6 students took on nurturing and leadership roles with their young buddies at play.

Pay heed to kids' online activities, expert advises

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

One way to be a good parent in the digital age is to communicate with your children about what's happening online, says a renowned author, social worker and family therapist.

To do this, Joe Rich advised parents to "Go online... Become a user."

Rich was speaking Oct. 16 at the North York Civic Centre to some 100 parents at an evening exploring technology called "From Preschooler to Screen-ager."

The evening was hosted by the Ontario Council of Jewish Camps (OCJC), an umbrella body comprising 10 Jewish overnight camps and one day camp. The OCJC is supported by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Silber Family Centre for Jewish Camping.

Rich offered strategies to eager parents hoping to learn about today's quickly changing technological world.

"We are never aiming for perfect – we're only aiming for better," Rich said. "Perfect is a moving target. Let go of perfect. As soon as you move forward into better, you actually solicit the feelings of better and you need to feel good to parent in today's world."

He provided figures about Facebook to put the social media site in perspective for parents.

"Somewhere between 500 million and one billion people have Facebook, and over half of them log in every single day. There are one million active advertisers – individuals or corporations – who have placed an ad on Facebook in at least the last 28 days; 7.5 million children under the age of 13 [which is against Facebook policy] have a Facebook account; 7.4 million of their parents don't know. Five million children under the age of 10 have their own Facebook account. In 2011 600,000 accounts were compromised per day," he said.

"This wakes us up. Things are moving very quickly for all of us."

Another strategy to teach is self-regulation. Noting that the usual mentality among teens using social media is, "In my mind, on my tongue, send," Rich advised parents to have their children write a text, count to 10, read the text and decide if they still want to send it.

Rich also cautioned parents about privacy issues with social media.

"It is important for each parent to have his child sign a waiver that releases the child from any expectations of privacy. Kids don't like to hear that, but they need to hear it."

Rich also advised parents to try to create a tech-free zone in their homes and limit screen time, including TV.

"Kids on the computer are playing with an unlocked door – something to think about for their safety and our own," Rich said.

The OCJC's participating camps are URJ Camp George, Camp Gesher, Camp Kadimah, Camp Moshava, Camp Northland – B'nai Brith, Camp Ramah, Camp Shalom, Camp Shomria, Camp Solelim, J.Academy and the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp. Each camp had a table at the event, offering parents the opportunity to learn more about them.

Bryan Keshen, vice-president of emerging communities and Jewish camping at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, told *The CJN* that camp offers kids a break from technology.

"In today's world, where even our children are constantly connected... overnight camp is the rare time when connective technology is turned off, shut down, or left behind and campers can immerse themselves in the connectivity of friendships," Keshen said.

Visit www.ilovejewishcamp.ca for more information.

JNF PROM: The Jewish National Fund held a prom night for more than 250 people Oct. 19 at Toronto's Zero Gravity Circus to raise money for the Ilanot Special Education School in Jerusalem, a school for students aged six to 21 with severe motor and cognitive disabilities. Proceeds will go to renovating the school's yards to meet safety and accessibility standards. Pictured, from left, are event co-chairs Jenna Kellner, Jian Magen, Max Zavet, Sandra Vadasz and Inna Gelfand

Honest Ed's sold to Vancouver developer

CJN Staff

After standing for 70 years at the corner of Bathurst and Bloor streets, Honest Ed's has been sold to Westbank Properties, a Vancouver-based luxury developer of homes, offices and hotels.

Honest Ed's owner, David Mirvish, son of the late Ed Mirvish, founder of the retail discount store and Ed's wife, Anne, said the deal will close later this year.

The store sits on a 1.8-hectare parcel of land, which includes the nearby Mirvish Village, known for its art galleries, restaurants and stores.

Mirvish said the iconic store will remain open for at least two more years, because the developer will be renting the properties back to him for the next two to three years while it decides how to develop the land.

He told the Toronto Star that Westbank is not in a rush to develop the land and that it has no concrete plans yet.

"I think they want to listen as much as anything else. They have some basic thoughts about it, but they need as wide open a slate as possible to draw the best conclusions," Mirvish said.

"[The company] has a wonderful history and track record. I think they want to be part of our community and make a contribution to it. I think it will honour my parents."

SURVIVORS HONOURED: Premier Kathleen Wynne, third from left, honoured Judy Cohen, second from left, and nine other Holocaust survivors at a special ceremony organized and led by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem at Queen's Park on Oct. 24 for their contributions to the betterment of Ontario. Pictured with them are Citizenship and Immigration Minister Michael Coteau, left, and MPP Monte Kwinter.

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5. be able to work in a high energy environment
6. be able to organize, prioritize and multitask
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THOMAS (MINUK) ALI

Jewish digital conundrums

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Rabbis have long grappled with how to apply Halachah to modern situations. But sometimes questions come along that may make our scholars scratch their heads. Today, a look at some Jewish digital conundrums and possible solutions.

Please remember that any rulings should be discussed with an authority who is well versed on the situation and the halachic issues involved.

If you like rabbis who get to the point, then you'll love Rabbi Shlomo Aviner. His tweet-length responses address a wide variety of halachic queries, including tech-related ones. A sampling:

Q: Is it permissible to try on shoes in a store to know the right size so that I can order them on the Internet?

A: You should ask permission in the store.

Q: Is it possible to sell chametz over the Internet?

A: Yes. It's a form of appointing an agent.

Q: Is it permissible to download things from the Internet for free when they're for sale elsewhere?

A: It's forbidden because of copyright laws.

In fairness, the rabbi does address some topics at length such as the previous question in an essay titled, "Don't Copy!" **[http://bit.ly/jdigital2]**

Many of the contemporary questions at Yeshiva.org.il focus on the Internet. For example, if it's not Shabbat where you live, can you check out a website that's located where it is the day of rest? The response: it depends. If the website is automated and isn't staffed by Jews, there's no problem. However, if you're benefitting from the efforts of Jews who are working on Shabbat, you should stay clear. Check out Yeshiva.org.il for its take on webcams, downloads and online financial transactions which take place on Shabbat. **[http://bit.ly/jdigital1]**

Judaism has an ancient tradition of valuing prayer while in a minyan or quorum. But if you find yourself alone, can you have a virtual minyan online with other worshippers all praying simultaneously? The Ohr Somayach rabbi quotes from the Shulchan Aruch, a 16th-century codification of Jewish law: "We require that all 10 be in one place and the *shliach tzibbur* [the chazzan] must be with them." So if you want to be counted, you've got to show up. However, the rabbi mentions that if due to extenuating circumstances someone isn't able to attend an "already-existing minyan," there is an established tradition of attempting to pray at the same time as the group. The lone worshipper could take advantage of technology to align himself with a local congregation. **[http://bit.ly/jdigital11]**

Mi Yodeya (Who Knows) is a clearinghouse for discussion and debate about the intersection between Halachah and technology. The answers aren't definitive, and the back-and-forth arguments about 21st-century issues seem reminiscent of traditional Jewish disputations. Here are some of the topics being discussed:

- If your neighbour has Wi-Fi, can you connect into it? Is there an issue of stealing?
- Is participating on a teacher rating site a violation of lashon hara (derogatory speech)?
- If a corporation responds to your complaint, can you publish its response online?
- Can you Skype/phone/text your future spouse during the week before the wedding when you're not supposed to see each other face to face? **[http://bit.ly/jdigital4]**

Next time, is your iPhone sacred?

highway@rogers.com

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שכונת עץ חיים Eitz Chaim SCHOOLS

We must study and live our heritage

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

I've been alarmed by three recent events that I'd like to share with you.

First, on Erev Yom Kippur, I met an elderly gentleman visiting Vancouver from Australia. At the breakfast table after Shacharit, this man of Persian background spoke nostalgically about his past. He shared some moments of his childhood, remembering how an Iraqi blind man whom he accompanied to the synagogue every day in Mumbai taught him Sephardi prayers and tradition. When asked about the current Sephardi congregation in Australia, he responded sadly that it was a dying community. With a beautiful voice, he led us in the *Birkat Hamazon*, and I couldn't help but imagine being in the desert of my ancestors. His voice had an authenticity that connected all of us to our rich past.

Second, a few weeks later, I read staggering news from a recently published Pew Research Center study of U.S. Jews. Let me share with you a few of the key findings:

- The intermarriage rate has reached a high of 58 per cent for all Jews marrying between 2000 and 2013, and 71 per cent for non-Orthodox Jews – a huge change from before 1970, when only 17 per cent of Jews married outside the faith.
- Two-thirds of Jews don't belong to a synagogue, one-fourth don't believe in God and one-third had a Christmas tree in their home last year.
- The study identifies a growing number, defined loosely as of Jewish ancestry, who now consider themselves people of no religion. This group currently constitutes nearly a quarter of the adult Jewish population.

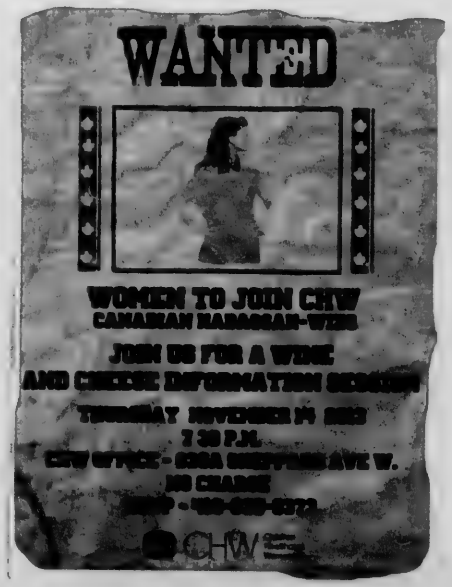
Third, a few days after the Pew study appeared, all of us were shocked to hear of the passing of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. His departure is a great loss for all of Am Yisrael. Among the many, many contributions this man made to Am Yisrael were his innovative halachic rulings, his role in restoring the pride of the Sephardi world, his reasoned, halachic permission for thousands of agunot to marry, and his decision that Jewish Ethiopians are, indeed, full-fledged Jews.

The imminent disappearance of a synagogue in Australia, the unhappy demographics in America (a soon-to-be published study will show roughly the same trends in Canada), and the painful loss of one of our generation's *gedolim* – what connects these three unfortunate events?

At once, we should understand that throughout the millennia, we have been confronted by numerous challenges that have required Jewish creativity and perseverance. Why should our generation be any different?

Education, as always, is the key to Jewish continuity. There's simply no substitute for study and the ensuing excitement of learning about our history and truly living our heritage – parents and children alike. It begins at home and carries on through formal education at our synagogues and schools. Yet, nothing can take the place of living our Judaism – through ritual, and unending questions and responses – at home. Historically, this provides fertile ground for the effective transmission of Judaism.

Put another way, my mother learned to salt meat, thus making it kosher, at home from her mother, and her mother learned this from her grandmother. This, in effect, is how we have endured – and shall endure – baruch HaShem – from generation to generation.



Being an outsider on the High Holidays

Class Act
Daniel Held

Growing up as a regular shul-goer, I have always felt as though the High Holidays are an extension of the rest of the year. I went to the same shul, sat in the same seat, saw the same familiar faces and listened to the same rabbi. Comfortable in the environment, the liturgy and the service, I couldn't conceive what it was like for the hundreds who were not regulars.

This year, my family and I arrived in Jerusalem a week before Rosh Hashanah. Deciding among synagogues is a challenge in any large community, especially in Jerusalem, where the options are virtually endless. So we did what any modern family would do, we crowdsourced – posting a message on Facebook looking for suggestions.

Our main priority was a kid-friendly synagogue. Last Rosh Hashanah our daughter was barely six months old. She spent most of the service bundled up in a baby carrier napping, eating and listening to the melodies of tfillah. This year, with an energetic toddler who claps and dances to Shabbat morning tffilot, who steals others' snacks, and who generally scurries around shul, we knew our needs would be different.

One shul percolated to the top of our crowdsourcing. We had heard of the shul, its reputation for a dynamic rabbi, a warm community, quality children's programming and a good kiddush. We bought tickets.

The High Holidays are an opportunity for synagogues to shine and reach beyond their regular attendees, but they are also the most challenging times on the synagogue's schedule. Expectations are raised, staff are pulled in multiple directions, the building operates at – and even beyond – capacity, and an influx of new people puts demands on the services provided by the synagogue.

Our experience on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur didn't live up to expectations.

The children's programming was poor – at best. The space where the children's services usually take place was usurped by an overflow adult service. Instead, a pair of teenagers were responsible for supervising children in the playground outside. The sanctuary was so crowded that there was no room for our daughter to sit with us – even during the short periods she was quiet. With so many new faces, the rabbi and congregants didn't display the warmth and welcome we had been told to expect. Only a few of those sitting beside us – for many hours of services – introduced themselves and welcomed us. The sense of warmth for which the synagogue is known was hardly apparent.

Judging by the strong recommendations, I am convinced that on a regular Shabbat, the synagogue is warm, welcoming and has stellar youth programming. But on the days we attended, the shul fell victim to the particular challenges of the High Holidays.

In the two months since Rosh Hashanah, we've been to many Jerusalem synagogues but haven't been back to the shul we went to on the High Holidays.

I'm not used to being an outsider in synagogue. For regular services, I feel comfortable in both my regular shul and new synagogues. Being an outsider on Rosh Hashanah, however, taught me important lessons about the particular challenges and opportunities of the High Holidays.

Faith in this eternal people

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

The 20th-century French essayist, Edmond Fleg, recalls the biblical Abraham and writes: "And I say to myself: from this remote ancestor right down to my own parents, all these ancestors have handed me a truth which flowed in their blood, which now flows in mine. Shall I not hand it on, with my blood, to those of my blood?

"And I say to you: Will you take it from me, my child? Will you hand it on? Perhaps you will wish to abandon it. If so, let it be for a greater truth, if there is one. I shall not blame you. It will be my fault; I shall have failed to hand it on as I received it. But of this I am sure: whether you abandon it or whether you follow it, [the People] Israel will journey on to the end of days."

This is a kind of confession. Fleg may have lacked faith in himself and in his ability to inspire a Jewish life in his own children. Fleg may have lacked faith in his children to be open-minded enough to receive the profound and practical wisdom Judaism can provide. Fleg may have lacked faith in his children to be open-hearted enough to perceive the exquisite morality of Judaism. But he did not lack faith in the promise made to Abraham – he believed with perfect faith that the Jewish People is an eternal people.

When our patriarch entered into the covenant with God, he was promised progeny beyond his wildest dreams. God took him outside to the open desert sky by night and said: "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them... so shall be your descendants." (Genesis 15:5)

Shimon Ravidovitch may have referred to the Children of Israel as "the ever-dying people," but Fleg articulated a faith that is also verified by history. Come what may – pogrom, inquisition or Holocaust. Come what may – the tremendous blessings of acceptance, opportunity, freedom, and privilege. Come what may, the Jewish People will endure.

The flurry of worry since the release of the Pew report is not new. Jewish continuity has been our number 1 concern from the very beginning. When Abraham and Isaac climbed together to the peak of Moriah, tension was thick in the air. The unspoken question between that first Jewish parent and that first Jewish child was: "What will become of us? Good God, what will become of us?!" But they both survive, they both carry on somehow, and God reinforces the promise of "descendants as many as the stars in the sky." (Genesis 22:17)

These are the words we still long to hear. From here, the stars look tiny, but from the point of view of heaven, each one is a world unto itself. Around each descendant star an entire solar system might take shape. Abraham's descendants may be small in number, but Rabbi Chayim of Tzantz teaches that each one is burning with potential,each one is an indispensable part of God's plan for eternity. So let's have a little faith.

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Bill to halt prisoner releases rejected

JTA

JERUSALEM — An Israeli government committee approved the release of Palestinian prisoners hours after another committee rejected a bill that would have prevented such releases as part of peace negotiations.

The bill, which was proposed by the Jewish Home party, was dismissed Sunday by the Ministerial Committee for Legislation.

Hours later, a ministerial panel led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu approved a list of Palestinian prisoners scheduled to be released this week as part of the current revived Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Some 26 Palestinian prisoners were to be freed Tuesday in the second of four prisoner releases. In total, 104 Palestinians jailed for at least 20 years will be released; 26 prisoners were released in August.

All of the prisoners approved Sunday for release perpetrated offences before the Oslo accords of 1993, according to a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office. 21 are from the West Bank and five are from Gaza.

"It should be emphasized that any prisoner who resumes hostile activity will be returned to serve the remainder of his sentence," the statement said.

Announcements of new West Bank settlement housing construction reportedly were to coincide with the release in a bid to calm critics from the right.

Ministers of the Likud, Yesh Atid and Hatnuah parties voted against the bill, while ministers of Jewish Home and the Yisrael Beiteinu party, which is in partnership with Likud, voted for the bill.

The public had 48 hours to raise objections to the list of prisoners released and appeal to Israel's Supreme Court.

The Palestinian Authority reportedly was planning a reception ceremony for Tuesday night at its Muquata headquarters in Ramallah to greet the freed prisoners.

A relative hangs a banner depicting Palestinian prisoner Moses Qar'an outside his house in Ramallah Oct. 28. Israel was set to release 26 Palestinian prisoners earlier this week in the second stage of a deal brokered by the United States in July that brought about the resumption of peace talks. *(Issam Rimawi/Flash90 photo)*

Anti-Israel ads back in Boston

JTA

BOSTON — The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority said it was restoring dozens of ads critical of Israel to its transit system that had been taken down following public complaints.

On Oct. 24, the transit system said the 80 ads would be put back in the Greater Boston area and that there had been a "miscommunication" with its advertising contractor Titan, according to the *Boston Globe*.

The ads, which went up Oct. 21, were removed several days later by Titan following the complaints.

"There was a breakdown in our established procedures for handling complaints about specific ads," a transit spokesperson said.

The ads consist of four maps that show what is called "Palestinian loss of land – 1946-2010." A message alongside the maps reads "4.7 million Palestinians are Classified by the UN as Refugees."

Connecticut resident Henry Clifford, chairman of the Committee for a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine, paid for the $40,000 campaign.

Similar ads are currently running in the Vancouver transit system, sponsored by a local anti-Israel group, while the Toronto Transit Commission has rejected such as ads as potentially anti-Semitic.

The pro-Israel group StandWithUs paid to have pro-Israel ads run in the Vancouver transit system to counter the anti-Israel ones.

Other ad campaigns with comparable ads have caused a stir in Washington, D.C., and New York, but the ads there were never removed.

Jewish rocker dies at age 71

JTA

Lou Reed

Musician and guitarist Lou Reed, the frontman for the band Velvet Underground as well as a solo artist, has died.

Reed, who was born to a Jewish family, died Sunday at 71. A cause of death was not made public.

He had a liver transplant last year after years of alcohol and drug abuse.

Reed reportedly was coy about his Jewish roots. He was quoted as saying, "My God is rock 'n' roll" and "The most important part of my religion is to play guitar."

Reed, born Lewis Allan Reed in Brooklyn, N.Y., became influential in rock by blending art and music in New York in the 1960s through the Velvet Underground's collaboration with pop artist Andy Warhol. The band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1996.

Reed quit the band in 1970 and focused on his solo career, which featured the 1972 hit song *Walk on the Wild Side*, as well as other well-known songs such as *Sweet Jane* (originally recorded with the Velvet Underground) and 1989's *Dirty Boulevard*.

He visited Israel five years ago with his musician wife, Laurie Anderson, during her world tour.

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U.S. Federation chiefs call for free preschool

JTA

NEW YORK — The leaders of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) are calling for free Jewish preschool for every Jewish family in America.

In an op-ed published last week on the *Huffington Post* and in the *Forward*, JFNA CEO Jerry Silverman and board chair Michael Siegal said free Jewish preschool would "dramatically widen the pipeline of families entering Jewish life through this critical early gateway."

Ted Sokolsky

The idea was one of four offered by Silverman and Siegal to "intensify – and make affordable – the most effective vehicles for engaging people in Jewish life," they wrote.

The two also called for tripling the percentage of Jewish kids attending Jewish summer camps, to 30 per cent, more followup with alumni of Birthright Israel trips, and intensive investment in Jewish programming in parts of the country where Jewish density is high but Jewish engagement is low.

Asked in an interview with JTA if he has a road map to deliver free Jewish preschool to every Jewish family in America, Silverman said, "It's an idea. These are four concepts and ideas. Our goal is to unpack these, take a look at these, take a look at the models that are already out there and see what this idea could really turn into. And once we unpack it, we will be able to really see what is reasonable and what is executable. But we think it's in the right direction."

Ed Segalowitz, executive director of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Centre for Jewish Education, said he doesn't know if JFNA's plan to fund Jewish preschool includes Canadian families, but he is happy to discuss the possibility with Silverman.

"I'd love to find out what his vision is and would love to work with him and see what ideas he's got and how we could get there," Segalowitz said.

He said he doesn't yet have an idea of how much it would cost in Toronto to offer free Jewish preschool education to all Jewish families in Toronto.

But he did estimate that there are about 11,000 Jewish children between the ages of two and five in Toronto.

Considering that Jewish preschool tuition costs upwards of $13,000 a year, if every Jewish child took advantage of this initiative, it would cost about $140 million a year.

Ted Sokolsky, UJA Federation's president and CEO, said, "In order to do this they're going to have to acquire new sources of funding… a lot of it might come from private foundations, some of whom can't provide funding in Canada."

But he added that the idea is not about mitigating the high cost of Jewish education.

"This is an initiative to incentivize Jewish families, particularly Americans, to consider the Jewish day school system," Sokolsky said.

He said in Toronto, 36 per cent of Jewish families choose Jewish day school.

"American families don't even approach that… It's not about financial need, it's about incentivizing people – if you put your kids in Jewish day school, number 1, they get a great start, and two, the families get turned on to Jewish education."

A jump in enrolment might result from this initiative, which could lower the cost of Jewish education overall, he said.

"It's the last five or six kids in a class that can lower the cost for everyone. The cost of educating 23 kids in a class is the same cost as educating 28 kids in a class."

Sokolsky said there are currently about 1,400 kids in Jewish preschool programs in Toronto.

"As far as I know, Jewish daycares are at full capacity. If we wanted to increase [enrolment] by 50 per cent, there are no spaces, so you'd need huge capital investment to get that."

Segalowitz said it's too premature to talk seriously about numbers.

"We'd have to talk, sit down… [and talk about] what it would mean to offer it on a free basis to all children… There is a lot of research that would need to be done on that," he said. "It's a concept, an idea, and one well-worth pursuing."

The op-ed outlining Silverman and Siegal's ideas offered little in the way of specifics. On Birthright followup, the two authors issued a call for Birthright's "gatekeepers to share this vast database of alumni contacts with us so that we have a mechanism to engage them in Jewish life."

On the subject of Jewish camp, Silverman did not identify a particular strategy for increasing enrolment, but told JTA that the Foundation for Jewish Camp, which he led for five years before he assumed the helm of the Jewish Federations, is working on a number of strategies for increasing market demand for Jewish camps.

On the subject of dense Jewish communities with low Jewish engagement – Silverman cited Denver, San Diego and Phoenix – the op-ed called for "Jewish Development Zones" that would develop the free Jewish preschool model, build an excellent Jewish summer camp, support existing Jewish youth programming, and develop programs for Birthright alumni and young Jewish singles.

With files from Sheri Shefa

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Ontario minister in Israel on trade mission

Viva Sarah Press
CJN Israel Bureau

TEL AVIV — Eric Hoskins, Ontario's economic development, trade and employment minister, was in Israel last week on a multipurpose trade mission that included attending the prestigious Water Technology and Environmental Control Exhibition and Conference (WATEC) Israel 2013.

WATEC is a leading event for the global water industry that brings together international business and government leaders to discuss water solutions and showcase technological advancements.

"The world is here, 14,000 delegates at WATEC," Hoskins told *The CJN* as to why it was important for him to bring a trade mission to the Tel Aviv conference.

"Israel and Canada are great friends, so I'm here to build on that friendship and translate it into even more co-operation and trade and looking for opportunities to collaborate."

Israel may be a country of little water, but its water technology sector is among the world's best.

"Israel has a world-class water and waste water sector and in Ontario, one of our strongest emerging sectors is water. We refer to it as the blue economy. So it's a natural area for co-operation," Hoskins told *The CJN* in his last media interview before returning to Toronto.

Eric Hoskins speaking at Mekorot. [*Sasson Tiram Photography*]

While Hoskins had great praise for Israel's water and waste-water technologies, his real message was that together with Ontario's water technology prowess, Canada and Israel could combine forces and help other countries in need.

"I know Mekorot [Israel's national water company] and Ontario share this vision to help other countries. We have opportunities to join forces to provide water solutions to countries that need water. No one country can solve this for the world, so we have to come together," he said.

Real Tech, an award-winning Canadian company that has developed a product line of portable and real-time water quality analyzers and Israel's national water company, Mekorot, offer one example of shared technologies.

Utilizing Real Tech's innovative, yet cost effective, continuous spectrum analyzers combined with the statistical analysis capabilities of Mekorot's water quality and models departments, the two firms are mid-way through a two-year project to develop a model for automated identification of irregular water-quality events.

"Real Tech's partnership with Israel's national water company, Merokot, is a perfect example of how Ontario innovation and expertise is making a difference around the world. Ontario has some 900 innovative water-technology companies providing solutions at home and abroad. Through organizations like Ontario's WaterTAP, our government is taking a proactive role in helping these companies succeed on the world stage," Hoskins said.

"Before my trip this time, I didn't have an appreciation for how much progress and how much leadership exists in this tiny country in waste-water management. This year, more Israelis will get their water from desalination than they will from other sources," Hoskins said

"I went to a waste-water management facility and understanding how there's a deficit of water, but it's made up in Israel because you're able to effectively purify it and use it for agricultural purposes and also replenish your aquifers. It's amazing."

This wasn't Hoskins' first trip to Israel, and he said he was more than happy to be back. While he had time to find new food favourites – falafel and Israeli wine – he said his schedule was too packed to find time for a swim in the Mediterranean Sea, even if his hotel was on the beach. He did, however, manage a few jogs along Tel Aviv's promenade, which he said he loved.

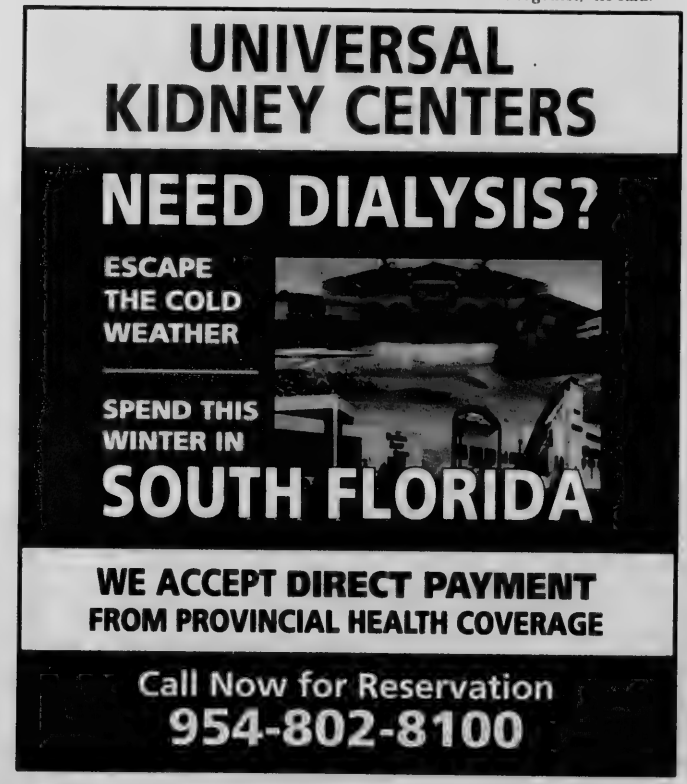
In addition to the WATEC conference, Hoskins met with the chief scientist at Israel's Commerce and Trade Ministry, and he visited the Israeli non-profit organizations Tmura and Access Israel.

Tmura is a venture fund that receives equity donations from Israeli and Israel-related high-tech companies and allocates the proceeds from sales of that equity to education- and youth-related charities in Israel. Google's recent purchase of Waze generated $1.5 million for the community.

Access Israel is a non-profit organization that promotes accessibility and strives to make Israel a place where people with various disabilities are integrated into society.

"There's a model that I think we can apply in Ontario in terms of the educational system and advocacy, to learn about the work being done on accessibility. I didn't expect to see that. It was a nice surprise, partly because it has given me some nice ideas to implement in Ontario," he said.

"There's a lot of room for growth. We've got this tremendous friendship, and now we've got an obligation, if not an opportunity, to build on that friendship in terms of strengthening economic ties and co-operation, and not just bilaterally but multilaterally as well."



Four mayors re-elected

JTA

JERUSALEM — The mayors of Israel's four largest cities, including Nir Barkat in Jerusalem, were returned to office in municipal elections.

Fewer than half of eligible Israeli voters turned out Oct. 22.

Barkat won 51 per cent of the vote to regain office. Turnout in Jerusalem was nearly 36 per cent, with most Arab citizens boycotting the vote.

Tel Aviv, Haifa and Rishon Letzion also re-elected incumbents. Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai had 53 per cent of the vote.

Elsewhere, Ra'anana voters brought back former mayor Ze'ev Bielski, who served as an MK for the Kadima party between 2009 and 2013 and also chaired the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization.

In Beit Shemesh, site of divisive conflicts between haredim and other residents, Shas-backed incumbent Moshe Abutbul was re-elected.

Sderot Mayor David Buskila, who has been the face of the southern Israeli community in recent years as it was battered by rockets fired from Gaza, lost a close race to modern Orthodox candidate Alon Davidi. Voters in three towns re-elected mayors who were accused of crimes. Among them was Bat Yam's Shlomo Lahiani, who was forced by the Supreme Court on Oct. 20 to resign due to an indictment filed against him.

Fashion website editor says a strong work ethic is key to success in her industry

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Becoming a fashion industry professional requires a lot more than having an interest in designer clothes and understanding how to put an outfit together, said Randi Bergman, online editor for *FashionMagazine.com*.

"I think people get caught up in the glamour and the fact that people from nowhere can make it," Bergman said.

"And that's all really important, but I think having more of an understanding and a strong work ethic really makes the difference between you being a fashion enthusiast and actually working in the industry."

Bergman, who has had the privilege of rubbing elbows with fashion legends including Christian Louboutin, Marc Jacobs and Michael Kors, said that while her position at *FashionMagazine.com* does present her with once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, it's also a demanding position.

"Whereas a traditional editor writes and edits and plans content, I'm doing so many other things, like programing websites, understanding trends, understanding stats, understanding the business side of it, understanding social media, really giving readers a lot more than I would if I worked in a traditional setting," the 28-year-old says.

"Everybody thinks your life is like *Devil Wears Prada*. Everybody seems to be really fixated on the fact that you get to go to fashion shows and you get free things and you get to travel. Those are all cool, but the number one perk of my job is just being able to do my job. I worked really hard to get here and... I'm really happy that I get to talk about fashion all the time."

She's had a short, yet impressive career that dates back to 2005, when she was a Ryerson University fashion communication student.

Through the program, which trained students in just about everything about the fashion industry except design, Bergman landed an internship at *Fashion Magazine*.

But before coming back for a full-time position in 2011, Bergman moved to New York, where she interned at *Teen Vogue* and *Interview Magazine*, and worked at *Page Six Magazine* and *Fashion Week Daily*.

When she moved back to Toronto, she got a job in Holt Renfrew's marketing department before coming full circle and landing back at *Fashion Magazine*.

Since then, Bergman has won the magazine two Proctor and Gamble Beauty and Grooming Awards for best fashion website.

Bergman's desire to carve out a career in the fashion world dates back to her high school days at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

"I always knew I wanted to do something creative, and I thought that fashion would be practical, which is funny. I thought it would be more practical than toiling away in a studio somewhere," she recalled.

She remembered an assignment for her 11th grade media class that required her to write an article about something related to her school.

"It had to be a critique, and I decided to critique the dress code, because I hated how people dressed." The article was later published in *The CJN*. That's when I decided that I wanted to be Carrie Bradshaw."

Continued on page 30

***FashionMagazine.com* online editor Randi Bergman with fashion icon Christian Louboutin at Holt Renfrew in Toronto in June.**

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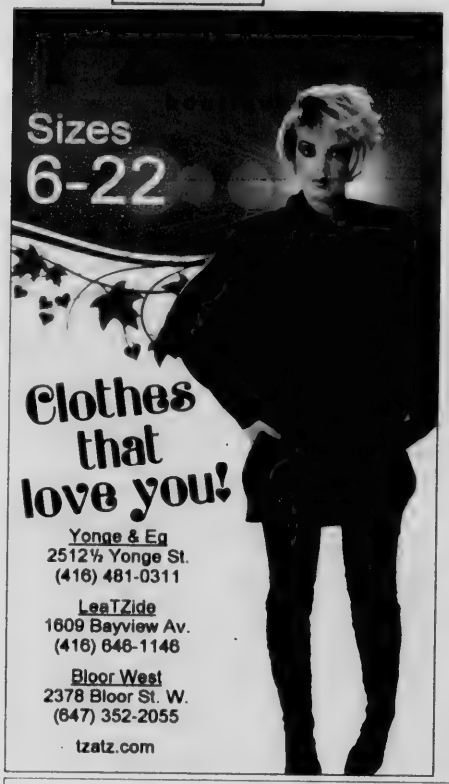

Credited with revamping magazine

Continued from page 29

Although Bergman lives and breathes fashion, she said she has no desire to get into design.

"I love clothes, and I have a very specific esthetic, and very specific things that turn me on, but I'm not creative in that way. I really love to analyze it," she said.

Describing her own personal style, Bergman said it's anything but simple.

"I'm kind of a 'more is more' type of person. I love colours, I love prints, and I love mixing them all together… I love vintage and I love fashion history.

"I always try to do a little bit of surrealism, because that's kind of my favourite fashion history period. So I love buying things that take you a few minutes to understand what's going on."

She said her favourite piece she owns is a skirt by Carven, a decades-old French couture house rebranded by designer Guillaume Henry, which "looks like a Dutch master's painting."

"I really love things like that. I have a purse that looks like a candy wrapper, and another purse that looks like a glove and another purse that looks like a pair of lips – things that are a little bit weird, but really cool."

As for trends, Bergman said she is very excited about the fact that 1990s style is on its way back.

"I'm extremely head over heels into the'90s right now, like I can't get control of it. So, right now everything that I wear is pretty much '90s – from Winona Ryder in *Reality Bites* to *[Beverly Hills:] 90210*… Bodysuits, spaghetti straps, lingerie dresses, ruffles, fluorescent – I'm really into Tori Spelling right now."

Credited with revamping *Fashion Magazine's* online presence with her combination of humour and industry knowledge, Bergman said that in the years since the fashion world penetrated the virtual world, it's leveled the playing field for people who want to be part of the industry.

"It's opened the conversation to a lot of different people… You don't have to go through the same hoops [as you might have in the past.]"

Still, she insisted that there is a big difference between a fashion industry professional and someone who has a passion for designer labels.

FashionMagazine.com **online editor Randi Bergman in Stockholm on a press trip.**

"That doesn't mean you have to go to school for it, it just means you have to know a lot. It just means you have to educate yourself on where something came from. There's a reason why you like something and it's important that people understand that if you're going to work in fashion."

And, she added, "If you're not willing to work your ass off, it's not for you."

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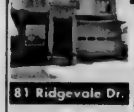

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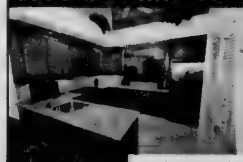

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Young rabbi has big shoes to fill at Beth Tikvah

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

If the Guinness world records people kept track of this sort of thing, they would list Rabbi Jarrod Grover as the youngest spiritual leader of a North American synagogue with a membership of over 1,000 families.

The milestone is not recorded anywhere, and that suits Rabbi Grover just fine.

He's just 31 and although not shy about proclaiming his youth, he doesn't advertise it either.

"I'm not saying that as something to boast about," says the Montreal-born rabbi in his study at Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto.

"I just know about it because I was really nervous to know that when I took this position."

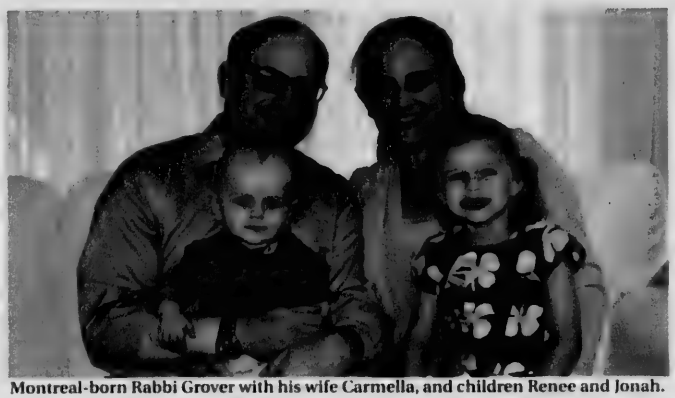
After all, he had big shoes to fill. Rabbi Grover took over as senior rabbi of Beth Tikvah earlier this year when Rabbi Howard Markose – who had taken the reins for two interim years following the resignation of the shul's longtime spiritual leader, Rabbi Wayne Allen – returned to Israel.

Armed with a bachelor's degree in economics from Princeton University, Rabbi Grover was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2009 and arrived at Beth Tikvah that summer as assistant rabbi.

"I get it all the time," he says with a smile. "People meet me for the first time and go, 'Oh my God, my son is older than you,' or 'I could be your grandmother!' Some people do see me that way. 'I'm your Bubbie, I'm looking out for you. We're so proud of you.' This is an older congregation. A lot of them do tend to look at me as the baby."

But his youth has also changed some perceptions at the 1,125-family member Conservative synagogue, founded in 1964.

For example, this year, he's running 12 conversion classes when many other rabbis have one or two at a time.



Montreal-born Rabbi Grover with his wife Carmella, and children Renee and Jonah. [*Yam Enbar photo*]

"If you ask the students, they say, 'We are more comfortable with you. We can talk to you. We can be ourselves. You are from our generation.' I think they do feel more comfortable with someone who's closer to their age," he says.

Rabbi Grover's enthusiasm for the job is obvious.

"I really am enthusiastic. I love my job. I love working with the conversion students. I love doing the weddings. I like working with people who are younger than me and who are my age," he says.

"I hope I have opened doors into Jewish life for people for whom the doors would not have been open if I was an older rabbi." But, he added, "I don't think I'm better at what I do because I'm younger. I'm still me."

He even doesn't seem to mind working "insane" hours. Like most of his colleagues in the pulpit, he's at work at 7:15 a.m. and though he may have lunch at home or a brief afternoon break, rarely leaves before 10 p.m. He and his wife Carmella have two children, Renee, who's 2 1/2, and Jonah, eight months.

Among his accomplishments, Rabbi Grover is especially proud of the shul's "Blue Jean Shabbat" program. It's an informal, interactive, family-centred Oneg Shabbat service featuring storytelling, trivia, music and dinner.

"To me, it was like a no-brainer when I came here," Rabbi Grover says. "We're building community through those programs. Young families are actually meeting other young families. That's where the commitment will come in the future."

In early 2012, Beth Tikvah became "Torah egalitarian," meaning women are allowed to participate in most aspects of the Torah service, including *aliyot*. But women do not count toward a minyan.

Is that an issue at the shul? "Oh, I think it is an issue," Rabbi Grover says. "Other Conservative shuls have changed their policy. I haven't felt any pressure here to do it.

"But every time we don't get a minyan, there's pressure. That tenth person, who happens to be a woman, is thinking to herself, 'What am I? Chopped liver?' [But] I am not at this time counting women in a minyan. It is not on my agenda and I don't have strong feelings about it. I really don't."

As for same-sex marriages, he says, "it's not really on the radar here."

Asked if he's more liberal than Rabbi Allen was, Rabbi Grover pauses.

"I think so," he replies. "Am I crazy more liberal than he was? No. I was brought here because I'm more traditional."

He describes Beth Tikvah as "centrist" – and that's "the hardest place to be. We're the only Conservative synagogue in this part of the city, the only shul in Willowdale. So I think we have to be centre of the road and accommodate people who are more traditional conservative and those who are more liberal. We try to find a balance."

On the other hand, "do I want to be all things to all people? No. But I really think there's more to be gained together than there is in picking one issue that's going to get people so upset that we're going to lose either all the traditionalists or all the liberals.

I don't think we're in a day and age where we should be taking sides to divide the community. We have too many important things on the agenda. We are losing Jews. People are walking away, not just from our shul, but from the community altogether."

He credits Rabbi Allen for hewing to tradition.

"He never dumbed down the service, never spoke to the lowest common denominator. Inclusivity was not his number one thing. It was totally OK for him to sit face to face with someone and say, 'You don't belong in this shul.' Inclusivity at any cost... It's not who we are.

"I think Judaism expects things of our congregants, and that is the message that I preach. I'm not going to dumb it down and, for instance, cut down the Torah reading because people are bored. I think it's God's expectation that we challenge ourselves. I have people here who feel the same I do, and that's why I'm lucky."

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Barbarash, Elyk, Yosif	Oct. 7/13	5 Fisherville Rd
Bober, Harold	Oct. 7/13	3560 Bathurst St
Komissarchuk, Michail	Oct. 8/13	Private
Sherman, Cydney	Oct. 8/13	121 Harris Way
Samuel, Joe Fleizar	Oct. 11/13	Private
Levy, Cecelia	Oct. 11/13	59 Garden Ave
Israel, Cynthia Sylvia	Oct. 12/13	4001 Bayview Ave
Frydman, Rose	Oct. 12/13	3560 Bathurst St
Fodor, Lea	Oct. 11/13	784 Centre St
Halberstadt, Lillian	Oct. 10/13	
Chperling, Tsilia	Oct. 14/13	4300 Bathurst St
Axelrod, Ben David	Oct. 17/13	65 Viewmount Ave
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Results flow from Vaughan mission to Israel

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Things moved pretty quickly following a recent week-long economic mission to Israel sponsored by the City of Vaughan. Within days of the return of the 23-strong contingent, Centennial College, one of the participants, had signed seven memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with Israeli academic institutions.

The MOUs were concluded "with learning institutions and organizations in Israel... as part of a concerted effort by [Centennial] to enhance student mobility and learning internationally," the college said in a statement.

The agreements are meant to create linkages between Centennial and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem, the College of Law and Business, the Jerusalem College of Technology and Tel-Hai Academic College. In addition, there are new ties with the Magen David Adom, Israel's version of the Red Cross, and VARAM, Israel's board of public academic colleges.

"Centennial and other colleges are looking for new academic partners to enhance learning opportunities for their students, as well as opportunities for collaborative research, innovation and commercialization," Centennial said.

Vaughan city councillor Alan Shefman, who, along with Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, spearheaded the mission and accompanied it to Israel, said that's just the kind of outcome he'd been looking for.

Vaughan has been working on a new economic development plan geared to increasing economic ties with three countries: Israel, Italy and China. The idea is to bring together Canadian and foreign firms, along with educational institutions, who can partner in pursuing business opportunities. On the educational front, it was hoped that it would lead to student exchanges and training programs, he said.

During the trip to Israel, organizers arranged 160 meetings with local companies and agencies, most of them one-on-one sessions, Shefman stated.

ColdSpring Commerce, a Canadian company that specializes in facilitating business partnerships, created the network that brought together Canadian and Israeli participants. "They were critical to the success of the program as they were on the ground in Israel," Shefman said.

The initiative was mounted in co-operation with Israel's Toronto consulate, the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce.

"Any trade collaboration has to be mutually beneficial. This is the philosophy I bring to international trade for the city. It has to be a win-win that fosters further growth and expands both economies," Bevilacqua said.

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, right, with Amos Harel, one of Israel's leading media experts on military and defence issues, at a briefing during the Vaughan economic mission to Israel.

"Israel is a country that is widely admired," particularly for its advances in the tech sector," he added.

One of the Canadian participants, Gino Di Rezze, founder of Groundheat Systems, was impressed at the vitality of Israeli entrepreneurs.

"I was excited seeing the energy of a small country. It was amazing," he said.

Di Rezze participated in one-on-one meetings that appear to have already spawned business relationships. In conjunction with an Israeli company, Groundheat is bidding on the installation of a geothermal power plant in a government building near the Knesset in Jerusalem.

The company's Rome office is also partnering with an Israeli firm to bid on installing a geothermal plant at an Israeli army base, Di Rezze said.

Shefman said Canadian participants represented a wide range of industries, from those specializing in security products, to metal fabricators, to investment funds.

Shefman said one Israeli company, A.B.A. Science Play, produces "high-end, scientific playgrounds" that add an educational element to children's playground activities.

"They're looking to establish a Canadian office in Vaughan," Bevilacqua said.

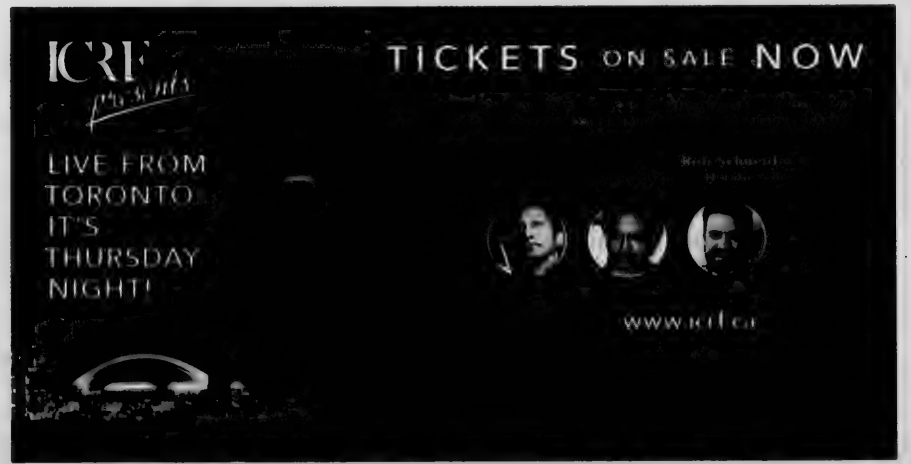
Another Israeli company that participated in the meetings makes an advanced automated parking system that moves cars to designated spots on a conveyor system and does not require a driver. It's a real money-saver, said Shefman, since it reduces the costs of excavating underground parking and allows more cars to use less space.

Canadians can offer their marketing and management skills to the roll-out of those sorts of products, or perhaps provide infusions of capital to develop them. For its part, Vaughan can serve as "a jump-off point in North America," providing a base from which Israeli firms, with a limited local customer base, can sell to a huge market, Shefman said.

Adding to the Vaughan sales pitch is the fact that many Israelis are quite familiar with the community.

"You can't believe the number of Israelis who have knowledge and connections to Toronto and Thornhill," Shefman said. "Then you start playing Jewish geography with them. It's a huge issue that we have a significant Israeli population that helps for familiarity. The fact we have a dynamic Jewish community adds value to them. They're not going to unfamiliar territory."

As part of the initiative, Vaughan will open a business development office in Tel Aviv, "to show Israel's business community we're serious and to continue to build relationships," said Shefman.



Smart car developed in Herzliya

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — The flying cars promised by science fiction aren't quite ready yet, but automakers like General Motors have a pretty acceptable consolation prize: a smart, self-driving, self-parking car equipped with a wealth of sensors and communications equipment that aims to make accidents a thing of the past.

For GM, much of the technology needed for the vehicle of the future is being developed at its Israel research and development facility.

"The technologies that will power autonomous vehicles, including smart sensing, vision imaging, human machine interface, Wi-Fi and 4G/LTE communications, much of that is being done at our Herzliya facility, in conjunction with GM's other R and D facility in Silicon Valley," said Gil Golan, director of GM's Advanced Technical Center (ATC) in Israel.

"The industry is being driven by customer preference and to keep up, we need to develop these technologies and ensure we are meeting customer demand. To stay on top of the market you have to be versatile, and the Israel ATC helps the company to do that."

"We started working in Israel nearly 20 years ago with some limited projects, but we ramped up activities here in 2007 and have been going strong ever since," Golan said. "Israel is a very important location for GM."

According to Golan, connectivity will be key for cars in the next five model years.

"Cars today are very sophisticated, much more than they used to be," he said. "Modern cars have as many as 100 systems controlled by computers or processors." That includes the engine, braking system, cooling system, steering and suspension and transmission.

A self-driving car might be designed to automatically stop at red lights, or stay within the speed limit. Sensors could alert drivers when a tire is about to hit the curb when they are parallel parking. A video camera could detect when a vehicle gets too close to the one in front and automatically reduce speed to ensure a safe gap. In-dash apps could let drivers communicate with others on the road, getting information about traffic, accidents, services, and other useful information.

Much of the technology to do this already exists, said Golan, having been developed in the past for smartphones. In fact, he said, the smartphone is the model for the car of the future.

"What customers are asking for are super smartphones on wheels," Golan said.

Study looks at Jewishness as an ethnic identity

Views & Reviews
Martin Lockshin

Jewish Identities in Postcommunist Russia and Ukraine: An Uncertain Ethnicity
Zvi Gitelman
Cambridge University Press

Social scientists have developed a useful distinction between Judaism and Jewishness. Judaism is identifying with either: (1) Jewish religious beliefs and/or practices, or (2) Jewish nationhood, or (3) both. Jewishness is relating to one's Jewish identity as an ethnicity, with no religious or national component.

But what is the nature and significance of Jewish ethnic identity? An important new book by Prof. Zvi Gitelman of the University of Michigan explores this issue, focusing on the survival of ethnic Jewishness in the former Soviet Union (FSU).

Jewish Identities in Postcommunist Russia and Ukraine: An Uncertain Ethnicity opens with the intriguing line: "Things did not turn out as they were supposed to: ethnic groups were supposed to disappear. Marxists, western liberals and social scientists agreed on that, but for different reasons." And yet, ethnic identity survives for Jews and other groups in many parts of the world, including Canada and the FSU.

Gitelman and his team conducted detailed surveys of large groups of Jews in Russia and Ukraine in the 1990s. Their results are organized into useful charts that show differences both over time and between Russia and the Ukraine. Gitelman puts these survey results into perspective through a learned analysis of the history of Russian Jewry, of anti-Semitism, and of the disputes in Jewish communities throughout the world about the connection between religion, nationalism and Jewish identity. Gitelman's scholarly training in all these areas – and also in classical Judaica and in Hebrew, Yiddish and Slavic languages – allows him to write authoritatively on these topics. (Sadly not every scholar who studies the sociology of modern Jews has this array of skills.)

Aside from appealing to those who want to understand more about the Jews who are left in the FSU, I believe the book is surprisingly significant for North American Jews, too.

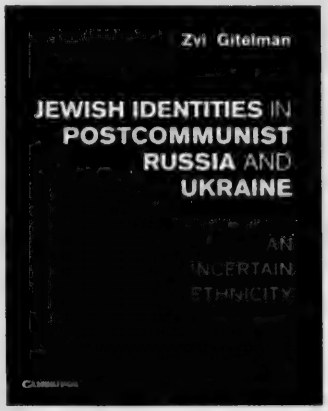
The Jews remaining in the FSU in the 1990s were anomalous. Jewish religious, cultural and national life had been supressed during most of the years of Communist control. After perestroika and later the fall of communism, those Jews with the strongest religious and/or national identity quickly took the opportunity to emigrate. This left behind an assortment of Jews who, in general, had little significant Jewish knowledge, religious commitment or connection to Zionism.

Nevertheless, Gitelman's statistics show that many still see themselves as Jews and, for the most part, feel positively inclined to that identity. But what that identity actually consists of is difficult to say. The factor cited by FSU Jews most often as underlying their Jewish identity is anti-Semitism. They see themselves as Jewish because they or others they know have been victims of anti-Semitism.

When Gitelman and his team dug a little more deeply, they did not find any significant manifestations of that Jewishness. In their surveys, they gave FSU Jews a list of "components" and asked them which ones were essential to Jewishness. In Russia in 1997, only four components were seen by a non-trivial number of respondents as "essential to Jewishness": "be proud of one's Jewish nationality" (22.9 per cent); "not hide one's Jewishness" (20.8 per cent); "defend Jewish honour and dignity" (17.3 per cent); and "remember the Holocaust" (15.1 per cent). Belief in God fared poorly – it was seen as essential to Jewishness by a mere 4.2 per cent of FSU Jews. Most traditional manifestations of Jewish religious or national identity received scores barely above zero: "know a Jewish language" (1.1 per cent); "circumcise one's son" (0.1 per cent); "give children Jewish education" (0.8 per cent); "marry a Jew" (1.1 per cent).

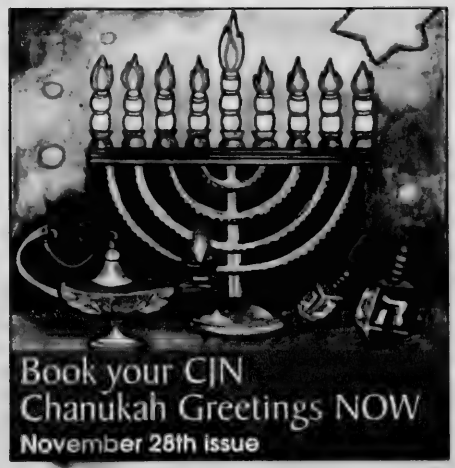
Gitelman's dispassionate analysis of intermarriage is extensive – he provides a historical background of Jewish attitudes to it, which for two or more millennia were universally condemnatory. He also shows statistically that the divorce rate in various countries is higher among the intermarried and that in Russia and Ukraine, self-assessments of marital happiness are lower among the intermarried. Yet it is not surprising that among Jews with only an ethnic attachment to Judaism and no sense of loyalty or obligation to traditional Jewish values, romantic love trumps ethnicity.

The statistic that shocked me most concerned the attitude of FSU Jews to "Jews" who practise a religion other than Judaism. Gitelman shows how, throughout Jewish history, practising a religion other than Judaism was seen unambiguously, even by modern non-religious Israelis, as essentially leaving the fold. But for the majority of FSU Jews, a Jew practising Christianity is seen as a matter of indifference. The logic of such an outlook is clear: if Judaism is simply an ethnic identity, certainly people of one ethnicity can practise any number of religions.



As I read these statistics, I began to wonder whether here in North America, a similar acceptance of what was always called "apostasy" will become normal among our own ethnic Jews. I did not have to wonder for long. The *New York Times* of Oct. 1, citing a survey of the Pew Research Center, reports that 34 per cent of U.S. Jews claim that you can still be Jewish if you believe that Jesus was the messiah, and a similar percentage (perhaps the same Jews?) have a Christmas tree in their homes.

Reading this book teaches that while ethnic identity does survive longer than experts expected, it is almost always shallow and content-free. Perhaps this book will serve as a wake-up call to all who think that ethnic Jewishness will contribute in any significant way to the survival of our people.



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TAKING SIDES EXAMINES DEEDS OF GERMAN ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR

Wilhelm Furtwangler, principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra from 1922 to 1945, received many government honours and appointments under the Nazi regime, but also used his influence to save hundreds of Jewish musicians from the concentration camps.

In his play *Taking Sides*, **Ronald Harwood** focuses on a 1946 investigation to determine whether Furtwangler used his artistic genius to glorify the Nazi's destructive ideology, or whether, as he insisted, he remained in Germany to safeguard a musical tradition and bring comfort to the German people with his music.

Stage Centre Productions and Chicken Coop Theatre presents *Taking Sides* for five performances only at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave., Nov. 6 to 9. $27.50, $22. Strong language; not suitable for children. 647-831-3980.

• • •

Names in the News: Robert Singer, CEO of the World Jewish Congress, sent a request to online bookseller Amazon.com on Oct. 14 to stop selling books that deny the Holocaust and promote anti-Semitism and white supremacy. The firm had quickly responded to a previous request in 2008, so the WJC announced it was "shocked and disgusted" on Oct. 17 that Amazon had not yet removed the items.

"No one should profit from the sale of such vile and offensive hate literature," Singer wrote to Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos. "Many Holocaust survivors are deeply offended by the fact that the world's largest online retailer is making money from selling such material."

• • •

Names in the News II: Jack Grinhaus and **Lauren Brotman** are co-artistic directors of Bound to Create Theatre, which is about to remount their 2010 Fringe Festival hit *Dirty Butterfly*, a drama by **Debbie Tucker Green**. Grinhaus and Brotman are also parents of a 10-week old baby, **Ethan Jude**. Aki Studio, Daniels Spectrum, 585 Dundas St. E., Oct. 30 to Nov. 17. www.boundtocreate.com

• • •

Arts in Brief

• **Gilbert Gottfried**, **Jesse Joyce**, **Tony Hinchcliffe** and **Brody Stevens** are among the chief "roasters" at the Dark Comedy Festival, which showcases "dark, challenging, controversial and deeply personal comedy." Danforth Music Hall, Nov 1 to 8. www.EmpireComedyLive.Com

• **Kevin Courrier** continues his series on the films of **Robert Altman** with a segment on *Film Noir (Part One) – The Long Goodbye*. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday Nov. 4, 7 to 9 p.m. $11.25 drop-in. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• **Osnat Lipa** focuses on the work of Georgia O'Keeffe in Art Appreciation – The Symbolic Power of Colour in Art. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday Nov. 5, 1:30 p.m. $12 at the door.

• • •

Passages: When **Morris Biderman** arrived in Toronto from Poland in 1920, he was a triple outsider: an immigrant, a Jew and poor. The son of a rag-picker, he left school at 16 and began peddling newspapers on the street. "I did not need to look far for reasons to become involved with socialism," he wrote in his 2000 autobiography, *A Life On The Jewish Left: An Immigrant's Experience*.

Biderman, who died in Toronto on Oct. 14 at the age of 105, worked for the communistic United Jewish People's Order from an early age. But when he joined **J.B. Salsberg** and others on a fact-finding mission to the Soviet Union in 1956, he, along with Salsberg, returned utterly disillusioned with the Stalinist regime, having realized it had been murdering and persecuting Jews and trying to sweep these crimes under the rug. That knowledge led Salsberg, Biderman and others to make a famous and highly controversial break from the UJPO to found the New Fraternal Jewish Association (NFJA) in 1960.

The event caused an enormous rupture in the Jewish left across Canada.

"They felt that much of what they had been told [by Moscow] over the previous two decades had been false, just a bunch of lies," said **David Abramowitz**, UJPO's longtime president.

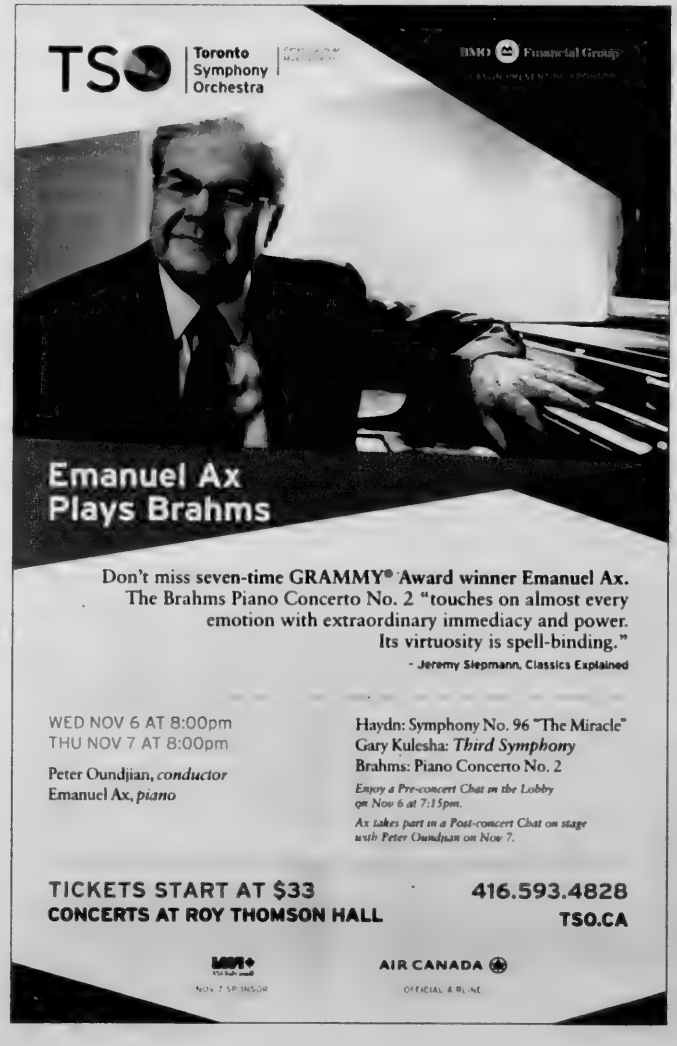
"When they left UJPO, they took about 200 members with them, and there was a great dichotomy in the membership. The animosities were great, and horrible accusations were slung back and forth. For four years that carried on, and some people continued the animosities and never forgot about 'those traitors that had left.'"

On the belief that culture was the best way to attract young people, Biderman helped establish UJPO's youth movement, as well as its Youth Singers and Folk Singers, who toured across Canada. Later he helped put Yiddish cultural values at the forefront of the NFJA.

According to Abramowitz, Biderman was instrumental in establishing Friends of Yiddish, the Committee for Yiddish, the annual summer concert at Earl Bales Park and other mainstays of the Toronto Jewish cultural scene.

Biderman operated a small printing shop, but worked his entire life in furtherance of socialist and communist ideals. "Am I sorry for having belonged to the party for 30 years?" he wrote.

"[M]y answer is no. I am not sorry… I was working day to day among comrades and friends for an organization and cause I believed in."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Ger Mandolin Orchestra pays homage to E. Europe

Jordan Adler
Special to the CJN

A few years ago, Avner Yonai flew to Góra Kalwaria, the Polish village where his grandfather lived before moving to Palestine in 1932.

Góra Kalwaria is known as Ger in Yiddish. When Yonai arrived there, one of the two Jews who still reside in the town, Henryk Prajs, showed him a tattered photograph of Yonai's grandfather and other family members from the early 1930s playing in the town's mandolin orchestra.

Today, the Israeli-born Yonai, who lives in the San Francisco area, is the founder of an updated Ger Mandolin Orchestra (GMO), which he created as an homage to the popular eastern European musical styles and a memorial to his family. This contemporary GMO will perform for the first time in Canada on Nov. 7 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. The event is tied into Holocaust Education Week.

"My immediate idea was to make a modern orchestra playing the same repertoire that [such an] orchestra might have played at that time," Yonai says.

This updated band of musicians formed in 2011, after Yonai got in touch with Mike Marshall, a Grammy-nominated mandolin player.

"[Marshall] was the one to make the call to most of the musicians who came on board," Yonai says.

Marshall recruited 10 other musicians, including Toronto's Eric Stein, artistic director of the Ashkenaz Foundation, a non-profit organization that showcases Yiddish and Jewish art forms, such as klezmer music. Stein is also the only Canadian in the orchestra and credits the presence of Ashkenaz and its music festivals as an inspiration to helping him as a musician.

Continued on page 37

Influence of mandolins continues in Poland today

Continued from page 36

"Getting into the instrument, I was really astounded by how many different styles of music are played on the mandolin," he says. "[Ashkenaz] opened my mind to the possibilities of using the mandolin as a vehicle for expression within Jewish musical traditions."

Klezmer music was a central part of Jewish culture in eastern Europe before the Holocaust. The mandolin was also a popular instrument for immigrant communities in North America.

GMO first performed at the Jewish Music Festival in Berkeley, Calif., in March 2011.

"We had many Holocaust survivors in the audience," Yonai recalls. "We had a full house, and a lot of them knew the songs that were played by our orchestra. Some of them sang along. It was very heartwarming."

Góra Kalwaria's mayor later invited the orchestra to perform in the Polish town. The group has not performed as a whole since their concert in Poland two years ago.

"We performed in the town, in the old synagogue – a broken-down old building that hadn't had a crowd in it for probably 70 years," Stein says. "This tradition of mandolin orchestras has actually continued in Poland to this day, without the Jewish influence."

During GMO's stay in Poland, the 11 musicians who comprise the band did a workshop with around 200 Polish student musicians. Now, many of these orchestras play arrangements of Jewish music in their repertoires.

"It's pretty cool that they were getting their own education about how significant the Jewish influence was musically, culturally, historically in their own country," Stein says.

"It's a really accessible way for young people, Jewish or non-Jewish, to memorialize the role that Jewish people played in Polish life for so many years."

Holocaust survivors who show up to the Toronto event will get free admission. Stein is also working on giving away free tickets to students and youth groups interested in learning about musical culture during Holocaust Education Week.

"[The survivors] appreciate it as something that is nostalgic and meaningful for them, connoting the world that they came from in Europe," Stein says.

"It's a great way to connect young musicians who are working in older musical traditions that reflect Jewish musicals styles to connect to an audience of survivors."

The current incarnation of the Ger Mandolin Orchestra

There's not much historical evidence of the songs that the original GMO played. Yonai wants people to go to their attics and take out old albums of family who arrived in Canada from Poland and other eastern European countries.

Yonai says he wants to see if there is sheet music, pictures or playbills from mandolin orchestras before the war. He hopes to authenticate the new GMO's repertoire with some of these songs. People who find artifacts can contact him at ayonai@hotmail.com.

Composer's musical based on grandmother's letters

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

Toronto's Kiever Congregation has commissioned local composer Charles Heller to translate into English his song cycle *Letters from Bozena* for an upcoming performance at that downtown synagogue as part of Holocaust Education Week.

Letters from Bozena is a musical work for soprano, viola and piano. Heller based the work on a series of letters written by his Czech grandmother, Bozena, to her son Otto in England. Heller found the letters in his mother's house after the latter died in 2006.

His grandmother, Bozena Hellerova wrote the letters in German in 1939 and 1940 after learning that Otto, who had mysteriously disappeared, had taken a flight to London just before the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia. "He flew on an impulse to get out of Europe, and that's how he escaped," Heller said. "If he hadn't gotten out within hours, he would have been trapped."

Tragically, almost everyone else in the family – 17 relatives in all – perished in Theresienstadt and Auschwitz.

Bozena, however, died in 1940 before the Nazis could murder her. Her letters describe the growing tension and fear of that tragic period, and are suffused with a mother's hopes and prayers for a better future for the refugee survivors.

Since they were written in a difficult, old-fashioned German script, it took Heller several years to decipher them, and then only with the help of experts in Europe. But once he was able to read them, he was amazed at the almost musical rhythm of his grandmother's prose.

"It's as if she wrote them with music on her mind," he said. "I realized when reading them that even though they are just ordinary letters, they would create something special if set to music."

Heller's parents met and married in London, England, where he was born. He has been living in Canada for 35 years and was choir director of Beth Emeth Congregation for 30 of those years. He now composes and arranges cantorial music and has written a book on Jewish music, *What To Listen For in Jewish Music*, which was published several years ago.

Heller said that while he was writing *Letters from Bozena*, he had the peculiar feeling that he was somehow giving his late grandmother a new kind of existence. "It reminds me of what we say in the memorial prayers," he said. "In the *K'el Male Rachamim*, it says, *'K'zohar harakia'*, the dead souls shine like a light in the sky."

The German version of *Letters from Bozena* premiered in London in 2010 with Duo Bohemia featuring renowned Israeli violist Rivka Golani.

The English version is due to be performed at the Kiever Synagogue, 25 Bellevue Ave., Toronto, on Nov. 10 at 2 p.m., with soprano Stacie Carmona, Bram Goldhamer on piano and Barry Shiffman on viola.

The concert is free and just one of many events being offered as part of Holocaust Education Week (HEW), Nov. 3 to 9, with additional pre-HEW and post-HEW events as well. For details, please visit http://holocaustcentre.com.

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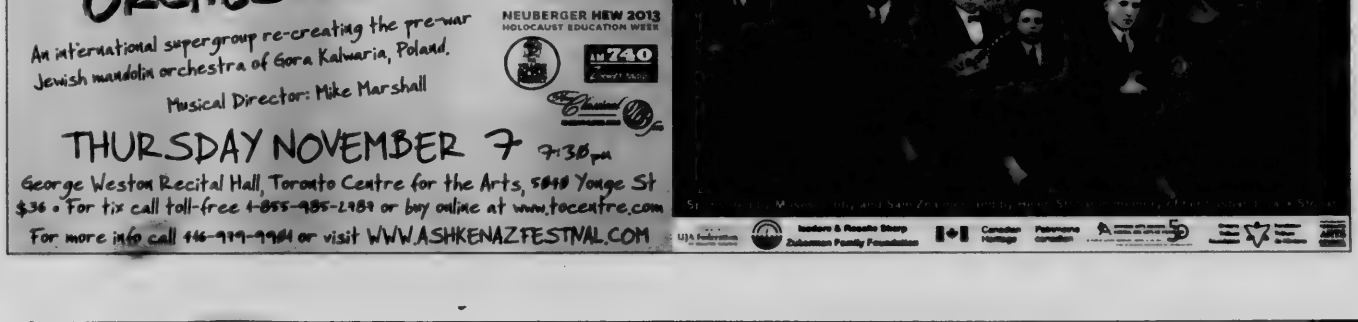
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Cellist straddling two musical worlds

Jordana Divon
Special to The CJN

Cellist Matt Haimovitz is used to playing in some pretty unconventional spots, but perhaps none quite as intimate as the last place he performed a brief interlude in B-minor.

"I was flying from San Francisco to New York a few weeks ago," he explained on the phone. "I was really tired and I was sleeping most of the flight, and when I woke up, the stewardess said, 'Oh, the captain is a classically trained pianist and is excited you're on the plane. Would you play a concert for us?'"

Naturally, he complied.

"She put the handset to the cello for the broadcast. It was surreal to be up in the air that high and play some music and just hear the strains of Bach."

When he heads to Toronto's Koerner Hall on Nov. 5 to play the cello solo in Ernest Bloch's *Schelomo* (*Hebraic Rhapsody*), the venue will be a little larger, but the Israeli-born virtuoso's commitment to performance will be no less intense.

"I'm looking forward to it," he said of the program that will be conducted by Maestro Marco Parisotto and backed by the Ontario Philharmonic as part of the Moordale Concerts series. "Koerner Hall is one of the great halls in Canada, so I'm excited to play there."

Composed during Bloch's "Jewish Cycle," *Schelomo* is a gorgeously moody musical narrative about the story of King Solomon, with Haimovitz's cello acting as its lyrical moor.

"The interpretation of it is so rich that the relationship of the solo cello line to the character of King Solomon just sort of takes you back in time and place and really puts you in a completely different world," he said.

The character-driven drama of the rhapsody also appeals to the 42-year-old's sense of adventure, the same one that led him to reject the trappings of a traditional career in classical music and forge his own path – a path that was set as soon as legendary violinist Itzhak Perlman singled him out at a California music camp in the early 1980s.

Matt Haimovitz plays at Koerner Hall Nov. 5

Within short order, the preteen prodigy from Bat Yam was whisked away to New York where he began to study at Julliard with legendary cellist Leonard Rose.

Rose, who before his death in 1984, taught everyone from Yo-Yo Ma to Yehuda Hanani, referred to Haimovitz as "probably the greatest talent I have ever taught." Haimovitz would have been just shy of his 14th birthday at the time.

While expectations of half that intensity have been known to derail many a talented young artist, the musician says he found a way to compartmentalize the pressure.

"I always felt like I had some perspective on what was going on and I could step back. Even early on, I felt I had some clarity on what my true priority was and my true focus and passion. That's what I tried to hold onto all the way through."

That same clarity has also inspired him to take a far riskier route than his peers. Frustrated by what he perceived as the limitations of his chosen profession, Haimovitz made a daring break with tradition.

He began to experiment with contemporary composers like Philip Glass and, hungry for a different kind of audience, would take his act to nightclubs, rock bars and jazz clubs.

"I was following a very specific path as a virtuoso soloist, playing the same concerti over and over again with orchestras, and knowing three years in advance what I'd be playing and not being able to change that," he explains. "I'd come across a piece or work with a composer and I'd want to change the program or add something to it and it was impossible. I was stuck with what I was doing."

While more stately, grizzled eyebrows would rise over Haimovitz's chosen concert schedule, his reputation ensured that he would always be welcome back in any traditional venue. At this point in his career, the boundary between concert hall and rock bar have even started to blur.

"For me the two worlds are reconciled. I try to bring what I learned from the nightclubs and rock clubs and jazz clubs back into that sense of intimacy and connection with the audience to the concert hall and I try to bring the standards of the high values of the concert hall into the clubs."

The pursuit of the new is the principle that continuess to guide Haimovitz as he successfully straddles the two worlds. He's interested in "stripping away the layers" that have grown over iconic pieces and imbuing the classics with a freshness that he hopes will attract music lovers who may not understand what makes classical music still relevant.

"Orchestras and conductors can play the music, and it's as though you're hearing it for the first time, and that's what I try to do when I play," he said. I try to get to the core and spirit of [the piece], understand the composer's intentions and connect with it in a personal way and then express and communicate that to others."

And if he can do that on an airplane, just imagine what he can do in a place with proper acoustics.

Cello phenomenon Matt Haimovitz joins the Ontario Philharmonic Orchestra and Maestro Marco Parisotto for two masterworks by composers of Jewish origin – Ernest Bloch and the giant of the symphony, Gustav Mahler.

The concert takes place Tuesday, Nov. 5, 8 p.m. at Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W., Tickets, $40, are available from www.mooredaleconcerts.com, or by phoning 416-922-3714, ext. 103. It is the fourth joint presentation between Mooredale Concerts and the Ontario Philharmonic.

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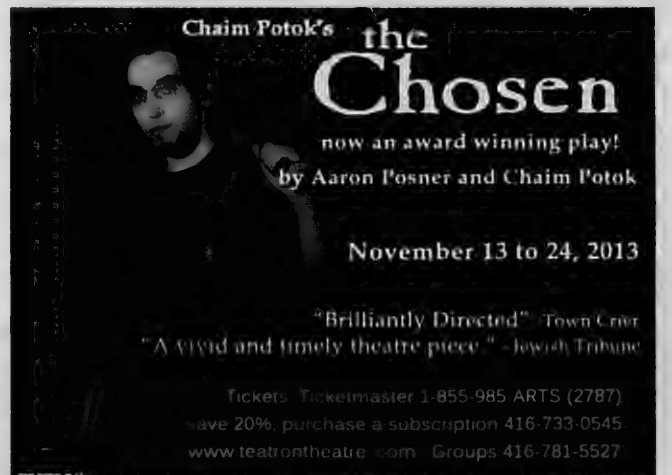
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Shul not a priority for young, Jewish adults

Ottawa shuls recognize importance of youth involvement

Monique Elliot
Special to The CJN

Ottawa's Limmud conference this month drew mostly an aging crowd, a worrying trend, organizers say.

There's a visible absence of youths and young professionals at Congregation Beth Shalom, where the conference took place, said synagogue president Ian Sherman, who estimates about 85 to 90 per cent of the congregation is 50 years of age or older.

Limmud, an international organization based in the United Kingdom and run by volunteers, is, according to its website, "dedicated to Jewish learning in all its variety… [through] events with a lively approach to Jewish learning."

Referring to one of the many programs at the conference, a panel on "Why do young adults turn away from shul?" Sherman said he feels discouraged to see so few young adults at shul.

"There has been a dramatic decrease with a capital 'D.' It counteracts my feeling of optimism that shul life can be better. It's depressing," he said.

Young adults at the conference said they are finding it increasingly difficult to relate to the tradition of attending shul regularly.

"I think it's well-known that we're losing young adults," said Samantha Banks, 25, a young professional who was one of the panellists.

"I didn't go to Jewish day school, I didn't go to Hebrew school, [I] did my bat mitzvah and I go to shul three times a year," she said. "And working with young professionals, I would say the majority of my [peers] are similar to this way of practicing.

"It's interesting because we're so Jewish-hungry: we wear our Jewish stars around our necks… It's something we want to do and we're proud to do," Banks said. "We go to our universities and rally because we're proud of it, but going to synagogue doesn't seem to be a priority for young Jewish professionals."

Carleton University student Jordan Stenzler, 22, said he believes the relationship with shul weakens for his generation as they age.

"Once you get into high school, you're not as involved and you lose your connection," he said.

Seen at the 2013 Limmud conference in Ottawa are, from left, Eric Trottier, Adam Moscoe, Samantha Banks, Rabbi Michael Goldstein, Rabbi Leibish Hundert and Rabbi Menachem Blum. ***[Robin Chernick photo]***

Both Banks and Stenzler stressed their relationship with their faith is not the issue and point out barriers that make going to shul less appealing for their generation.

"I believe we go to shul because our parents brought us to shul," Banks said. "When we move away from our parents, we don't have people to go with, we can't afford it ourselves, we don't understand what the heck is going on, we can't relate to the leadership of the congregation and we have no friends there."

The service can be four to five hours long, and young adults say they place priority on their postsecondary studies and jobs. Stenzler said he sees going to shul as "a second workday."

A shortened service would be more effective in drawing in youth, they said, because it would show the rabbis have chosen their lessons carefully.

"Shul-hopper" panellist Eric Trottier said a lack of understanding of the lessons because of language barriers can also be frustrating.

"We want to learn and we want to be here," he said, and suggested that providing Hebrew translations should become more the norm, and "creating Jewish literacy from the ground up" should be a priority so that future generations can better understand and become more involved.

Banks, along with two of her peers, brainstormed solutions with three local rabbis and the audience in an interactive panel during the conference.

The speakers agreed that creating a mentorship program, organizing social and networking opportunities, and sharing new experiences – religious or otherwise – could increase youth involvement.

"We need to make the shul a place that is welcoming for things other than learning," Banks said.

One congregation successfully attracting this young, urban demographic is the Glebe Shul, named for the Ottawa neighbourhood where it was founded by Rabbi Michael Goldstein and his wife, Stacy, in 2011.

"Why people, I think, have migrated to the Glebe Shul, is because even though the leadership is Orthodox, it's a very welcoming environment. It's not imposing or restricting, and it lets you practise how you want to practise," Banks said. "Our generation is full of culture, full of pride, but traditional practices don't necessarily fall within our day-to-day [routines]."

Rabbi Goldstein said his shul, known as "a shul without walls," attracts young Jews who are "not particularly interested in religion," but who crave a sense of community and belonging after moving to Ottawa for work or university.

"Shul needs to be completely re-imagined" to establish a strong relationship with Jewish youth, he said.

Sherman said he welcomed the suggestions offered and intends to collaborate with other local synagogues to implement some of the more creative ideas the discussion generated.

Banks proposed that shuls should host tailgating parties before sporting events and then discuss lessons learned after the congregation watches the game.

"We'll be doing that," Sherman said, laughing.

"It's nice to know there's an emerging generation out there that still cares."

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Nov. 4 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 14. Nov. 11 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 21. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Friday, Nov. 1

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

Rabbi Donniel Hartman is the scholar in residence this Shabbat at Beth Sholom Synagogue. Friday night dinner at 6 p.m. Lecture at 8 p.m. Saturday on "The Holocaust and the Creation of the State of Israel." RSVP 416-783-6103, or email naomi@bethsholom.net.

Saturday, Nov. 2

TORAH CLASS

Allen Cooper teaches the Torah class this week at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

ISRAEL & THE ARAB WORLD

Jonathan Kay, Tovah Lazaroff, Shmuel Rosner and **David Weinberg** discuss "Israel, the Arab World and the Media," 8:30 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $15. www.torahinmotion.org.

MUSLIM ANTI-SEMITISM

Tahir Gora, director of the Muslim Committee Against Anti-Semitism, speaks at Temple Sinai, 10 a.m.

Sunday, Nov. 3

A DAY OF LEARNING

Torah in Motion sponsors a day of learning, starting at 9:20 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. For schedule, see www.torahinmotion.org. Register at 416-633-5770.

JEWISH MALE CHOIR BENEFIT

The Toronto Jewish Male Choir performs a benefit concert for Zareinu, 7 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $36. For tickets, call **Nadine Joffe** 416-661-1800, ext. 227, or visit www.zareinu.org.

DO SOMETHING SWEET

Maya and **Zachary Winkler** hold a fundraiser with cotton candy, face painting, silent auction and more to raise money for the Hospital for Sick Children, 3-5 p.m., 81 Ramblewood Lane, Thornhill.

JEWISH WAR VETERANS

Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Toronto Post, holds a general meeting, Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. Breakfast 9:30 a.m., meeting at 10. Nov. 11, the war veterans will re-dedicate the Flames of Memory memorial, 10:45 a.m., Lipa Green Centre. RSVP 416-635-2883, ext. 5181.

FUND FOR CHILDREN

Robert Meeropol (son of **Ethel** and **Julius Rosenberg**) is the guest speaker at a fundraiser for the Mary Pitawanakwat Fund for Children, 4 p.m., Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave.

HEBREW CLASSES

Beth Emeth Synagogue is running a 5-session Hebrew reading crash course (beginner's level) starting today, 9:15 a.m. Free. Register at 416-633-3838.

Monday, Nov. 4

ART CRIME IN WAR

Doug Purdon discusses "Art Crime in Time of War," 2 p.m. Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880.

Tuesday, Nov. 5

RUSSIAN CAREGIVERS

An educational support group for Russian-speaking caregivers whose loved ones have dementia will be held for 6 weeks, starting today, 6 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre. To register, call 416-635-2900, ext. 498 or 477.

MATT HAIMOVITZ

Cellist **Matt Haimovitz** and the **Ontario Philharmonic Orchestra** perform works by Jewish composers, 8 p.m., Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. $40. For tickets call 416-922-3714, ext. 103, or visit www.mooredaleconcerts.com.

CHUG HATANACH

Irving Matlow discusses Chapter 83 of the Book of Psalms, 8 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

Wednesday, Nov. 6

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

Benjamin Tal discusses "Is the U.S. Economy Really Recovering? What does this mean for Canada and the world?" at a breakfast meeting of Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro, 7:30 a.m., 6 Rosehill Ave. Call 289-597-0500, or email cfobis@rogers.com.

OPEN HOUSE

Netivot HaTorah Day School holds an open house, today at the south campus, 470 Glencairn Ave., 7:30 p.m. and at the north campus, Nov. 13, 18 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, 7:30 p.m. RSVP **Mashie Feintuch,** 905-771-1234, ext. 234.

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Other News

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Nov. 2. Mark Celinscak discusses "British and Canadian Forces at Bergen-Belsen," Congregation B'nai Torah, 8 p.m.

Nov. 3. The Weirzbnik Society shows a film about the community during the war, Bialik Day School, 2760 Bathurst St., 2 p.m.

Samuel Kassow discusses "**Emanuel Ringelblum** and the Oyneg Shabbes Archive," in Yiddish, Lipa Green Centre, 2 p.m.

Piotr Wrobel and **Tamara Trojanowska** discuss "**Witold Pilecki:** Auschwitz Volunteer," 4 p.m., George Ignatieff Theatre, University of Toronto, 6 Hoskin Ave.

Nov. 4. The film *No Place on Earth* will be shown at Beth Tikvah, 7:30 p.m. Director **Janet Tobias** will introduce the film.

A staged reading performance of *Angel in the Night* will be presented by Medina Theatre Ensemble, 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

Nov. 5. Robert Jan Van Pelt discusses his research into the 40,000 Nazi camps, 8 p.m., Shaar Shalom Synagogue.

Michael Marrus discusses "**Yitzhak Zuckerman** and the Memory of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising," 7:30 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple.

Beth Radom Congregation presents the story of the Czech Torah scrolls, with voices of the Toronto Jewish Chorus, 7 p.m., 18 Reiner Rd.

Doris Bergen discusses "Giving Voice to Survivors," noon, Beth Tikvah Lunch and Learn Series, $20. 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Nov. 6. Anna Janina Kloza discusses "Teaching about the Shoah and Jewish Heritage In Poland," 7:30 p.m., Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave.

Nov. 7. Mordechai Ben-Dat discusses "History of the Jewish Press in Europe and the Role of the Media during the Holocaust," 7 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

David Abramowitz discusses "Stalin's Holocaust," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. www.yiddishvinkl.com.

The White Rose, a play by **Lillian Groag**, runs Nov. 7, 8 & 10 at City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Thornhill. For tickets, call 905-882-7469.

Nov. 9. Rabbi Erwin Schild shares his memories of Kristallnacht, at Adath Israel Synagogue, Shabbat morning service.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett discusses the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 12. Bernd Wollschlaeger discusses his journey from the Wehrmacht to the IDF, 8 p.m., Chabad of Markham, 83 Green Lane.

FOR CHILDREN

Uncle Moishy performs a benefit concert for DANI, Nov. 10 at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. For tickets, go to www.dani-toronto.com

Beth David Synagogue holds a teddy bear and pyjama havdallah evening, Nov. 9, 6:30 p.m., www.bethdavid.com.

A NIGHT OF WONDER

Small Wonders, an organization that supports Jewish couples experiencing infertility, is holding a "Night of Wonder," Nov. 14, 7:15 p.m. For tickets, see smallwonders.ca, or call 416-742-0090.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Adult Child Losing a Parent: A 6-session group for adult children who have recently lost a parent. Starts Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m

Successful Step-Parenting: A 4-session group for couples living in blended families, starts Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m.

Life Skills for Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Starts Nov. 6, 7 p.m.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly separated or divorced individuals. Starts Nov. 7, 7 p.m.

Living with Teens: A 6-session group for parents of teenagers. Starts Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m.

Parenting the Child/Teen with ADHD: A 4-week group for parents of children diagnosed with ADHD. Call 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 for a pre-group assessment.

Healthy Dating & Relationships for Teens: A 2-part workshop for teens ages 15 and older, starts Nov. 21, 5 p.m., Schwartz Reisman Centre.

Stop the Roller-coaster: A workshop for parents or professionals who want to learn more about the change in teenagers' behaviour and attitudes. Nov. 27, 7 p.m.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women who have lost a spouse and want to move forward. Nov. 28, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC.

BEREAVEMENT GROUPS

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario presents a panel discussion and healing service on "The Loss of a Child," Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. No cost, but RSVP: lmarmer@jfandcs.com or 416-638-7800, ext. 6312.

FAMILY FUN DAY

Jewish Family and Child hosts a Family Fun Day, Nov. 10 at the Prosserman JCC, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For tickets, visit www.jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m., 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Beth Tzedec Haverim: Kitty Wintrob discusses her memoir *I'm Not Going Back*, Nov. 4, 1:30 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Nov. 5, **Corey Keeble** discusses "The Titanic: 'The Unsinkable Ship,'" 10 a.m.; Nov. 6, **Alvin Abram** discusses "Stories of Chance and Circumstance," 10:30 a.m., as part of Holocaust Education Week; Nov. 7, **Jane Teasdale** discusses "Hiring Help Privately and Through an Organization," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Dance with live music, Nov. 3, 7 p.m. Casino Woodbine, Nov. 20. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Nov. 5, Art appreciation with **Osnat Lippa**, "The Works of **Georgia O'Keefe,**" 1:30 p.m. Nov. 7, **Alain Goldschlager** discusses his collection of 3,500 Holocaust memoirs, the third-largest in the world. Refreshments at 1:30, program at 2 p.m.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722.

Care After Home Care: Learn about long-term care options and substitute decision-making, Nov. 12, 6:30 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre, RSVP by Nov. 6. 416-635-2900, ext. 499. Sponsored by Family Caregiver Connections.

Edithvale Community Centre, 416-665-9050. Feldenkrais Awareness through Movement, Mondays 10 a.m. $60/5 classes.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Prosserman JCC Daycare and Preschool hold an open house, Nov. 17, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Call **Kailah Rubin**, ext. 4250.

Osnat Lippa explores modern Jewish artistic culture in Israel, Nov. 12, 1 p.m.

Women only fitness classes now offered. Call ext. 4000.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Eli Rubenstein discusses "Tales of Courage from the Shoah," Nov. 3, 11 a.m.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Nov. 4, Film Noir: *The Long Goodbye*.

Kobi Hass presents "The Evolution of Israeli Songs," Nov. 10, 11 a.m.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Monsieur Batignole*. Guest speaker **Yves Etienne Massicotte.** Nov. 10, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets at the door, only. $15/$10. Ext. 606.

The downtown Jewish community holds a ceremony to mark the 18th anniversary of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's death. Nov. 10, 7 p.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. Free but space is limited. RSVP hadarparnas@gmail.com.

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574.

MELT Method: Self-treatment techniques to help prevent pain and heal injury, Wednesdays 11 a.m. to Nov. 13; Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m.to Nov. 13; Beyond addiction yoga, Fridays, 6:30 p.m. to Dec. 6.

Rhythm Distributed, works by **Bernice Eisenstein,** are on display in the gallery, Oct. 29-Nov. 18.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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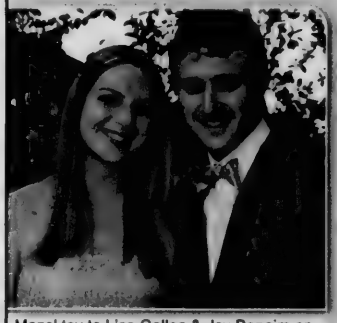
FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב

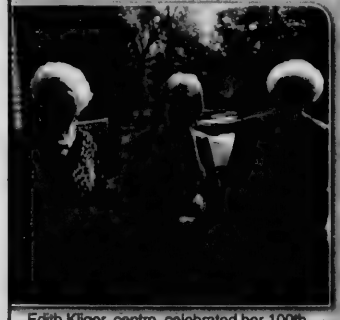
Molly Applebaum celebrates her 83rd birthday with the arrival of her second great-grandson, Carter Baram.

Selma Karp turned 95! Happy birthday to a special Mom and Bubbie. With much love from your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.



Mazel tov to Lisa Gallen & Jay Benaim on your recent engagement. Love from the Gallen and Benaim families.

Brittany & Shane are engaged! Mazel tov from the Delson, Nussbaum and Urowitz Families. Proud grandparents are Jackie Rotblott, Ernie Hurst and Ellie Delson.



Edith Kliger, centre, celebrated her 100th birthday on Oct.14 with her centenarian friends Rose Hochenstein, left, and Sue Lewin. Three beautiful women!

Aviva Chaya Nobel-Stern born Sept. 5 in London, U.K., to Robin & David Yehuda. Mazel tov!

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Just what does a mashgiach do?

Kosher Living
Richard Rabkin

"What is a 'mashgiach' and what exactly do they do?"

This is a question we often receive at the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR) –one often followed by "and how do you spell that – "M-A-S-H-G-I-A-C-H?" So why don't we examine the roles and responsibilities of a COR mashgiach.

Just like the government has health inspectors who visit restaurants to ensure compliance with the government's health and safety standards, in simple terms, a mashgiach, or a kashrut supervisor, ensures that an establishment is in compliance with kashrut standards.

Is there a program where one studies to become a mashgiach?

Much of the training is on the job. New COR mashgichim go through a training regimen with senior COR mashgichim. In addition, a mashgiach must be knowledgeable about the laws of kashrut and be scrupulous about their observance in his or her own personal life. Yes I did say "her." A common misconception is that a mashgiach must be a man. This is not the case, and COR employs a number of talented female mashgichot.

A mashgiach's roles and responsibilities may vary depending on the type of establishment where he or she is working, but in most cases, the mashgiach is responsible for ensuring that every product or ingredient that enters a COR-certified establishment is kosher. In fact, deliveries may only be made after the mashgiach has verified the associated paperwork and approved the delivery's contents.

A mashgiach must also clean fruits and vegetables of insects. Aside from being, well, a little disgusting, insects are also not kosher. You'd be surprised how many common fruits and vegetables are infested with insects – those that are visible to the naked eye – so the mashgiach has to be ready to roll up his sleeves and "de-bug" (if that's a word). A mashgiach will also turn on the cooking equipment and pilot lights to ensure that the food is compliant with a regulation called *bishul yisrael* – that a Jewish person must be involved in the act of cooking food in order for it to be considered kosher.

In many COR-supervised establishments, the mashgiach is what we call a "working mashgiach." A working mashgiach is optional, but some restaurants find him beneficial because not only does he oversee the integrity of the kosher program, he's also an employee of the business, helping in any way he can. Because meat is highly kosher-sensitive, a kosher-observant person is required on premises at all times. As a result, many meat restaurants employ a working mashgiach.

COR-supervised dairy or pareve restaurants only require a *yotzei venichnas* (coming and going) mashgiach, and these establishments typically receive around three visits per day from our COR "route mashgichim" who are assigned restaurants in their quadrant of responsibility and simply travel a circuit a few times daily.

A caterer's mashgiach situation may be a little bit more complicated. Caterers typically cook in their own kitchens (called commissaries), and the working mashgiach onsite ensures that everything is kosher. But what happens when a caterer delivers food to an offsite event, such as a golf club, museum or other event venue? If the event organizer has requested that this be a "supervised event," it means that they have requested a mashgiach who will, for example, be responsible for making sure that the kosher food is not reheated with non-kosher equipment, served on non-kosher dishes, or that no non-kosher beverages or food are brought into the event.

At "supervised events," COR-supervised certificates will be placed at the entrance of the event so guests will know that the event is under COR supervision. If there's no mashgiach present, however, there's no one overseeing the event's kosher program. This is what we call an "unsupervised event."

As you can see, it's a difficult job, but mashgichim are really the unsung heroes of every kosher consumer. It would not be an exaggeration to say that without the mashgiach, kosher food would be virtually nonexistent. That would make for a lot of hungry Jews – and no one wants to see that.

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Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Cookbook author Ricki Heller can show you how to have your cake (and pie and cookies) and great health, too, in her newest cookbook, *Naturally Sweet & Gluten-Free* (Sellers Publishing). After decades of baking and indulging in unhealthy sweets, Heller was inspired to radically alter her diet.

The result was a comprehensive dessert cookbook without gluten, eggs, dairy or refined sugars. Many of her recipes are also soy-free (or offer a soy-free option), corn-free (all but one!), and nut-free (or offer a nut-free option). Allergy-friendly and entirely vegan, the sweets in her book taste great and are good for you, too. Heller has taken great care to ensure that every recipe will taste and look just as good as a traditional dessert. There are mouthwatering photos throughout the book.

With a mother who was a baker, Heller first wielded a wooden spoon when she was about six, and has barely let go of it since. When she suffered health issues because of her sweets addiction and had to cut all refined sweeteners from her life, Heller decided it was time for a change.

She writes: "I began to search for alternatives that I could bake that (a) didn't contain any of the unhealthy ingredients I'd been accustomed to using; and (b) still tasted good. This quest led to a stint baking vegan desserts for a vegetarian restaurant here in Toronto, and later starting my own baking company. I still love dessert and think it can be both healthy and delicious."

GRAIN-FREE AUTUMN FRUIT CRUMBLE

This is another one of those "desserts that can be breakfast." With the abundance of fall fruit and absence of grains, this dish offers a great lower-glycemic way to start your day. Add a bit more protein, and you're all set! For best results, select crisp, sweet apples, such as gala, honeycrisp, or pink lady, and firm pears, such as d'Anjou or Bosc.

For the topping:
1/3 cup coconut sugar
1/2 cup natural raw walnut pieces
1/2 cup natural raw skin-on almonds, preferable organic
1/3 cup coconut flour
1/4 cup potato starch
1 tbsp. ground cinnamon
generous pinch fine sea salt
3 tbsp. coconut oil, at room temperature, preferably organic
30 drops pure plain or vanilla stevia liquid, or to taste
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
3 tbsp. water
For the Filling:
2 medium pears, washed, cored and diced, peeled or unpeeled
2 medium-sweet apples, washed, cored and diced, peeled or unpeeled
1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. ground ginger
2 tbsp. coconut sugar
juice of 1/2 lemon
1/4 tsp. pure stevia powder or 1/2 tsp. pure plain or vanilla stevia liquid, or to taste

Preheat the oven to 350. Grease a 9-in. square pan or a 6-cup casserole or soufflé dish with nonstick spray or coconut oil.

Make the topping: Place the coconut sugar, walnuts, almonds, coconut flour, potato starch, cinnamon and salt in the bowl of a food processor and process until the mixture resembles a fine meal with no pieces of nuts visible.

In a small, heavy-bottomed pot, melt the coconut oil. Whisk in the stevia, vanilla and water. Pour the coconut oil mixture in a ring around the dry ingredients in the processor and pulse until it all comes together. It should look like moist clumps. Set aside.

Make the filling: In a large bowl, toss the pears, apples and cranberries together with the cinnamon and ginger. In a small bowl, mix together the coconut sugar, lemon juice and stevia, and stir until the sugar begins to dissolve. Drizzle over the fruit and then toss again to coat evenly.

Assemble and bake the crumble: Turn the fruit mixture into the prepared casserole dish and sprinkle with the topping. Press down gently on the topping.

Bake for 40 to 60 minutes (depending on the depth of your pan, you will need more or less time for the fruit to cook), rotating the dish about halfway through baking, until the crumble topping is deeply browned and the fruit is soft. Serve immediately or at room temperature. Serves 6 to 8. May be frozen

BELLA'S CRUNCHY ONION CHICKEN

2 c (2 cans) French's fried onions
2 tbls flour
1 egg beaten
6 boneless skinless chicken breasts

Crush fried onions with flour in plastic bag.
Dip chicken in egg, then coat in onion crumbs.
Press firmly to adhere.
Bake at 400° for 20 minutes until no longer pink in center.

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COCONUT MACAROONS

3/4 cup natural raw skin-on almonds, preferably organic
2 tbsp. finely ground flax seeds (from about 1 tbsp. or 15 ml whole seeds)
1/8 tsp. fine sea salt
2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut, medium shred
1/4 cup coconut nectar
1/4 cup light agave nectar
20 to 25 drops pure plain or vanilla stevia liquid, or to taste
1/4 cup tahini (sesame seed paste)
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1/2 tsp. (2.5 ml) pure coconut extract (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper, or spray with nonstick spray.

In the bowl of a food processor, whir the almonds, flax, and salt together until they resemble a coarse meal, about the texture of cornmeal, without any identifiable pieces of almond visible. Add the coconut and pulse once or twice to combine.

Next pour the coconut nectar, agave nectar, stevia, tahini, vanilla, and coconut extract, if using, over the dry ingredients. Process again until everything is incorporated and the mixture forms a sticky ball (you may need to stop and scrape down the sides of the processor bowl once or twice). Stop as soon as the mixture holds together, to avoid grinding the coconut too fine.

Using a small ice-cream scoop or tablespoon, drop small mounds of the mixture onto the cookie sheets about 1 inch apart. Wet your palms (or use a silicone spatula) and flatten the cookies slightly.

Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, rotating the cookie sheets about halfway through baking, until the cookies are deep golden brown on top. Cool completely before removing to a rack (the cookies will firm up as they cool). Makes 14 to 16. May be frozen

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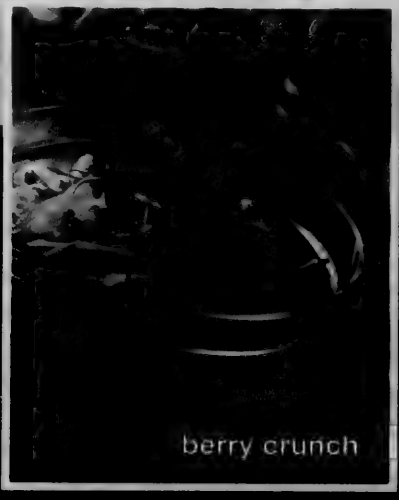
gluten free



BERRY CRUNCH
roasted chicken, grapes, strawberries, roasted pumpkin seeds, basil vinaigrette *gluten free*

GLOW
vegetarian, gluten free

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The Canadian Jewish news

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From Jerusalem with love

Singer Paula Abdul poses inside the Ahava (Love) statue in the Israel Museum garden in Jerusalem. Abdul, who was raised Jewish, was in Israel to celebrate her bat mitzvah at the Western Wall. She said that being in Israel was a dream come true. "From age 17 I have been working, and haven't taken a vacation for eight years. I knew when I had the chance I would come to Israel and see it like a regular tourist. Today I am fulfilling the dream and am very excited to be in Israel. I only landed yesterday and I already feel I won't want to leave," she said last week. *(Israel Sun photo)*

Merkel's Kristallnacht message to Germans: fight anti-Semitism

JTA

BERLIN—The people of Germany need "civil courage" to stand up against anti-Semitism, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on the eve of Kristallnacht's 75th anniversary.

Merkel, speaking on her weekly podcast with 17-year-old Jewish student Samuel Vingron, also said the fact that Jewish institutions still need police protection is a sobering reality 75 years after the pogrom known as the "Night of Broken Glass."

Angela Merkel

The remarks, broadcast on her website this weekend precede the anniversary of the pogrom, which will be marked in ceremonies throughout Germany.

In Berlin, in addition to the Jewish community's annual ceremony, some 100 businesses will put stickers on their windows to symbolize the broken glass when Nazis rampaged homes, businesses and synagogues on the night of Nov. 9-10, 1938.

More than 1,000 synagogues were destroyed, nearly 100 Jews were murdered and tens of thousands of Jewish men were deported to concentration camps. The government held Jews financially liable for the damages and confiscated insurance payments.

Dieter Graumann, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, will address some 200 members of the Conference of European Rabbis on Nov. 10, in a synagogue that escaped destruction and is now part of the Rabbinerseminar zu Berlin.

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Couple was high suicide risk, doctor says

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Holocaust survivors jumped to their deaths

Vladimir Fiser and Marika Ferber, the elderly Jewish couple who jumped to their deaths from an Etobicoke apartment building last week, had high risk factors for suicide, said Baycrest Health Sciences' chief of psychiatry.

"Those with physical illness, impaired functions, and have difficulty with their medications have a high risk factor," Dr. Robert Madan said.

He added that as Holocaust survivors, their risk was also higher.

A study done by University of Toronto and Baycrest, which appeared in the *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, in 2007, showed there is an increase rate of suicide and suicide attempts among the elderly who were exposed to the Holocaust.

Fiser, 89 and Ferber 84, who were married, were found at the base of their apartment building at 8 a.m. Oct. 29. Suicide notes were later found by police in the couple's 18th-floor apartment.

Born in Croatia, they were friends as youngsters, but were reportedly separated in 1941 when the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia.

Fiser's father and many of his family members were killed during the war, and he fled to Italy, where he was a war refugee until the Germans invaded in 1943.

Continued on page 27

Vayetzei
Candlelighting: 4:42
Havdalah: 5:44
Greater Toronto Area

250-year-old Torah scroll to be restored

Please see page 11

Women of the Wall hold large prayer service at Kotel — see page 33

CANADA

Body Found

TORONTO — Police believe they found the body of a Jewish senior from Uruguay who was reported missing by her family last week. Police said her body was found around 1 p.m. Oct. 30 on a river bank near a reservoir and that she may have fallen into a valley-like area. Edith Gus Peltinovich, 72, was last seen Oct. 28 walking toward G. Ross Lord Park in the northwest corner of the city, which contains a large water reservoir. Gus had been in Canada since early October visiting family who live near the park. She spoke only Spanish and Yiddish. The search for her involved officers on foot and horseback, as well as the marine unit and a helicopter.

Speakers Banned

MONTREAL — Le Mood, a Federation CJA-funded project that brands itself as an alternative Jewish community event for diverse voices, disinvited two controversial scheduled speakers less than two weeks before its third annual conference. Aaron Lakoff, a Jewish anti-Zionist activist, and fellow journalist Sarah Woolf say they were told by festival director Mike Savatovsky on Oct. 22 that Le Mood had cancelled the two panels they were to give at the Nov. 3 event. Le Mood issued an Oct. 30 statement that it's open to criticism of the government of Israel, but does not have "an obligation to provide a platform to people actively engaged in delegitimizing the State of Israel." Woolf was to moderate a panel discussion featuring Lakoff and two other speakers on radicalism among Montreal Jews and the role Jewish radicals play there today. Woolf was to host a second panel on a tour she's preparing on historic sites in Montreal's old garment district and the experience of Jewish workers in that industry in the early 20th century

CJN Columnist Among Kotel Dissenters

MONTREAL — Norma Joseph is among 20 Women of the Wall members and others – and the sole Canadian – who have told Israeli Minister of Religion Naftali Bennett that they won't stop praying at the main area of the Kotel.

Norma Joseph

Joseph, a Concordia University religion professor, *CJN* columnist and wife of an Orthodox rabbi, is among the signatories of an Oct. 30 letter telling the Israeli government they reject their own group's compromise to allow women to pray at an alternative site near the Western Wall, apart from where men daven.

The letter was prompted by a split in the 25-year-old group after its leader Anat Hoffman's decision to abandon the longtime goal of women praying together at the Kotel itself in exchange for partial control over a new egalitarian prayer area at Robinson's Arch. The decision was supported by the Women of the Wall's board.

Joseph is a longtime Women of the Wall member.

The dissidents say Robinson's Arch "is not now and has never been the Kotel" and that they will continue to pray at the Kotel on Rosh Chodesh and "other times."

"The government proposes making structural changes at Robinson's Arch to create a site to which all whose prayer practice is not tolerated by those who now control the Kotel will be relegated, leaving the Kotel permanently and officially in the hands of a segment of Jewry that suffers the presence of other Jews only on its terms," they say. "Regrettably, the Israeli government is yielding to intimidation, threats and violence as the basis for policy making, rather than upholding the equality of rights of all citizens in public space that is enshrined in Israel's Declaration of Independence."

The other signatories come from Israel and the United States, as well as one from Australia.

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Thornhill park renamed for Holocaust survivor

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Felix Opatowski says he feels like "a million dollars" after learning that a Thornhill park has been renamed in his honour.

A Holocaust survivor who lived in the Lodz Ghetto and was imprisoned at Auschwitz-Birkenau, he said that "now that I have so much land, maybe I'll put up a condo."

He might joke about the fact that the city of Markham is renaming Tamarack Park East, located off Tamarack Drive in the Willowbrook Road area, "but truly, I am overcome. When I found out, I had tears in my eyes.

"Maybe now, people will think about the Holocaust, and in 500 years, they'll remember my name."

Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti publicly announced the renaming of the park at Shaar Shalom Synagogue's Shabbat service on Oct. 26. At the same time, Scarpitti talked about his recent visit to the site of the Dachau concentration camp in Germany.

For more Holocaust-related stories, please see pages 7, 11, 15, 16

Opatowski, who attended the service with his wife, Regina, said that he was "so impressed with the mayor's speech, that when I closed my eyes, I was sure I was listening to a Jew."

The mayor said that the seeds for renaming the park began with Howard Shore, a Thornhill-Markham city councillor, who worked on the plan to rename a Thornhill-area park to honour and recognize a Holocaust survivor, not only for his individual experience, "but as a testament to all [those who survived] and those who did not."

Opatowski was recognized by Markham city council at its International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration last January.

Felix Opatowski

At age 15, Opatowski smuggled goods out of the Lodz Ghetto in exchange for food for his starving family, and later, he was a runner for the Polish Underground inside Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Since moving to Canada, he has spoken to thousands of students across the country about the Holocaust, and he's the author of his personal story, *Gateway to Hell*.

Shore, who is "excited and proud" about the name change, said that naming a park after a survivor is a wonderful way to pay tribute to someone who lived through the most horrific genocide in modern history.

"Although painful memories haunt them, many of the survivors are brave enough to speak about their experiences time and time again, so that others can learn about the importance of tolerance and the acceptance of diversity," Shore said.

He said he's also planning to have a monument erected in the park to pay tribute to survivors and those who perished in the Holocaust.

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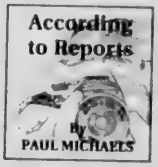
Optimists, pessimists differ on Israel's strategic situation

With the Middle East wracked by upheaval and uncertainty, it's been fascinating to see competing analyses in the media and in policy circles of Israel's current strategic situation.

On what we might call the "optimists' side" are pieces such as Roger Cohen's October 18 *New York Times* column: "It is possible to imagine a scenario more favourable to Israel than the current one, but it is not easy.



"Syria is giving up its chemical weapons. In the civil war there, Hezbollah and Iran are bleeding. The Egyptian army has ousted the Muslim Brotherhood, restored a trusted interlocutor for Israel, and embarked on a squeeze of Hamas in Gaza. In Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the prime minister, has overstretched; the glow is off his aggressive stand for Palestine," Cohen writes.

In the Oct. 17 issue of *Foreign Policy*, Aaron David Miller also underscores how regional changes have improved Israel's overall strategic position at a time when the United States is withdrawing from its previous involvement in the region. "To be sure," he observes, "the threat from Islamic extremism has not gone away. But the notion that the Islamists and their Sunni or Shiite arcs are poised to take over the Middle East and require some new grand interventionist strategy is another example of threat inflation."

Like Cohen, Miller cites the decline of the Muslim Brotherhood and the isolation of Hamas, adding that, with respect to Syria, "[Hassan] Nasrallah and Hezbollah have been weakened by [Bashar] Assad's travail."

Consequently, Miller argues, "Israel's own situation has also improved dramatically. Indeed, three factors – Israel's formidable capacity; steadfast support from the United States, and stunning Arab incapacity – have created a situation where Israel is stronger and more secure than it's ever been."

Overall, Miller aims for perspective: "Iran's nuclear pretentions remain an acute challenge, and an unresolved Palestinian problem holds longer-term worries, too. But the notion that the Jewish state is a hapless victim, the Middle East's sitting duck, has been an illusion for some time now."

To take just one more example: Efraim Inbar, director of the Begin-Sadat Center For Strategic Studies (BESA), has recently written a 20-page monograph, "Time Is on Israel's Side," in which he concludes that the strength of Israel's democracy and high-tech economy, its multi-layered missile defence shield, and the weakness of Arab countries – including a steep decline in their military capability – leave Israel in a much more secure regional position than ever before. Inbar doesn't ignore Iran's nuclear threat and potential regional nuclear proliferation, but he believes that Israel has the capacity to handle these challenges.

However, on the "pessimists' side" is the view expressed, for instance, by Walter Russell Mead (in the Oct. 27 *American Interest*) that Israel cannot count on the Americans, especially, where Iran is concerned: "The Israelis worry most of all that the U.S. will accept a nuclear agreement [with Tehran] that leaves Iran closer to a bomb than the Israelis would like to see them, sacrificing Israeli security interests as understood in Jerusalem in order to keep the U.S. out of a war."

Other analysts also point to the threat to Israel of the 100,000-plus missiles in the hands of Iranian-backed Hezbollah and Hamas, and the growth of Iran's Shia crescent that's unmatched by the Sunni arc (Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia), which is disorganized and, though numerically superior, not nearly as focused as Shia forces. Then there's a growing Russian presence, inimical to Israel's interests, backing Iran and attempting to fill the breach left by the United States (as with Egypt).

Whereas Inbar argues that "the ascendance of a Shiite 'crescent'… makes Israel a potential ally of the moderate [Sunni] Arab states," others point out that this implicit alliance has only limited value to Israel. Turkey's continuing hostility to Israel is part of this weakness.

On balance, it's fair to say that this is a mixed picture for Israel's security, but one where predictions about even near-future outcomes are difficult to make with any confidence.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

BASEBALL CHAMPS: From left, catcher Ryan Belz, and pitchers Zachary Danilewitz and Gregory Greenberg are all smiles after the Laurier Golden Hawks captured their first-ever OUA Championship in baseball. The provincial win vaulted the Golden Hawks to the OUA/OCAA national championships in St. Catharines where they finished second, losing a pair of deciding games to the eventual winner, St. Clair College.

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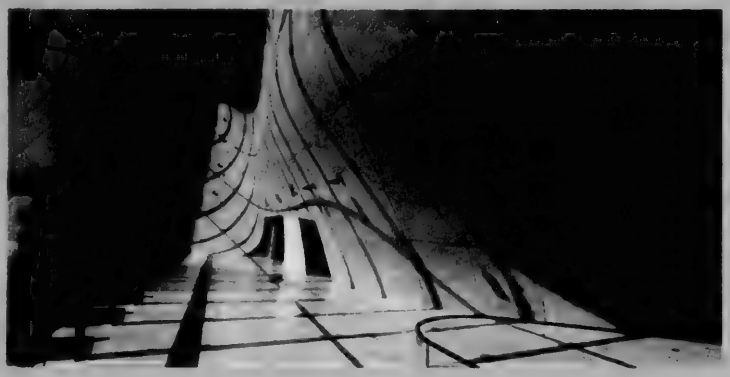

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The elephant in the Jewish room

Guest Editorial

The bad news spin on the Pew report on U.S. Jewry has been pervasive, the good news spin not as much. J.J. Goldberg of the *Forward* argues that in terms of numbers, the news is good. Predictions that the American Jewish population would dip below five million by now have not panned out. Instead, it has risen to 6.5 million.

But the intermarriage rate outside the Orthodox community hovers around 70 per cent. Factor in the Orthodox and the rate is holding at "only" 58 per cent.

The Orthodox dare not be smug at their relative good news. First, there is significant attrition within the Orthodox – low by comparison, but still significant. And the fact that 90 per cent of the Jewish population is not Orthodox should give them pause. Given the indicators, including earlier marriage and more children per family, the percentage who say they are Orthodox should be higher.

There is plenty of blame to throw around. If the product, Judaism, is good, why is the buy-in not reflective of the product?

This is a community issue. Everyone has a responsibility to make an impact, but no one person, or organization, can overcome this challenge alone.

The Pew report leaves an empty feeling. Why, with the gigantic efforts of so many, is there so much drop-off from Judaism? Is there an elephant in the room that has escaped scrutiny?

Here is one unpleasant possibility. Ours is a generation that prizes happiness and contentedness. A truly Jewish home should offer that very happiness-contentedness mix. Surely there are many such homes. But there are also far too many unhappy Jewish homes in which the children grow up in fear.

That fear is often the result of abuse, a serious but still under-reported reality in Jewish homes. The upshot of this abuse often is the resolve of the victims to reject their roots, and either leave the fold entirely, or stay in a perfunctory way, but loaded with cynicism and disdain.

How bad is the abuse situation in the Jewish community? As bad as it is outside the Jewish community, approximately 15 per cent, across all denominations. Making matters worse is that Jewish women tend to stay two to three times longer in the abusive relationship, seven to 13 years rather than three to five years. Add to the abuse another 15 per cent (best guess) growing up in dour, sour, unhappy environments, and we have an epidemic of unhappiness that adversely affects Jewish affirmation in elephant-like proportions.

So instead of railing against the murky picture in the Pew report, it is more appropriate, and helpful to launch an assault against abuse. No rabbi should go more than a few months without that issue being a major sermon. No one who is aware of abuse dare be silent. No Jewish school should look the other way when suspicion arises. And the community resources available to abuse victims must become a priority.

We do this not in order to bolster the statistics. We need to do this because it is the right thing to do. And usually, when the right thing is done, good things ensue.

Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka

Where is Israel's peace partner?

Regarding the fiasco in the Middle East, I am constantly reminded of the classic children's story, *The Emperor's New Clothes*. It is a perfect metaphor for how Israel handles itself and how the world responds accordingly. It is absolutely baffling to me that the charade continues and that Israel and the world pretend that Israel actually has a peace partner. Who are we kidding?

The story that I allude to is all about pretending – pretending that the emperor is actually wearing outstanding royal robes when in fact he is wearing nothing at all. The swindler tailors have told the king's subjects that anyone who sees otherwise is merely stupid and incompetent. Finally, a child speaks the truth and the bubble bursts. The charade is over.

Why do our Israeli leaders pretend that we actually have someone to negotiate with, someone whose interests are the same as ours? Thus the myth, the metaphor and the insanity continue. When will this nonsense end, and who will finally have the guts to speak the truth? Anyone?

Eileen Shapero
Thornhill, Ont.

• • •

Netanyahu's win wasn't surprising

Yair Lootsteen was "astonished" that in the May 1996 elections Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu defeated the "peace" candidate, and Rabin heir apparent, Shimon Peres, with over 60 per cent of the Jewish vote ("Remembering Rabin becomes less partisan," *The CJN*, Oct. 10).

Given that between Feb. 25 and March 4, 1996, four Palestinian suicide bombers murdered 60 Israelis and wounded another 284, it is surprising that Netanyahu did not do even better. It was these actions by Palestinian rejectionists that did more harm to the Oslo accords than the assassination of Yitzchak Rabin by Yigal Amir.

In 2000, then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak made a very generous offer that even Rabin would have balked at, and this was rewarded with the second intifadah, costing another 1,000 Israeli lives, so it is naïve to think if Rabin had not been assassinated the Middle East would look that much different today.

Ezra Franken
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Supervision doesn't make it kosher

It may surprise readers that not every Israeli winery is considered kosher, especially many of the smaller vineyards, even when following kashrut standards ("Vineyards revive ancient Negev wine route," *The CJN*, Oct. 24). One reason for this is the cost (financial and political) of supervision by the Chief Rabbinate Council of Israel.

In Israel, only the rabbinate can declare something kosher. Rujum, one of the wineries in the article, is trying a new path. They now work with the Masorti Movement (the Conservative Movement in Israel) for their supervision. The supervision, while overseeing the process, cannot legally declare the wine "kosher." Instead, the labels say "kosher of trust."

While some will say the supervision is all that matters in the end, it is important to realize that neither the rabbinate nor other supervising organizations make something kosher. It is an observance of the laws and processes that make something kosher. The label and hechsher are simply modern innovations that make buying and selling easier. Just ask the thousands of kashrut-observant households about their kitchens. None are under supervision. All are kosher by trust.

Rabbi Jennifer Gorman
Toronto

• • •

We must not glorify assimilation.

According to the article "Skating legend hid her Jewish past" (*The CJN*, Oct. 24), Ellen Burka not only hid her Jewishness, but gave it up, raising her family as Christians.

Did Ellen Burka ever return to being Jewish?

If not, I have trouble understanding why she would be inducted into the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and why *The CJN* would place her life story on the its front page.

She may be a wonderful person who led an exemplary life, but she is no longer Jewish. I do not judge her or her reasons for hiding her Jewishness, but six million people died defending their right to be Jewish. Surely we must have some heroes who are proud to be Jewish to write about.

Larry Swern
Toronto

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75th anniversary of Kristallnacht:

Remembering the cartoonists who spoke out

Rafael Medoff
JNS.org

"I could scarcely believe that such a thing could occur in a 20th-century civilization," U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared in the wake of the Nazis' Kristallnacht pogrom, which devastated the German Jewish community 75 years ago this month.

Most Americans, like their president, were appalled to read of Nazi stormtroopers burning down hundreds of synagogues, ransacking thousands of Jewish-owned businesses, murdering some 100 Jews, and hauling 30,000 more off to concentration camps on Nov. 9-10, 1938. In the days following the pogrom, three American editorial cartoonists would try to channel the public's sympathy for the victims into concrete steps to help German Jewry.

In response to Kristallnacht, Roosevelt recalled the U.S. ambassador from Germany for "consultations" and extended the visitors' visas of the approximately 12,000 German Jewish refugees who were then in the United States. But at the same time, the president announced that liberalization of America's tight immigration quotas was "not in contemplation."

In the wake of Kristallnacht, humanitarian-minded members of the U.S. Congress introduced legislation to aid German Jewry. The Wagner-Rogers bill proposed the admission of 20,000 German refugee children outside the quotas. Nativist and isolationist groups vociferously opposed the Wagner-Rogers bill.

Typical of the opposition's perspective was a remark by Roosevelt's cousin, Laura Delano Houghteling, who was the wife of the U.S. commissioner of immigration. She warned that "20,000 charming children would all too soon grow into 20,000 ugly adults."

An appeal to the president by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to support Wagner-Rogers fell on deaf ears, and an inquiry by a congresswoman as to the president's position was returned to his secretary marked "File No action FDR." Mindful of polls showing most Americans opposed more immigration, Roosevelt preferred to follow public opinion rather than lead it. Without his support, the Wagner-Rogers bill was buried in committee.

Ironically, when *Pets Magazine* the following year launched a campaign to have Americans take in pure-bred British puppies so they would not be harmed by German bombing raids, the magazine was flooded with several thousand offers of haven for the dogs.

Most American editorial cartoonists, like most Americans, exhibited little interest in the plight of Germany's Jews. But there were exceptions. A handful of cartoonists used their platforms not only to express sympathy for the refugees but also to call for practical steps to help them.

Six days after Kristallnacht, Paul Carmack, staff cartoonist for the *Christian Science Monitor*, drew a cartoon in response to the pogrom. ***[Images courtesy of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies]***

A *Christian Science Monitor* editorial cartoon, by J. Parker Robinson, responding to Kristallnacht.

Six days after Kristallnacht, Paul Carmack, staff cartoonist for the *Christian Science Monitor*, drew a cartoon titled "The Best Answer to Race Persecution." It showed a large hand, labelled "Humanity," handing a document titled "Assistance" to a crowd of Jewish refugees.

Five days later, the *Christian Science Monitor* published another editorial cartoon responding to Kristallnacht, this time by J. Parker Robinson. It showed a mass of people, labelled "Jews," marching past a sign pointing to "Exile," with a giant question mark looming over the horizon. He titled the cartoon "Wanted: A Christian Answer." The question was the fate of the Jews. The answer, the cartoonist insisted, was for Christians to accept their moral responsibility to help the downtrodden.

Meanwhile, in the pages of the *Chicago Daily News*, another cartoonist pleaded for help for Germany's Jews. Staff cartoonist Cecil Jensen drew a group of Jewish refugees on a large rock, surrounded by turbulent ocean waves. They can see, in the distance, a 17th-century-style ship, labelled "World Rescue Efforts." Whether or not the ship will save the refugees is unclear. Jensen titled the cartoon "Mayflower," invoking America's own powerful historical symbol of refugees from religious persecution reaching a safe haven.

In the pages of the *Chicago Daily News*, cartoonist Cecil Jensen pleaded for help for Germany's Jews.

Sadly, few Americans heeded the appeals of Carmack, Robinson, and Jensen, despite the horrors of Kristallnacht. When a "Mayflower" ship called the St. Louis approached America's shores just a few months later, Roosevelt turned it away.

Expressions of sympathy were not matched by deeds. There were no U.S. economic sanctions against Nazi Germany, no severing of diplomatic relations, no easing of immigration quotas.

The Roosevelt administration's muted reaction to Kristallnacht foreshadowed the terrible silence with which it would greet the Nazis' Final Solution.

Rafael Medoff is founding director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies. This article is adapted from his forthcoming book, Cartoonists Against the Holocaust, *co-authored with Craig Yoe.*

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Inspiring heroes with stories of heroes

Gil Troy in Montreal

I recently addressed a conference in Toronto of Jewish communal workers. Looking at the crowd of poverty workers, elder-care experts and educators, I felt moved. "You are heroes," I said. "You are our community's connectors, the glue bonding us, and living embodiments of our Jewish values."

My speech title was "Cultivating a Cult of Success." I'm no MBA, management consultant or even much of a manager. As an academic, I rarely manage or am managed. To me, the secret of success for Jewish community workers is remembering that they are mission driven. Their mission is fighting the good fight, doing good works, helping us all strengthen our Jewish identities by living up to our most cherished Jewish values.

"Whoever you are, whatever you believe, by doing what you do, you are doing holy work," I proclaimed.

I acknowledged, of course the frustrations and limitations, as in all jobs. The bad stuff in a job is what you get paid for. The good stuff – building community, saving community – you do happily, for free.

To illustrate my point, I shared the stories of three of my heroes, who stretched themselves and others to make the world a better place. I spoke of Daniel Patrick Moynihan, an aide to John Kennedy and then Lyndon Johnson, who was pilloried for writing a memo, called "the Moynihan Report" in 1965, which recognized that the problem of absentee fathers in black neighbourhoods was spreading poverty – and would get worse. Even though he offered an academic analysis, hoping to help African-Americans, he was accused of racism.

His bitterness at this false accusation was painful, but liberating. It freed him from following the conventional wisdom and emboldened him to do the right thing, regardless of the consequences. A decade later, in 1975, when he spearheaded the fight against the United Nations' "Zionism is racism" resolution, being far more "confrontational" than his boss, his colleagues, his allies and the *New York Times* wanted him to be, he did it because he knew the resolution was wrong. In denouncing the resolution so vociferously, he was also condemning the small-minded people who had distorted his words a decade before and feared truth and truth-seekers.

A second hero – a most unlikely choice for a group of Canadian social activists – was former U.S. president Ronald Reagan. I didn't address his politics or his diplomacy. I spoke about the fact that, having been born in February 1911, he was just short of 70 when he was inaugurated and 78 when he retired after two terms, making him America's oldest president.

Reagan used his sense of humour to compensate for whatever deficits he had. Forgetting the names of White House staffers from day to day, he joked about what fun it was to go to work: "You meet the nicest people every day – again and again and again." He also disarmed opponents by letting them underestimate him, joking, when asked about B-29s, which were fighter bombers, whether those were vitamins he needed to take.

Reagan confounded his opponents and surprised the doubters by not just surviving, but thriving in office. Brian Mulroney, his colleague as Canadian prime minister during Reagan's second term, said he tried to learn from the older Reagan about not being so thin-skinned, about being settled within oneself.

My final hero was Emanuel Ringelblum from the Warsaw Ghetto. A social worker, political activist and historian, he educated the world – and future generations – about what was occurring under Nazism by collecting thousands of documents depicting life in the ghetto. He then hid the documents in metal boxes and milk cans. Two of the caches were discovered. One remains missing. Ringelblum died in the ghetto. But his archives, including drawings showing Jews helping each other out during this nightmare, have taught us about the evils of Nazism, the wonders of Judaism and the power of the human spirit.

These three – an anti-poverty worker turned diplomat, an elderly president, and a farsighted educator and historian, teach us about the immortality of idealism and ideas. None of us may be as heroic as these three, or the people I was addressing. But we all should challenge ourselves to live by our values, to develop our Jewish identities, and to live large – not with big indulgences and spending sprees, but by having a sense of mission and helping to improve the world.

We, too, are aboriginal

Urban Writer Avrum Rosensweig

Chances are you don't know the following: over a 400-year period, our land's first people were marginalized until they were considered non-citizens, strangers, insignificant. This process was subtle and slow, but don't be fooled: the Europeans who arrived on our shores systematically and strategically made our First Nations people feel invisible, as insignificant as an ant on your desk.

Here's some background.

It would be easy to look back at the history of our Aboriginal Peoples and see a bunch of people scattered throughout the land, running wild and savagely warring with others and spending days sharpening their arrowheads. That's the "John Wayne myth," which is as nonsensical as the story of Jews, warped noses and all, sitting by the "gate," hands extended, collecting debts from Christians.

But like us, the Jewish People, Aboriginals in this land lived by a code of laws and had a sophisticated way of life. Elders passed on oral stories from one generation to the next. Native children learned that they were part of the entire creation, and they gave thanks to nature for their survival. We Jews call this process Torah *sheba'al peh* (oral Torah).

First Nations gave respect to all things in their environment, animate or otherwise. They did so through songs, dance, festivals and ceremonies – just like we do through ritual. According to an Aboriginal Affairs online history, "In the Woodland First Nations, for example, a hunter would talk or sing to a bear before it died, thanking the animal for providing the hunter and his family with much-needed food."

You might also read this: "The Haudenosaunee held six to eight festivals a year relating to the cultivation of the soil and ripening of fruits and berries. There was a seven-day festival to give thanks when corn was planted, for example, and another when it was green. A third festival was held when corn was harvested." This sounds very much like our Shalosh Regalim, the three major holidays we celebrate at key times in the agricultural calendar.

As the colonialists arrived in great numbers, they demanded more land from Aboriginal Peoples. By the 1830s, only small lots were made available to the First Nations in Upper Canada. Through this land grab, First Nations had less and less, and essentially became strangers on their former lands.

At the same time, Christians worked arduously to convert native peoples to their religion, as various denominations still do today with our people. The lives of our Aboriginal Peoples became more and more dismal due to starvation, disease and a clear plan to marginalize them within what we now call Canada. Their spirit was all but destroyed.

There is much more history to learn, clearly, and I advise you to go online and read as much as you can about the history of Canada's original peoples particularly the residential school years. The truth is beginning to emerge.

(As you study, you'll discover that the decimation of Aboriginal People's society, as I mentioned, happened over four centuries. The compelling point within this is that Native people today cannot remember what the "glory days" were like when they had control over their own land and culture. This is unlike our own people, who came out of the Holocaust with a clear memory of what had happened only a decade prior. I make this comparison, because I often hear from our own people, "Well, we put our lives back together after the Holocaust. Why can't First Nations?" The comparison is incomplete.)

There's a wave of interest within our community about our First Nations, Metis and Inuit brothers and sisters. Educate yourself. Learn about the Reform movement's recent resolution in support of First Nations and Ve'ahavta's health-promotion program in the Kenora region of Ontario. Become part of this movement.

We, too, are Aboriginal people in the Land of Israel, and we understand that sort of struggle. We were also victims of anti-Semitism right here in Canada. Let's use all of that knowledge and experience, as well as the beauty we share between our cultures, to create a strong bond with First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

There is much to learn. There is much to share. It is time.

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

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Holocaust Education Week Events at Congregation Habonim

5 Glen Park Avenue

Sunday, November 10 2:00pm

Canadian Premiere of
The Trial of Adolf Eichmann

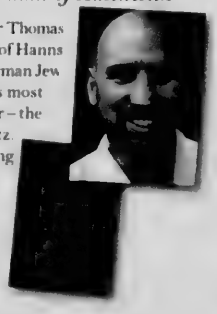
This absorbing, comprehensive new documentary features detailed accounts of Eichmann's capture, the drama in the courtroom and behind the scenes, and reactions to the trial from around the world.

"Marvelous footage... the film gives audiences a chance to be at the trial... A fascinating assemblage of interviews, footage and analysis."
– *Jewish Daily Forward* (Jan 4, 2013)

Sunday, November 17 8:00pm

An Evening with Thomas Harding, Author of *Hanns and Rudolf: The True Story of the German Jew who Caught the Kommandant of Auschwitz*

Join us to hear from author Thomas Harding, grand-nephew of Hanns Alexander, the young German Jew who captured the world's most notorious mass murderer – the Kommandant of Auschwitz. There will be a book signing after the event



"A Gripping Thriller"
–John Le Carre

The above film and lecture are part of the 33rd Holocaust Education Week. Programming co-sponsored by Congregation Habonim, March of the Living Canada and the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

HABONIM March of the Living CANADA Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Israeli hospital gets first-ever Arab donation

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Meir Medical Centre in Kfar Saba, Israel, has been around for 57 years. With around 800 beds and leading departments in cardiology and orthopedics, it serves a population of close to one million. It boasts top-flight research, is a teaching hospital and features exchange programs with hospitals around the world, including three in Toronto.

But recently, it broke new ground in a rather unexpected sphere. For the first time in its history, it received a substantial donation from a consortium of Arab-Israeli citizens. Twenty Arab donors got together to give the Meir Medical Center a gift of 300,000 shekels ($89,000).

"It was the first time Arab Israelis donated to any Israeli hospital," according to Arie Fishbein, CEO of Friends of the Meir Medical Center.

Fishbein, who has been charged with handling external relations for the hospital, was in Toronto last week to meet with Canadian Friends of the Meir Medical Center.

The hospital is known not only for its diverse population that it serves, but for its equally diverse staff. "We have an Arab doctor who organized 20 Arabs together to donate to Meir," he said.

The Meir Medical Center is the fourth-largest hospital in Israel, and from its location north of Tel Aviv, "it takes care of one million people in the region," Fishbein said. There are many Arab villages and communities in the area it serves.

It was that kind of inclusive and integrated medical facility that led one Canadian to donate more than $1 million to the hospital last year, said Arie Raif, vice-chair and CEO of the Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Center.

Arie Fishbein, left, and Arie Raif [Paul Lungen photo]

Altogether, in the four years he's headed the hospital's local support group, Canadians have contributed more than $2.5 million to it. The bulk of the funds have gone to the children's facility and the cardiology unit, where Canadian funds were used to acquire new equipment.

One of Raif's primary tasks is to raise Meir's profile in Canada, particularly among younger people. The Canadian support group now has "a few thousand" supporters. The main event on the organization's calendar is its annual gala in which the hospital's Medal of Merit is awarded to worthy recipients.

This year's event will take place April 6 and will see the Medal of Merit awarded to Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, Dr. Allan Abramovitch, a urologist at Scarborough Hospital and Jacqueline Abramovitch, a community activist, as well as Karen Mock, a human rights activist, and David Mock, a professor and former dean of the faculty of dentistry at the University of Toronto.

Raif is eager to foster professional relationships between Canadian and Israeli medical practitioners. An exchange program is already in place with Mount Sinai Hospital, with doctors of each centre working in the other's intensive care units, while the Hospital for Sick Children and Meir are conducting joint research, as are Sunnybrook Health Science Centre and the Meir hospital.

During his visit to Toronto, Fishbein was introduced to members of the Canadian Friends' board. It was his first trip abroad on behalf of the hospital, indicating the high regard the centre has for its Canadian supporters, he said.

Fishbein has been on the job only a few weeks. He was recruited to the position from Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), where he worked as a project manager. Before that, he had served for 28 years in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), mostly in air defence. When he left the IDF, he was a brigadier general in charge of the Air Force's anti-aircraft disposition and ground defence. He had 15,000 soldiers under his command. Earlier, he headed the IDF's delegation to the United States when it acquired the Patriot missile defence system.

It turns out, he's not the first ex-soldier to parlay his military knowledge into a job at Meir. One of the hospital's professors of medicine is a former F-16 fighter pilot. The doctor/warrior developed a simulator – similar to one used to train pilots – to teach other doctors how to diagnose patients so they "do not crash," Fishbein said.

From his vantage point at the intersection of the health and military professions and his intimate knowledge of the country's defence profile, Fishbein is confident the country can meet any challenges hurled at it – at least in terms of missiles and rockets.

Israel will soon be protected by a triple ring consisting of the Iron Dome, David's Sling and the Arrow. In a few years, perhaps as soon as five, the country will add a laser weapon system to shoot down incoming rockets.

"From day to day, we're becoming safer and safer," he added.

BOOK WORMS: Senior kindergarten students at the Toronto Heschel School, Liora Kligerman, left, and Bracha Gordon, discover interesting reads during their visit to the school book fair.

Temple restores its three Torahs

Rabbi Micah Streiffer, left, and Neil Yerman *(Joseph Sharivker photo)*

One 250-year-old Czech scroll survived the Holocaust

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Temple Kol Ami, one of Greater Toronto's fastest-growing congregations, is embarking on a year-long project to restore its three Torah scrolls, including a 250-year-old Czech scroll that survived the Holocaust.

Rabbi Micah Streiffer, spiritual leader of the Reform synagogue in Thornhill, Ont., asked for renowned American Torah scribe, or sofer, Neil Yerman to restore the scrolls.

"We contacted Mr. Yerman because of his particular approach, which is both a torah restoration and a teaching approach," Rabbi Streiffer says.

Yerman was at Temple Kol Ami on Oct. 26 teaching families about which materials make a living Torah and examining the scrolls with them.

"It's something I call the 'Torah Detective Training Academy,'" Yerman told *The CJN*.

"We look for clues in the Torah. We want to find out something about where the Torah was from or how old the Torah might be, or something about the culture of the people [from where the scroll was written]."

Yerman, who is based in New York, will return to the synagogue two more times during the restoration process.

At one session this coming spring, he says he will ask congregants to clean parts of the scrolls and then hold a quill with him to fill in broken letters. This act fulfills an important Jewish commandment.

Members of the congregation and others in the community are encouraged to donate $72 or more to write a letter in any of the three Torahs.

"This type of programming brings the Torah... to a place that is very close to us – within our hearts, within the very essence of who we are," Yerman says.

"We bring that Torah home in a very real way by coming into physical contact with it and taking direct responsibility to bringing life back to it."

The temple hopes to have it finished by the next High Holidays, Rabbi Streiffer says. The project will likely cost around $40,000.

Temple Kol Ami's Czech Torah is one of more than 1,500 rescued from the Holocaust that have been distributed around the world.

"We see it as part of our obligation to that community to have their Torah scroll continue to be part of Jewish life today," Rabbi Streiffer says. "We see ourselves as carrying on the work and the life of a Jewish community that was destroyed during the Holocaust."

Yerman doesn't just restore Torahs. He has written several new scrolls as well, including for nearby Temple Har Zion in October 2012. He has worked in scribal art since 1987, which also includes calligraphic work and illuminating scrolls.

"My love of drawing and my love of letters started at a very, very young age," Yerman says. "I loved penmanship. That has never gone away. I love writing and I love letter form of many languages."

Temple Kol Ami is located in the Leo Baeck Day School and has 165 member families.

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New film examines Israel's first leaders

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Yehuda Avner, the best-selling author of personal memoirs that detail his service to four former Israeli prime ministers, was in Toronto last week for the Canadian premier of the documentary based on his book.

The Prime Ministers: The Pioneers, the latest production of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Academy Award-winning film division Moriah Films, provides viewers with a behind-the-scenes look into how Israel's pioneers shaped the Jewish State into the country it is today.

Avi Benlolo, right, and Yehuda Avner

Written and produced by Richard Trank and Simon Wiesenthal Center founder and Academy Award-winning film producer Rabbi Marvin Hier, part one of the two-part documentary features interviews with Avner, who moved from Britain to Israel in 1947 and served for decades as a key adviser, ambassador and English speechwriter to Israeli prime ministers Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin and Menachem Begin.

A seemingly bottomless pit of compelling, detailed anecdotes about some of Israel's greatest leaders, Avner, who spoke briefly before the screening at the Eglinton Grande in Toronto, said, "I can tell you that all of them, all the prime ministers... as Jews, they loved peace, but they loved freedom more."

After joining the Israeli Foreign Ministry in 1958, "he was privy to the most crucial decision-making moments, such as Operation Entebbe and the signing of the Israel-Egypt peace treaty," said David Cynamon, co-chair and sponsor of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal for Holocaust Studies event.

"It is fortunate for us that he kept meticulous notes to share a remarkable account of pivotal moments in Israel's history," Cynamon added.

In addition to providing insight into the ways Israel's leaders navigated through crisis after crisis, Avner also shed light on the relationships they developed with American leaders, including U.S. presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon, and former U.S. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger.

His 731-page book was a product of short-hand notes made during secret government meetings involving the four prime ministers that he stashed away in a drawer until he began writing his memoir in 2005, at the age of 76. It wasn't until 2010 that he completed his manuscript.

Avner said the purpose of writing the memoir "was not simply to write the history, but to bring history back to life. To bring [to life] the episodes and the personalities and how they behaved in certain situations... in Israel's first testing, challenging days, days fraught with peril."

Although the film didn't offer a lot of new information about Israel's history, it did give viewers a glimpse into the personalities and the strengths and weaknesses of each of the prime ministers he served. Avner described Eshkol, voiced by actor Leonard Nimoy, as the "most affable man, utterly accessible," and as a man who "loved Yiddishisms."

Voiced by Michael Douglas, Rabin, who served as ambassador to the United States from 1968 to 1974, was described by Avner as "painfully shy," with a "mind so analytical, so structured."

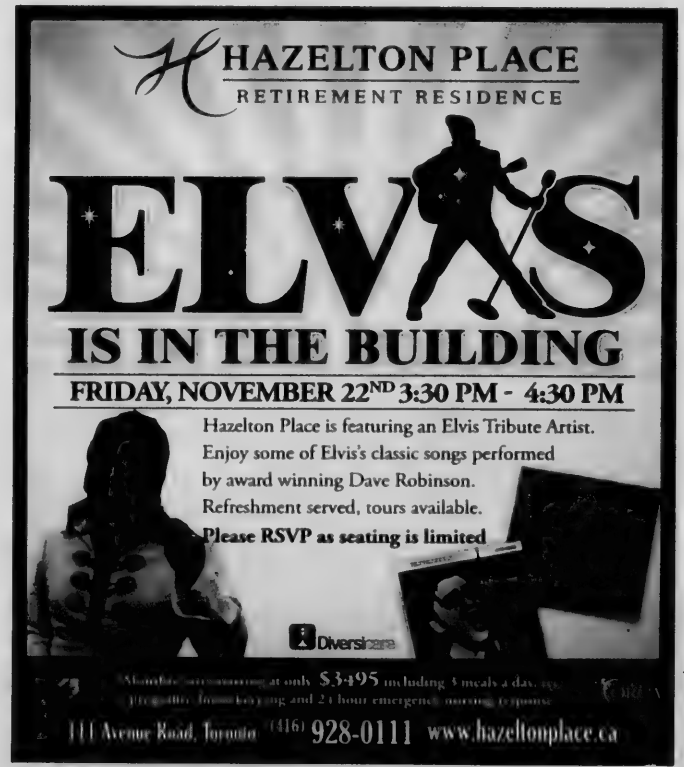
Avner described Meir, voiced by Sandra Bullock, as a woman who "exuded warmth" and was a "classic Jewish grandmother who kept an eye on you," but also as an orator who would become "the face of Israel."

"She proved herself time and again as a person who could bite the bullet... She would not negotiate with terrorists... She believed that if you negotiated with terrorists, there would be no end to it," Avner recalled.

The film also chronicled some of the most pivotal moments in the young country's history, including the Six Day War and the capture of the Old City; Eshkol's sudden death and Meir's succession as prime minister, and the military intelligence blunder that resulted in the surprise attack by Egypt and Syria on Israel in 1973.

The film ends with Meir's resignation in 1974, but Avner insists that for a woman with no war experience who suddenly found herself as a war commander, "if you look at the way the war began and the way it ended... Golda looms large in the pantheon of Israel's great prime ministers."

Part two of the documentary, *The Soldiers and Peacemakers*, which will highlight the years during which Rabin and Begin were in power, is scheduled to be released next spring.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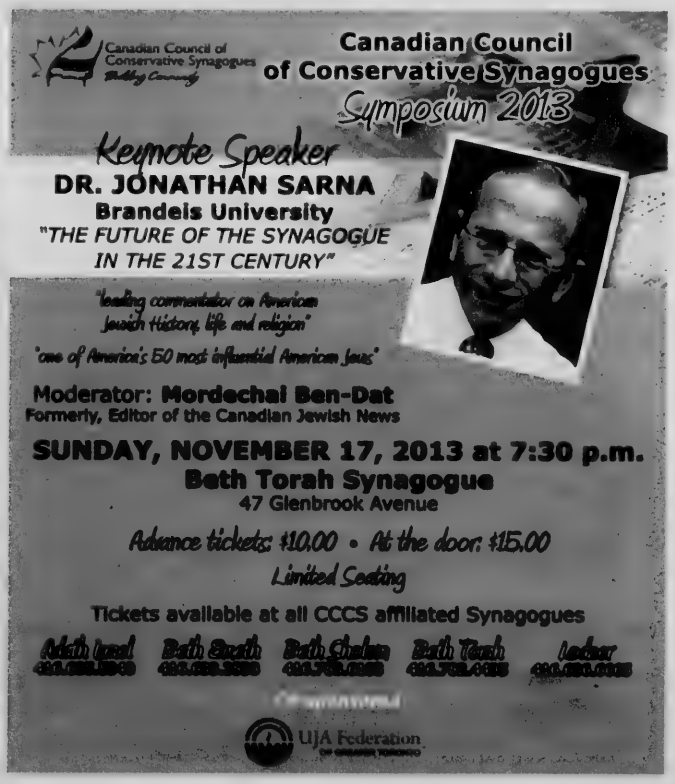
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W. Brett Wilson
Opening Keynote

Seymour Schulich
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Ken Tanenbaum
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Eric Berke, Managing Partner, Torquest Partners
Laurence Bernstein, Managing Partner, Protean Strategies
Paul Braun, Managing Director, CanFirst Capital Management
Rick Chad, President, Chad Management Group
Carey Diamond, President & CEO, Whitecastle Investments
Stephen Diamond, President & CEO, DiamondCorp
Cyril Drabinsky, President and CEO, Deluxe Entertainment Services Group Inc.
Patti Fakas, President & CEO Barter Network Ltd.
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11:00 am / Vivian Felsen - Montreal of Yesterday (adults)
2:00 pm / Tova Raz - "One More Generation" (adults)
3:00 pm / Aubrey Davis - A Hen Espr ittty Pippik (kids and families)
• Monday, Nov 11 - 6:30 pm / Storytelling in English with Mariana Rakitovsky
• Tuesday, Nov 12 - 6:30 pm / Storytelling in Hebrew with Merav Cohen
• Wed., Nov 13 - 6:30 pm / Storytelling in Russian with Mariana Rakitovsky
• Thursday, Nov 14 - 7:00 pm / Tova Raz - "One More Generation" (adults)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17
10:00 am - 12:00 pm / Storytelling with PJ Library (kids and families)
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3:00 pm / Judie Oron - City of the Giraffe (adults)

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Shul offers dementia care program

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Holy Blossom Temple will once again offer its Living With Dementia program, geared to family members caring for loved ones suffering with dementia.

Set to start in March, Living with Dementia is a satellite program run in partnership with the Reitman Centre for Alzheimer's support and training program at Mount Sinai Hospital, where the methods were developed.

Gerri Richman, who co-leads the 10-week program with Sandy Atlin, said it began in 2011 after Atlin, a retired adult educator whose husband has Alzheimer's disease, approached then-spiritual leader Rabbi John Moscowitz and told him that due to the synagogue's aging population, it would be helpful to bring in a support program.

Sandy Atlin, left, and Gerri Richman

Atlin said there's a strong need for such a program to be available and accessible in our community.

The program, which is free, consists of support, education, and coping and communication skills development for caregivers, as well as an arts-based program for loved ones with dementia.

Professionals, trained by the Reitman Centre, volunteer their time to teach and facilitate the program.

Richman, a life transitions coach, said that "while there are some supports offered through various associations, there is still not enough practical coping skills development available to family members who face the shocking transition from spouse or child to caregiver.

"Most family members are ill-equipped to handle the complete shift in relationship and role. This change requires the support of others and should not be faced alone."

A recent participant in the program said it gave her an opportunity to think, question and challenge herself in the daily handling of many issues which have been suddenly thrust upon her.

"You really made us question many of our automatic responses with thoughtful and better methods. You allowed us to change and observe the change in others," she said.

"The group has slowly coalesced into a wonderful support group where sharing information, resources and friendship have become so helpful in navigating the health-care system on a daily basis."

For information on the program, call Elana Fehler, 416-789-3291, ext. 221.

Kristallnacht horrors to be recalled at gala

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

The Canadian German Chamber of Industry and Commerce apologized last week to anyone who was offended by its choice to hold a gala dinner on Nov. 9, the anniversary of Kristallnacht, but said it will commemorate the Nazi pogrom at the event.

B'nai Brith Canada had issued a statement Oct. 29 saying the choice of date was in "bad taste."

"The sanctity of the anniversary coupled with the pledge never to forget the victims of the Holocaust should have been enough to dissuade the organizers from selecting Nov. 9," CEO Frank Dimant said.

However, the Canadian German group's president and CEO, Thomas Beck, said the date for the event, titled Night of a Thousand Stars, was chosen because it's the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

"The chamber's gala dinner will bring together the Canadian German business community and, therefore, offer an opportunity to recall both – the Holocaust as well as the relief about the end of the Cold War and the end of the Iron Curtain that separated Europe," Beck said.

Thomas Beck

He noted that prior to the event, German Consul General Walter Stechel will take part in a commemoration of Kristallnacht, known as the Night of Broken Glass, as part of Holocaust Education Week, and he'll address dinner guests about the anniversary and hold a moment of silence.

"We hope that in this way, by drawing the attention of our members and friends to the historic resonance of this day, we can do justice to its ambivalence and offer our respect to the victims of this greatest crime against humanity that started on Nov. 9, 1938," Beck said.

B'nai Brith spokesperson Sam Eskenasi said his group is satisfied with the response of the chamber of commerce to its concerns, adding that B'nai Brith would be happy to work with it in the future on these kinds of issues.

MITZVAH CORPS: Shaarei Tefillah Congregation's first annual Mitzvathon was a huge success. More than 50 kids and adults of all ages came out to make more than 240 care packages for Jewish families in need, through Tomchei Shabbos, and raised nearly $3,000 for charity. They also learned about the importance of getting involved in chesed projects for the community.

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Prof not surprised by new figures on Nazi repression

Number of camps higher than previously thought

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

The names are seared into the Jewish consciousness: Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Treblinka, Sobibor.

So are the names of Jewish ghettos set up across Nazi-occupied Europe. Many will also recall dozens of sub-camps, detention facilities, forced-labour sites and transit centres during the Holocaust.

But recent research shows that the extent of the Third Reich's apparatus for killing, imprisoning, dehumanizing and re-educating, not just Jews but gentiles, and even Germans themselves, was much vaster than previously believed.

Last March, the *New York Times*, in a story headlined "The Holocaust just got more shocking," reported on the results of research by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, which 13 years earlier, began cataloguing all the ghettos, slave-labour sites, concentration camps and killing factories that the Nazis had set up throughout Europe.

Seven decades after the fact, the results, to be contained in 12 encyclopedic volumes, showed there were some 42,500 Nazi camps and ghettos throughout Europe from 1933 to 1945. The figure staggered many Holocaust scholars.

"The numbers are so much higher than what we originally thought," said one. "Unbelievable."

The final bewildering list tabulated 30,000 slave-labour camps; 1,150 Jewish ghettos; 980 concentration camps; 1,000 prisoner-of-war camps; 500 brothels filled with sex slaves; and thousands of other camps used for police detention, euthanizing the elderly and infirm, performing forced abortions, "Germanizing" prisoners or transporting victims to killing centres. There were re-education camps for doctors, professors, lawyers, librarians, and even philosophers.

About the only Holocaust historian not shocked at the new figures was Robert Jan van Pelt of the University of Waterloo and the University of Toronto, who has conducted his own research, which closely parallels the results of the USHMM.

"The older number of 25,000 was a number that I knew quite well," van Pelt told *The CJN*. Asked if the new findings surprised him, he replied, "no, absolutely not."

One of the world's leading experts on Auschwitz, van Pelt is careful to point out that the first part of the title to his Nov. 5 talk for Holocaust Education Week – "The Holocaust Just Got More Shocking" – was not his idea, but that the second part – "The Camp as Form of Life in Nazi Germany" – was.

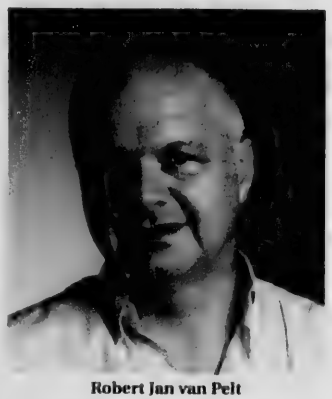
That's because his research reveals that camps which served either to punish or indoctrinate blanketed Germany even before World War II. They were considered a normal part of German life.

The proliferation of "betterment" camps in Germany in the mid-1930s "was a key element in the formation of a state and society that was willing to use internment, forced labour, concentration, and death camps as a common tool of politics," van Pelt's research has shown.

He believes that as many as 90 per cent of Germans who came of age during the Third Reich had some experience with being incarcerated for non-criminal offences.

"When people start talking about camps in Nazi Europe, what comes to mind are the concentration camps," van Pelt told *The CJN* in an interview prior to his talk at Shaar Shalom Synagogue. "In fact, the concentration camps are only a small part of this enormous phenomenon of German-controlled camps that covered the continent… these camps were everywhere, not only in 1944, but earlier."

Among the thousands of pre-war camps, van Pelt has been able to distinguish at least 44 different kinds in Germany alone. There were camps for "Aryans," for party functionaries, for the SS, "re-education" camps for lawyers, artists, physicians, civil servants and managers, for men and for women, and for the young and the very old. Pro-Nazi thinker Martin Heidegger even ran one for philosophers.



Robert Jan van Pelt

The idea was to Germanize and later, to Nazify. "Ideologically, they were dedicated to the idea of renewal and regeneration outside the confines of civil society," van Pelt noted.

In 1933, the Nazis quickly and effectively brought all of these initiatives under their control. By 1935, labour service camps for young men prior to military service were mandatory.

These were harsh places: hair was shorn, uniforms were mandatory and a tough physical regimen followed. There was little or no freedom.

Van Pelt sees a continuum between these early camps and the later Nazi death mills.

The camps helped create the "Nazi Man – the human being who was conditioned to be a bystander and ready to become a perpetrator. [They] created the human being who was willing to tolerate and even operate the other camps—the camps meant for 'The Other.' [They] created the preconditions for the Holocaust."

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SURVIVOR SPEAKS: As part of Holocaust Education Week, survivor Leslie Meisels spoke to middle school students from Netivot HaTorah Day School and Leo Baeck Day School about the atrocities he witnessed during his years in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. With Meisels are, back row from left, Shoshana, Batel, Kyra and Avivit, and front from left, Moriah, Maya, Ilana and Johanna.

A special monthly message for the Baycrest community

CommunityMatters

Celebrating our community's Precious Legacy

Neuberger Holocaust Education Week is always an important time of reflection at Baycrest Health Sciences—not only because of the significance of remembrance, but because our Holocaust programs provide support for the largest cohort of survivors in Canada.

This year, as part of our commemoration of Neuberger Holocaust Education Week, we are inviting our community to visit Baycrest for a special photographic exhibition called *Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life*. This unique exhibit showcases the striking black and white photography of Elliot Sylman, himself the child of a Holocaust survivor.

This poignant collection features portraits of 180 survivors drawn from our own residents and program participants at the Terraces of Baycrest, the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged, and our Café Europa program.

The title of this exhibit refers to the collection of Judaica from the Jewish Museum in Prague, which toured selections from the more than 200,000 objects, books, artistic artifacts and printed material collected by the Nazis from Jewish communities across Europe during the Second World War as anti-homage to Jewish life in what the Third Reich had intended as a "Museum of an Extinct Race."

What is unique about our exhibit is that it features not the symbols and objects of Jewish life, but the actual survivors who bravely brought themselves and their culture to a new life here in Toronto. Each of the photos is both moving and thought provoking, and presents an incredibly human reminder of the importance of remembrance and keeping survivors' legacies alive for generations to come.

To be sure, artifacts are also an important cultural reminder of our Jewish roots, and we are proud to complement our new photo exhibit with free access to The Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum. Our museum is a place for people of all ages to discover and enjoy the history and beauty of Judaic heritage.

In addition, Baycrest offers a range of programs and support for survivors and their families including drop-in programs, specialized services for child survivors and second-generation support groups. We also produce a series of unique publications focused on care giving for survivors.

It's important to know that these types of cultural, educational and support programs are fully funded by grants and the generosity of our donors—they are not paid for from our provincial operating funds. Yet they remain an intrinsic part of what makes Baycrest such a special place for our residents, clients and our community.

Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life is generously co-sponsored by Marilyn and Stephen Sinclair and the WordCheck Translation team in honour of Honey and Barry Sherman for their outstanding leadership and commitment to Holocaust education.

The photos will be on display until Jewish Heritage Month next May, and are free for the community to view inside our Bathurst Street entrance. The entire collection of photographs can also be accessed on our website, along with supporting curatorial information and artistic statements, at **baycrest.org/preciouslegacy**.

I invite you to take part in our commemoration of Neuberger Holocaust Education Week, and I welcome your feedback at **community@baycrest.org**.

Baycrest
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Tube

Milstein links donors with 'worthwhile projects'

JNF Canada gets new shaliach

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The new shaliach for the Jewish National Fund of Canada, Yossi Milstein, said he's eager to build relationships with Canadian donors who want their contributions to benefit meaningful projects.

"My job is to liaise between Canadian donors and worthwhile projects in Israel and to make sure that the hard-earned money that people donate is put to good use," said the 60-year-old Milstein, who arrived in Toronto last month from Israel for a two-year term with JNF Canada.

Milstein is a second-generation emissary, born in Israel, but raised in a number of cities worldwide, as his father, Shraga Milstein, served as a Jewish Agency shaliach.

"I spent many years outside of Israel. I went to kindergarten in London," he said, adding that he also spent part of his teen years studying at Montreal's Herzliah High School.

Now, he's hoping to call on some of his high school buddies to help him get acquainted with Toronto's Jewish community.

"It takes time to get to know the people, and a place, and two years is a very short time for that... I have some high school friends who used to live in Montreal and now live in Toronto... I'm being helped to blend in quicker," he said.

Although working with JNF is new to Milstein, he has decades of experience in business, economics and fundraising.

In 1979, after obtaining a business degree from the New York Institute of Technology, Milstein returned to Israel, where he served the Tel Aviv municipality as an economist in the budget department, as a manager of the lands department, and as chief aide to the mayor.

"Because I knew well the mayor and the Tel Aviv Foundation – which collects money from all around the world for projects in Tel Aviv – [the Jewish Agency] asked me to help them in England."

In 1984, Milstein joined the Jewish Agency's aliyah department in London. That year, he also established and directed the London-based Tel Aviv Foundation, which he ran for 10 years.

Today, Milstein's focus is on raising funds and awareness about an organization that he believes has an "understated" image.

"JNF is the definition of Zionism today. People know about the blue box and planting trees, but they don't really know what JNF does. The have a budget of almost 1 billion shekels a year," he said.

"In the last few years, JNF took on a few more projects.

Yossi Milstein

One is water. You know that Israel has very serious water problems. What JNF is doing is funding, especially in the south, water reservoirs and clever ways of collecting water."

He explained that JNF has developed a new way to capture and make use of winter floodwaters from the Arava River to compensate for the water lost to the heat in the summer months.

He also talked about JNF's ambition to develop settlements in the Negev, by building on the local economy and the transportation infrastructure.

"Today, [JNF is] not just about planting trees. There is a very wide variety of projects that someone interested in donating to a project can find anything they desire. It's just a question of bridging the gap and matching the person to the project," Milstein said.

"I want to help donors and serve as their adviser to make sure their money goes to good use. A lot of the funds raised for Israel today, only a small portion reaches Israel... JNF prides itself on the fact that 100 per cent of the money goes to Israel."

READING BUDDIES

Grade 5 student Eden Moncik reads to her senior kindergarten buddies Isabel Silber, left, and Erin Satov during Robbins Hebrew Academy's recent school-wide buddy day.

Holocaust art at Kitchener gallery

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Christian Bernard Singer recalls the stories his great-grandmother used to tell her family about letters she would get from relatives in Europe before the war. The letters would ask their fortunate Canadian family member for help to get out. When war broke out, the letters got increasingly "panicky" as her European relatives would frantically ask for some kind of help.

But as a poor, Yiddish-speaking immigrant trying hard to make ends meet, there was little his great-grandmother, Yetta Kramer-Fromstein, could do, Singer recalled.

"Those were the stories I heard. My grandmother told me those stories and she was very upset."

The stories "hung around me for a while" and eventually served as inspiration for an exhibition of art on Holocaust themes that is currently running at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo, Ont., Singer said.

Titled *WAR: Light Within/After the Darkness*, the exhibit, previously reviewed in *The CJN*, features the work of seven artists who "poignantly evoke the realities faced by Jews and other innocent populations during the war," states a news release about the exhibition.

Singer, curator of the gallery, called on the artists to develop works that looked "at it from a place of resistance and survival. Where there is resistance and survival there is hope and beauty."

The contributing artists, four of them Jewish, were given quite a bit of latitude to create something appropriate based on the theme, he said.

Chari Cohen, a Toronto-based artist, "did a hanging forest of ceramic trees that are suspended" over parched earth through which seedlings are sprouting. It is meant to evoke the resistance of Jewish partisans and other fighters who hid in European forests.

Another display by Kingston-area artist Laura Donefer, features an installation of glass footprints, some cast from Holocaust survivors, that evokes the forced death marches "and the last traces that they existed," said Singer.

Other artists include Mary McKenzie, Oded and Pamela Ravek, Tina Poplawski, Claire Weissman-Wilks and Helene Brunet-Neumann. Some of the artists were inspired by their own family stories.

In his great-grandmother's telling, "eventually, the letters stopped coming."

They had originated in the town of Kosów (now Kosiv), which had been home to 4,000 Jews.

Singer later learned that between October 1941 and November 1942, the Nazis shot nearly all of the town's Jews, shoving them into mass graves. The rest were sent to concentration or extermination camps.

"As for the relatives, no one ever heard from them again."

The exhibit is on display until Jan. 5, 2014.

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Technion close to deal with Toronto hospitals

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Israel's Technion University and the University Health Network (UHN) in Toronto are close to finalizing an arrangement that would see "significant" collaboration in medical research.

When concluded, the agreement will see stem cell research initiated at the Haifa campus of Technion University and the engineering of the cells at Toronto labs, followed by clinical testing locally. The stem cells would target damaged heart muscles.

"The Technion and the UHN have been discussing a very significant long- term collaboration in the areas of stem cell research and its application to the cardiovascular area," said Boaz Golanyi, vice-president for external relations and resource development for Technion.

Golanyi was in Toronto last week as part of a larger visit to the university's support groups around the world.

"One of the purposes of my visit here is to solidify the meetings and lead them to completion," he said. "We are getting close to completion of the negotiations."

The UHN represents Toronto General Hospital, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Toronto Western Hospital and Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, which are affiliated with the University of Toronto.

In addition, the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre has been involved in the discussions.

"Each party brings to the table unique strengths," said Golanyi. "We believe [an agreement] will lead to tremendous synergy and hopefully will facilitate important breakthroughs in cardiovascular research and better ways to treat heart diseases, heart failure and the like."

Boaz Golanyi
(Paul Lungen photo)

Beyond the expectation of medical breakthroughs, Golanyi stressed the "potential for significant economic benefits for Canada and Israel," resulting from the development and commercialization of medical technologies.

Though Israel's oldest university – it was founded in 1912 – the Technion has been among the leaders in blazing new paths as "an entrepreneurial university." In addition to its focus on basic research, it actively seeks to commercialize its findings and it has played an important role as a source for innovation and training, helping make Israel a "start-up nation."

The Technion offers degrees in science and engineering, and related fields including architecture, medicine, industrial management and education. Three members of its faculty have received the Nobel Prize in the last few years, "an amazing number for such a small university," Golanyi said.

While the Canadian deal has yet to be finalized, an arrangement involving joint research has been adopted by the Technion and Cornell University. On Dec. 19, 2011, the two schools won a competition to establish a high-end applied science and engineering institution in New York City.

The Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute (TCII) has the potential to generate economic benefits to both parties, and could lead to the creation of very lucrative intellectual property, Golanyi said.

The Technion also recently "signed a major agreement with China that could lead to bigger projects than in the United States," he said.

Guangdong Province in China is investing $250 million (all figures US) into a facility that will see the Technion collaborate with Shantou University. Chinese billionaire philanthropist Li Ka-shing, who through his foundation, donated $130 million to Technion, is participating in the Chinese venture, which will see creation of the Technion Guandong Institute of Technology, said Golanyi.

This will mark "an important new bridge between Israel and China to further enhance the commercial and economic ties between the two countries.

"China is looking for everything and anything," including water treatment technology and renewable energy. "China is interested in everything that moves in Israel," he quipped.

During his visit to Toronto, Golanyi addressed a meeting of The Economic Club of Canada, which was attended by representatives of local universities. His address included a look at Israeli "entrepreneurial universities and their economic impact."

The Technion promotes applied research and it has incorporated mechanisms to encourage faculty, students and alumni to participate in startups. That creates value to the employees and shareholders of a company as well to the university, he said.

By participating in business ventures, the university generates income while reducing its dependence on government subsidies. Even more significant is the access to "partners' huge databases, which can be more important than the money itself," he added.

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Bronfman's art collection on auction

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

A large collection of Canadian decorative and fine art assembled by businessman and philanthropist Charles Bronfman in the 1980s and 1990s will go onto the auction block at Toronto-based Waddingtons.ca in a series of sales beginning Nov. 6.

The so-called Claridge Collection, which formerly adorned Bronfman's offices in Montreal, consists of some 900 contemporary works by 372 artists, including pieces by most of the recipients of the Saidye Bronfman Award, now part of the Governor General's Awards.

The assortment of works includes paintings, photography, sculptures, ceramics, glass and mixed media objets d'art. Assembled over a period of about 10 years by longtime Bronfman curator Franklin Silverstone, the pieces seem particularly rich in colour and whimsy.

"My mandate was to hand pick a fun, colourful and bright collection of the top Canadian artists, sculptors and crafts people, not based on who was popular at the time," Silverstone writes in the 214-page full-colour catalogue of the sale. An accompanying 154-page manual provides biographies of all participating artists.

Beginning in the 1980s, Charles Bronfman focused on acquiring new works by emerging artists across Canada. But now his son, Stephen Bronfman, has taken over Claridge and has decided to dismantle his father's collection to focus on building his own collection of Canadian emerging art.

Proceeds from the auction will benefit Historica Canada, a national charitable organization that promotes awareness of and pride in Canadian history, identity and citizenship.

Previews of the pieces begin Oct. 31 and continue until Nov. 5. The first two sales are slated for Nov. 6 – decorative arts at 1 p.m., fine arts at 7 p.m. A third sale is planned for 2014.

On a recent morning in Waddington's second-floor exhibition space above King Street East, Silverstone was asked to point out a few of his favourite works. He led this reporter from one piece to another like a bee going from flower to flower, offering a few words of praise about each. He highlighted an earthenware teapot by Greg Payce, raku pottery by Wayne Ngan and John Pickering, wood maquettes by Alan Wood, a self-portrait in clay by Victor Cicansky, and more.

All lots in the auction can be viewed online at Waddingtons.ca. The auction house is located at 275 King St. E., second floor.

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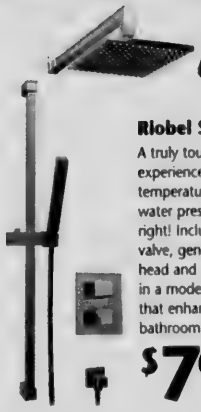

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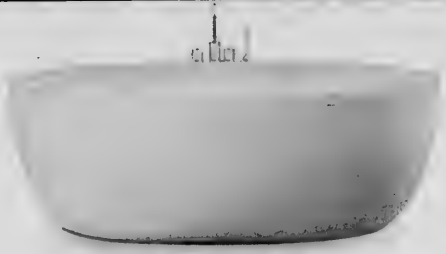

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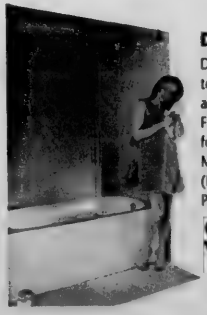

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Appeal for foster homes: help!

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

At present, within the Jewish community, there are many Jewish children who need stable, caring families to look after them until they can either return to their own families or begin to care for themselves. Within our community, there is an urgent need for foster families to care for deprived and troubled children.

The fostering of children who cannot live with their natural families is a moral and ethical duty whose basis in fact lies in biblical teaching and tradition. (See the book of Ester (2.7) and Midrash HaGadol (1:334-7).

The need for foster parents is such that Toronto's Jewish Family & Child Service and Montreal's Batshaw Youth & Family Centres have foster parent recruitment committees. These are composed of community representatives, board members and staff people, with a view to coordinating efforts to reach out to the Jewish community and promote the need for foster families. At times, these efforts are also coordinated with the other local children's aid societies whose needs are equally pressing.

Numbers of foster children at all-time high

At present, foster homes for children of all ages (infants to 16 years in Toronto, infants to 17 years in Montreal) are required but there is a particularly urgent need for foster parents interested in caring for children in their adolescence.

Generally, foster parents are asked to foster only one child, although as foster parents develop increased skill at fostering, some assume responsibility for two or three children. At times these children may be siblings, but they are just as likely to be unrelated.

Jewish Family and Child Service in Toronto has the highest number of children in care in its history. Similar conditions exist in Montreal. Rapidly changing economic and social conditions have contributed to significant changes in the fabric of the traditional family unit. Children in all strata of society, all cultures and communities have suffered as a result.

These changes will inevitably have long-term effects on the lives of children and it is doubtful that our present need for more foster parents to care for children of all ages — especially those in the mid-adolescent range — will diminish in the future. To allow both agencies to fulfill their mandates and commitment to service the needs of Jewish families in Toronto, York Region, and Montreal, Jewish families able and willing to assume a fostering role must come forward.

Help needed in both Toronto and Montreal

In Toronto JF&CS has 50 to 100 Jewish children in its care at any given time. They are individuals who:

- are at least 25 years old;
- are straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender;
- have a sustainable income;
- are renters or homeowners with enough room for a foster youth;
- are/are not currently parents;
- are able to pass a criminal background check;
- are Jewish or have a spouse/partner who is Jewish.

The Montreal Batshaw Youth and Family Centres have their own set of standards: contact them by phone (see below) or at http://bit.ly/HgjLyp.

Those interested in exploring opportunities for care are urged to contact Jewish Family & Child Service in Toronto (416-638-7800) with their questions (ask for Intake). In Montreal, contact the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres, Jewish foster care recruitment office, at (514) 989-1885 x 1139.

To our community's shame and embarrassment, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find Jewish families to accommodate these blessed children. Are we beginning to forget Who has guided us since Sinai? *"If I am not for myself, who is? And when I am for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?"* — Hillel (Pirkei Avot, Chapters of the Fathers, 1:14).

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzdegal.com*** *Visit www.freemychild.com, www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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Justice for victims of terrorism

Joe Oliver

Money is the lifeblood of terrorism. Terrorist organizations receive billions of dollars of support from states, organizations and individuals, yet those who supply this funding have rarely been successfully prosecuted.

That is about to change. The new Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (JVTA) is Canada's latest tool in its effort to confront terrorism and terror financing.

The JVTA allows victims of terrorism to hold perpetrators and supporters of terrorism responsible by allowing the seizure of their assets and thwarting their access to Canada's financial system through civil litigation in Canada. The objective is to cripple terrorist infrastructure and provide justice for victims. By standing up for the rights of victims in the global fight against terrorism, perpetrators and supporters of terrorism are held accountable for their actions.

Financiers and facilitators of terrorism, unlike their front-line suicide bomber cannon fodder, fear exposure. The risk of being named in a civil suit will deter funding from potential sponsors who rely on anonymity.

Civil lawsuits leave financiers vulnerable to massive lawsuits that can deplete their funds or freeze their assets. Without funding, terrorist groups will have trouble recruiting and training their members, purchasing weapons and launching attacks.

The JVTA arrests the flow of blood by obstructing the flow of money. It turns the malicious ideas of terrorism on their head by attempting to cut off the terror economy in order to save, rather than wreak havoc on, innocent lives.

And there is of course the moral dimension. Victims are compensated for their loss and perpetrators are held to account financially. We cannot pretend it is adequate in either case, but it at least goes in the right direction.

I am heartened to see this new chapter in our fight against terrorism and thank the many courageous people who worked so tirelessly for this significant achievement. The first result: a Canadian citizen, Sherri Wise, is suing Iran for damages as a result of injuries sustained in a 1997 Hamas suicide bombing attack. This is possible because the act lifts immunity for states listed by the government of Canada as supporters of terrorism.

Canada has always taken a leadership role on the world stage against those who support terrorism. We walk the walk in sanctions against Iran, in votes at the United Nations, in closing our embassy in Tehran, in listing the Iranian Revolutionary Guard as a banned terrorist entity and in our staunch defence of Israel's right to defend itself against international terrorism and those with hostile intent.

By allowing the victims of terror to sue state sponsors of terrorism, we have created a new avenue to disrupt the actions of terrorist organizations. This law has granted victims a basic legal tool to help them rebuild their lives and ensure that others do not share their fate.

We should all celebrate that Canadians are now able to fight back against their terrorist attackers.

Joe Oliver is the MP for the Toronto riding of Eglinton-Lawrence.

NA'AMAT BENEFIT: Na'amat Canada Toronto held a concert and variety show Oct. 27 at Beth Tikvah Synagogue to benefit 23 Na'amat extended daycare facilities in Israel. Four Na'amat chapters organized the evening: Aviva, Ilana, Simcha-Kadima and Ruach. Pictured are Orit Tobe, left, chair of Na'amat Canada, and international cabaret singer Aelita, who was one of 10 entertainers at the event.

Lac Mégantic Mayor Colette Roy-Laroche, second from right, welcomes Jewish community representatives Federation CJA CEO Deborah Corber, left, Victor Goldbloom and federation president Susan Laxer.

Montreal, Toronto give $100,000 to Lac Mégantic

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — The Jewish communities of Montreal and Toronto presented a cheque for $100,000 to Colette Roy-Laroche, mayor of Lac Mégantic, which continues to rebuild after a deadly train disaster in July.

The money was raised in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy through an emergency relief fund established by Federation CJA.

On Oct. 24, a busload of representatives from the Montreal community, headed by federation president Susan Laxer, travelled to the Eastern Townships to personally deliver the donation to the mayor, who has earned widespread admiration for her steadfastness in the town's recovery.

Among those making the trip were Irving Teitelbaum and Steve Gross, who owned Magasin Shier, a clothing store that was established by their late father-in-law in Lac Mégantic in 1940. This was the family's first store in a business that grew into a national chain encompassing Suzy Shier and La Senza.

Former employees were on hand to greet the delegation.

The relief fund collected $60,000 in Montreal and $40,000 from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

The money will go to the Fonds Avenier Lac Mégantic, a discretionary fund for various aspects of the town's rehabilitation.

"The mayor, and others who attended [the ceremony], were truly overwhelmed that the two Jewish communities care so much," Laxer said. "Funds from both communities were not an allocation of the two federations' existing annual campaigns, but rather the result of many individuals making donations online."

Victor Goldbloom, chair emeritus of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Quebec region, who was Quebec's municipal affairs minister in the 1970s, reminded the audience of the Jewish community's 250-year history in the province.

"We are with you," he said. "We wish you the best in the future. We congratulate you on your courage and appreciate the warm welcome we have received."

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downtown:
miles nadaljcc
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Chanukah Celebration • Sunday, Dec. 1 • 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
midtown: prossermanjcc
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Lights in the Air Community Celebration with Zero Gravity
Saturday, Nov. 30 • 4:30 pm - 9:00 pm (by preregistration)
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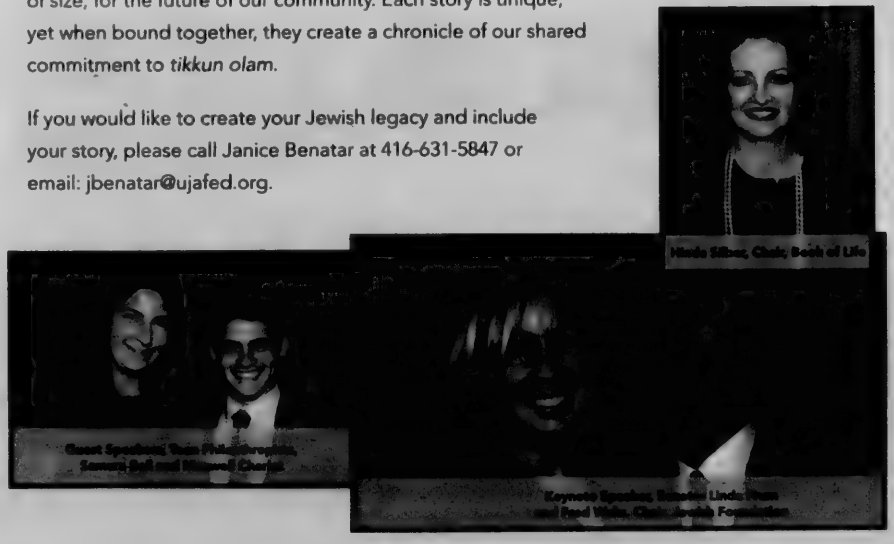

2013 BOOK OF LIFE

STORIES

Jennie Appleby

Dr. Jonathan Bishinsky

Erika and Ernie z"l Bloch

Basia z"l and Israel z"l Chaiton

The Honourable Charles z"l and Anne z"l Dubin

Eva Ferenci z"l

John Haas z"l

Alison Himel

Manny z"l and Eva z"l Kimel

Israel Mida

Terry Moranis z"l

Alan and Pamela Perlis
Herschel and Mami Perlis
Nathan Perlis and Jennifer Gold

Leslie Richmond

Helen z"l and Robert z"l Rosen

Lillian z"l and Pascal z"l Rothman

Helen Silverstein

Micki Moore Simpson and Leonard Simpson

Manuel and Phyllis Spivak

Shirley Goldberg Trim z"l

Fred Waks

Jonnie Appleby and Family

Tammy and Jerry Baltzky, signing for the story of John Hass z"l

Hartley Hershenhorn, signing for the story of Terry Morania z"l

Helen Silverstein and Faye Gitter

Billie Black and Family

Alison Himel

Hershel and Mimi Perlis; Nathan Perlis and Jennifer Gold (absent); Alan and Pamela Perlis

Leonard Simpson and Nikki Moore Simpson

Dr. Jonathan Bishinsky

Warren Kimel and Ben Kimel, signing for the story of Manny z"l and Eva z"l Kimel

Leslie and Darren Richmond and Family

Phyllis and Manny Splunk

Carl Shiff and Family, signing for the story of Beila z"l and Israel z"l Chaiton

Alan and Hinda Silber & Ros Rosen, signing for the story of Helen z"l and Robert z"l Rosen

Goldenberg-Trim Family

Israel Mida and Laura Walsh

Sandra Robinson & Stuart and Pamela Klein, signing for the story of [illegible] z"l and Anne z"l Dubin

Barbara and Allan Goldman, signing for the story of Lillian z"l and Paul z"l Goldman

Saul Wahn and Family

Photos courtesy of Rosemary Goldhar and Liora Kogen.

Roberts developed test to diagnose heart attacks

Ottawa cardiologist honoured by JNF

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Nearly 500 people paid tribute to Dr. Robert Roberts, president and CEO of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, at JNF Ottawa's 2013 Negev Dinner Oct. 29.

As a cardiologist, educator and scientist, Roberts has an international reputation. One of the founders of molecular cardiology, Roberts developed the MBCK test, the gold standard to diagnose heart attacks, and he discovered several genes responsible for heart disease, including the first gene for heart attacks.

"Part of the reason I am [being] honoured is because of my position at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute," Roberts said, "and I take the opportunity to thank the Jewish community for all that they have done for the Heart Institute, not just for your philanthropy, but so many of you have given of your time on our boards and committees. We are really appreciative of what the Jewish community has done for us."

From left, Alan Blostein, Bret Stephens, Lynda Taller-Wakter, Dr. Robert Roberts and Lawrence Weinstein at JNF Ottawa's Negev Dinner.

Bret Stephens, a foreign affairs columnist and deputy editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, was guest speaker at the event. In addition to his other, and varied, journalistic experience, Stephens was named editor-in-chief of the *Jerusalem Post* at the age of 28, and during his tenure there, he oversaw the paper's extensive redesign.

Referring to a small group of protesters holding placards outside the entrance to the Fairmont Chateau Laurier hotel where the event was being held, Stephens questioned their knowledge of the cause they were rallying behind. Of "these young protesters outside whose sincerity I don't question, but whose IQs I do," he asked, "Why is it they are protesting a country that has done more for the environment than perhaps any other country in the world?"

He added that "No country in the world has voluntarily relinquished more land for peace than the State of Israel," and he reminded the audience that in the Middle East, only Israel ensures women's rights and gay rights as well; that only Israel has a free press; that only in Israel will a president or prime minister who is accused of a crime be convicted and jailed.

"If you are going to call yourself a liberal and progressive and do so in good conscience, the only state in the region you should be supporting, the only state that espouses your values, is Israel," he said.

Funds raised at the event will go to the Yir'on Recycled Water Reservoir, a 40,000-cubic-metre reservoir that's used to irrigate fruit orchards in the Upper East Galilee. The reservoir provides a solution for an ecologically hazardous situation by recycling effluents instead of letting them flow untreated.

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Kosher slaughter not under Quebec scrutiny: CIJA

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Jewish community officials have been reassured that the Quebec government's declaration that it's looking into ritual slaughter has "absolutely nothing" to do with shchitah.

Jonathan Kalles, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs' associate director of government relations in Quebec, told *The CJN* that a "senior official in the agriculture ministry" informed him that the government's concern is solely with certain aspects of Muslim halal slaughter.

"He said it has absolutely nothing to do with kosher slaughter. To their knowledge, there never has been a problem with kosher slaughter," Kalles said.

On Oct. 25, radio station CJAD reported that Agriculture Minister François Gendron was considering tightening regulations concerning the production of halal and kosher meat. It aired a month-old quote from Gendron in which he expressed concern about the hygiene of such practices, as well as for animal welfare.

Kalles said the minister's comment was in response to numerous complaints following the Muslim holiday of Eid, which took place in August.

It seems that some halal butchers killed a large number of animals at that time or that people slaughtered animals at home and existing regulations may not have been followed, Kalles said. "In any event, I was told no change to the regulations is imminent... At most, the ministry will enforce existing regulations more properly," he added.

Flowers have been left at the base of the building where Vladimir Fiser and Marika Ferber lived. [Carolyn Blackman photo]

Couple was in love, but 'tired and in pain'

Continued from page 1

He was then smuggled to Switzerland by a sympathetic police officer and spent the remainder of the war there.

They each moved to Israel after the war and married someone else, and each lost a spouse to cancer. They then turned to each other and married.

Fiser eventually earned a master's degree in social work in Toronto, where he worked in a psychiatric hospital, and Ferber, whose wartime story is not known, was a ballerina and teacher.

In recent years, Fiser suffered from heart problems, and Ferber had chronic back and leg pain. She needed the assistance of a walker or wheelchair, and her husband took her daily for injections for pain relief.

One neighbour said that they were in love, but were "tired and in pain."

Madan said mental illness and depression is almost always a factor in later-stage suicide, "and it is important to screen for this. People almost always give warning signs.

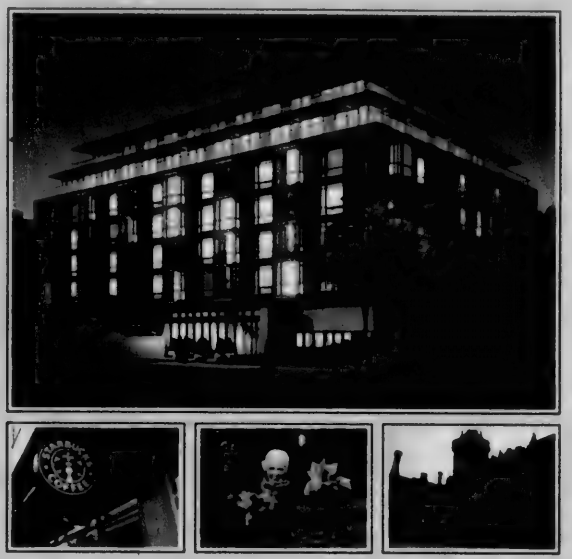
"People should not be afraid to ask if they think someone is at risk for suicide. It is a myth that asking someone about suicide plants an idea in their head. It is important to start a conversation."

There is lots of help available in the community, he said.

The Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health (www.ccsmh.ca) has put out a toolkit on suicide prevention and intervention, Madan said.

Richard Cummings, executive director of Jewish Family & Child, said that when he read the story of Fiser and Ferber, who were donors to JF & CS, he was "particularly saddened by the poignant love story.

"It is always sad to hear about desperation that leads to such an unfortunate ending. I am also saddened when I hear about families who were unable to reach out. At the same time, I am humbled that I do not know their story or their circumstances."



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Holocaust survivors launch their memoirs

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

When Marguerite Élias Quddus was five years old, she found out that she was Jewish, but her parents kept telling her not to tell anyone that she was a Jew. That same year, authorities arrested her father and she was forced to wear the yellow star. Élias Quddus understood quickly what that symbol would mean to her life.

Growing up in Paris during the start of World War II, Élias Quddus and her older sister learned to remain silent about their identity. During the Holocaust, the sisters went to live in convents around Europe and pretended to be Catholics. Both survived the war.

Years later, Élias Quddus turned that harrowing story of survival into a memoir. Her short novel, *In Hiding* (published in French as *Cachée*) was one of five Holocaust survivor memoirs that the Azrieli Foundation launched Sunday at the opening event for 2013's Holocaust Education Week (HEW).

"My thoughts turned to an idea in chassidic thought. They say the telling of a story can itself save the world," said Naomi Azrieli, chair and CEO of the Azrieli Foundation.

"When we celebrate survivor's stories, there is this terrible weight of knowing that there are millions of stories of millions of victims that have never been told. In the sharing of a story, you can save the memory of a person. In keeping a memory alive, you also prevent a kind of second death… the death of when a person or event is forgotten."

The memoirs are a part of the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs program. This organization has published 40 stories in English and French that are written by Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Canada after the war.

The Azrieli Foundation also turned these five new stories into short films that show the author reading from the memoir, as well as animated sequences that bring their story to life.

The five survivors who launched their survivor memoirs. From left to right: Marguerite Elias Quddus, Michael Kutz, George Stern, Elsa Thon, Zuzana Sermer and Azrieli Foundation CEO Naomi Azrieli. *(Jordan Adler photo)*

The other memoirs launched were *If Only It Were Fiction* by Elsa Thon, *Vanished Boyhood* by George Stern, *Survival Kit* by Zuzana Sermer and *If, By Miracle* by Michael Kutz.

When writing her story, Élias Quddus also illustrated several pictures in it with crayon. "It took me eight years to do the book," she said in an inteview. "It was so difficult to write the story. I wrote in rhyme because of the musicality. It helped me to get all of the emotions out."

When printing *In Hiding*, the Azrieli Foundation took out the rhyming patterns but kept her illustrations.

Élias Quddus, who lives in the Montreal area, now speaks at conferences and to many university students about her life in Europe during the Holocaust. "I do everything I can to make people know what happened," she says. "That's what makes me get up every day, to do my duty. It keeps my brain working. I am doing something useful."

Holocaust Education Week, now in its 33rd year, runs through Nov. 9 across the Greater Toronto Area and other regions of Ontario. There are more than 150 diverse programs happening across Ontario for HEW, says Mira Goldfarb, executive director of the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, which organizes HEW.

"Survivors are sadly leaving us and also losing their ability to speak with strength and coherence about their narratives," Goldfarb said. "There has been a very tremendous effort on the part of Jewish organizations… to record and print those narratives."

Among the various programs set to run during the week are survivor testimonies, musical performances and film screenings. It is considered "the largest educational forum of its kind featuring world-renowned experts and Holocaust survivors."

In 2013, the Azrieli Foundation distributed over 11,000 copies of these survivor memoirs to high school classes from Newfoundland to the Northwest Territories. They are available free of charge to schools and Holocaust education programs, the funding coming from the foundation, donors and the sale of the books.

"If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten," Azrieli said, drawing on a quote from author Rudyard Kipling. "We see that in the response of readers and students, after reading the memoirs, they want to learn more about the Holocaust."

Seniors raise their voices in song

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Yankel Gladstone, a resident of the Terraces at Baycrest, wants to take his musical theatre group on the road.

He established the 22-member group when he moved to the Terraces three years ago, and until now it has only performed at the Terraces.

"We put on Sholom Aleichem's *Esrog* for Sukkot, and I would love to perform it at other retirement homes, said Gladstone, who at 88, is one of the group's youngest members. The oldest is 100, and the average age is in the mid-90s.

The founder, leader, script writer, and director of the chorus, Gladstone, originally from Montreal, came to the Terraces from New York, where he worked for a number of years.

"I was lonely here. I had an active life in New York, and I needed something here to keep me busy," he said.

"I volunteered to run a Yiddish-speaking group, and then I decided to get creative and asked [members] if they wanted to sing. We've never stopped."

His group is dedicated and committed, he said. "They love singing, and they've really bonded. They've embraced each other like family."

They work hard, though. "They call me a taskmaster. We rehearse often, and I meet with the actors privately to help them with their lines."

Everyone is welcome, he said. "A lot of people tell me they can't sing, but they end up as part of the group. I'm a good talent scout."

Being part of the group has been good for everyone, said Gladstone. "One man knocked on my door and said he's a new person since he joined, and the daughter of one of the members thanked me.

"Another man, who is now in palliative care, insisted on coming to the performance in his wheelchair. He just had to be part of the show."

From left, Clara Buckley, Yankel Gladstone, Milton Klayman and Ed Greenbaum

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What we've lost, and the road ahead

Guest Voice

Franklin Bialystok

Gerald Tulchinsky, our foremost scholar of Canadian Jewry, concludes his 2008 magisterial survey, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* by comparing our lives in Canada to those of our grandparents. Titled *Oyfn Veg* (On the Road), Tulchinsky ties what we have "lost," such as Yiddish, farm colonies and smaller communities, leadership in organized labour, and the vibrant street life of the immigrant community, to what we have achieved: a prominent position in the mainstream of Canadian society.

Were he to reprise his analysis today, he might add that we have also transformed our voice on the national stage. While we once spoke through Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) on behalf of Canada's Jews, human rights, and community relations, we now speak from a more centralized and homogeneous group of advocates.

CJC, founded in 1919 by a broad consortium of religious, business, labour and professional leaders from across the country, reflected our diversity. Dependent upon the financial support of Jewish contributions to UJA, CJC, with a small staff at the national and regional levels, but with a veritable army of volunteers, was active in working with other ethno-cultural communities, boards and ministries of education, police, and all levels of government to protect Canadians from hate speech, unfair employment and housing practices, and discrimination on the basis of religion, appearance, and gender.

CJC was not without its faults and was subject to criticism for overlapping its activities with those of federations and other community-supported advocacy organizations. It was criticized by some for being too close to the federal Liberal party and for a leadership that did not reflect the diversity of its members. There is some justification for these views. In recent years, there was no clear line of demarcation between CJC's advocacy on behalf of Israel from the mandate of the Canada-Israel Committee, nor did it distinguish its advocacy on university campuses from that of Hillel.

From its re-emergence in 1933 to 1960, its spokespeople were almost exclusively well-to-do males, bastions of the established Conservative and Reform elite. Yet, in this era, it lobbied for the immigration of European Jewry, teamed with B'nai Brith Canada and the Zionist Organization of Canada to create the Joint Community Relations Committee, and was at the forefront of the movement to abolish exclusionary laws based on race and religion.

From the 1960s to its demise in 2011, its membership spanned the spectrum of the community, its leaders numbering women, workers and educators. Its meetings were marked by spirited debates. Steadfastly apolitical, Congress reflected the values of most Canadian Jews and its brand was a model for advocates for other ethno-cultural minorities.

CJC has been subsumed by an umbrella organization that has condensed the myriad advocacy groups into a central body. By our silence, Canadian Jewry has ceded advocacy to a small number of individuals who purport to speak with a single voice in our name. This is not surprising, as many Jews perceive that anti-Semitism in Canada is growing and that support of the policies of the government of Israel is primary. In that sense, the demise of CJC is a reflection of who we are now and the road that we have chosen.

Comfortably ensconced in Canada's mainstream, we may be projecting an image of a unified community, but the price is our heritage of respectful debate and diversity.

A symposium on Canadian Jewish studies in honour of Gerald Tulchinsky will be held at the University of Toronto's Jackman Humanities Building, at Bloor and St. George Streets, Room 101, on Sunday, Nov. 17, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. All are welcome. No registration or entrance charge. See http://cjs.utoronto.ca for details.

Franklin Bialystok teaches modern Jewish history at the University of Toronto, specializing in Canadian Jewry.

Monument to be dedicated

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — All 577 Jews who are known to have been killed while serving in the Canadian military during World Wars I and II and the Korean War are now memorialized at the Baron de Hirsch-Back River Cemeteries.

The names of almost 300 more fallen Canadian Jewish servicemen are now inscribed on new monuments at the Baron de Hirsch-Back River Cemeteries.

A three-piece monument will be dedicated at the de la Savane Road cemetery on Remembrance Day, Nov. 11 at 11 a.m.

The names of all 577 are inscribed on the memorial.

The cemetery, which is the largest Jewish cemetery in Canada and one of the oldest, has had a large monument in its veterans' section since after World War II.

But it contained only about 300 names, said Larry Rosenthal who has been instrumental in ensuring that all Canadian Jewish casualties be recognized.

Cemetery executive director Jay Aaron said the original monument, which is about 20 feet high, did not have room to add any more names. So, the cemetery, with some donations, underwrote the cost of adding two smaller monuments on either side of the main one.

"This is really something quite special for the cemetery – and the community," Aaron said.

Rosenthal sees it as the completion of the 41 years of effort he has made to have the contribution of Canadian Jewish servicemen in wartime recorded and honoured.

"This is very emotional for me. It's something that's been on my mind for so many years," he said. "My brother died for what he believed in. No sacrifice was too great, he felt, to stop fascism."

The 577 names are from the Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives, which for years has been researching and compiling the Canadian Jewish war dead. That project, which Rosenthal urged CJC to undertake, has brought to light a significant number of casualties, the vast majority from World War II, who were previously unknown to that national Jewish organization.

Names and basic data are available on its Canadian Jewish Casualties in the Armed Forces website, with additional material such as photos and letters uploaded as they become available.

The dedication ceremony will be conducted by Rabbi Moishe New, director of Chabad's Montreal Torah Centre.

For more information, phone 514-735-4696 or email bdh@barondehirsch.com.

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The Byzantine period in Israel

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

The Byzantine period in Israel is one of those historical eras that falls between the cracks. It's not quite ancient, nor is it medieval. This is the period between the fall of the Roman Empire in the West and its survival in a changed form in the East. It's a transitional age between Roman rule and that of Islam after 638 CE. It also sees the emergence of Christianity as the official religion of first the Roman Empire and then its surviving eastern half.

The Byzantine Empire gets its name from the Greek colony of Byzantium, located on the Bosphorus, the body of water that joins the Mediterranean via the Aegean to the Black Sea. This is one of the most strategic places in the world. The Roman Emperor Constantine named the city after himself, Constantinople, the city of Constantine, after he permanently moved the capital of the Roman Empire there in 330 CE.

Byzantium was ideally located between the major areas of conflict in the empire, the Rhine-Danube frontier in the north and the eastern border with the Persian/Iranian speaking Sassanian Empire in the East.

The region of the eastern Mediterranean where Constantinople was located had been Greek-speaking since the time of Alexander's conquests in the fourth century BCE, if not even earlier. It would remain predominantly Greek-speaking for 1,000 years until the time of the Muslim conquests in the seventh century CE. This use of Greek is also quite evident in Israel, which had been renamed Palestine by the Romans after the second Jewish Revolt led by Simon Bar Kochba from 132 to 135 CE. The Romans chose this name because it was the Latin name of the Philistines, who had been Israel's greatest enemy in its early history.

The Greek language had been evident in the land for quite a while, judging by the number of inscriptions that have been found there since the Hellenistic period (the period from the conquests of Alexander to the victory of Octavius over the forces of Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE). Although the land was briefly independent under the Hasmoneans (the family of Judah the Maccabee), it became a Roman client state after Pompey's takeover in 67 BCE and its subsequent rule by the Idumean dynasty of Herod the Great.

Dating to the Byzantine period in the fifth century CE, we have one of the major archeological finds of the past two years in Israel, that of the inscribed and illustrated mosaic floor of the synagogue at Tel Huqoq in the Galilee. Not that long ago, it was thought that there wasn't much of a Jewish presence in the land after the desolation of the two failed revolts against Rome. Over the years, archeology has overturned this view, showing that there was a vibrant Jewish life in Palestine centering on synagogues, many of which have been excavated since the Six Day War.

A grateful perspective

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

In the upcoming Torah portions, we read about Jacob, Rachel and Leah building their families. Their sons will become the ancestors of the 12 tribes of Israel, but we know very little about them. In fact, the most we know about each of their sons is the angst of their parents and the meanings of their names. None of it seems very positive.

Reuben, the first born, is named by Leah as a testament to her suffering. Simon, her next son, is named to commemorate that God has heard her cries. Each of the sons' names, with few exceptions, signify another moment of tension and competition that permeated all aspects of the parents' lives.

The exception that speaks volumes is the naming of Judah. The reason for his name, as stated by his mother Leah, is that she gives thanks to God. The aspect of gratitude unfolds as simultaneously simple and complex.

Leah's life is anything but easy. She was substituted for her sister in a wedding contract and subsequently gains the hatred of her husband. Hatred is the word that the Torah uses, and it serves to have us understand how difficult everyday life must be for her. Rachel is her biological sister, which means they enter their marriages to Jacob with all their childhood sibling baggage intact. Life must be a constant challenge.

And yet Leah thinks to show gratitude to God when Judah is born. Not only does she show thankfulness, she teaches this attribute to Reuben, her son. The midrash tells us that Reuben felt a special connection to Joseph and ends up saving his life, because he's grateful to Joseph for including him in his dream.

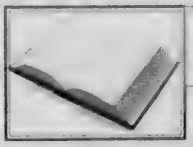
Joseph dreams that the sun, the moon and 11 stars bow down to him. The dream is understood by his brothers as their showing subservience to Joseph, since they viewed the 11 stars as representative of themselves. Reuben was grateful to Joseph for this dream, since it includes him with the other brothers. This detail was important to Reuben, because he had done something years before that he felt could have excluded him from the family, and yet Joseph was including him in the dream. Although it's a dream of subservience, Reuben sees a moment of gratitude toward his brother.

Although Leah leads a life of exclusion and isolation from love, she finds a moment of gratitude in the birth of a child. In fact, the rabbis of the midrash point out to us that Leah was the first of our ancestors to explicitly give thanks to God. She's responsible for introducing this foundational expression into the covenant. She shows us how each of us, as individuals, must find our moments of gratitude and teach our children to find theirs.

Rachael Turkienicz is director of Rachaelscentre.org.

'Apatheism' is the biggest threat to Judaism

Rabbi Wayne Allen



Rabbinic Reflections

Since the end of the 18th century, there have been many who have challenged the truth and the efficacy of traditional religions. Most would be categorized as agnostics, those who are unsure if God exists. Given sufficient evidence, agnostics are willing to change from doubt to certainty. But until such evidence is presented, agnostics choose to suspend belief.

Atheists, however, make a bolder claim. In contrast to theists who say they're sure God exists, atheists claim they're sure that God does *not* exist. Yet the real challenge to theists comes from "apatheists": those who don't care whether or not God exists.

Apatheists go through life without even thinking about whether morality is imposed from above or composed below. To the issue of God's very existence they are sublimely indifferent. Apatheists are principally concerned with their own happiness and satisfaction with little regard to grand philosophy or theology. It's not that the issues of the immortality of the soul or life after death or the nature of sin are uninteresting. They're simply irrelevant. Apatheists might even find some religious teachings compatible with their own thinking if they happen to chance upon them.

But devoting the time to intentionally exploring the possibility is not under consideration.

A teacher of mine was once confronted by an obstreperous congregant who justified his obstructionism to *apikorsus*, meaning religious rejectionism, from the Hebrew corruption of the word for the Greek philosopher Epicurus. My teacher responded that he paid himself too much of a compliment. He lacked both the knowledge and the interest to be a true *apikoros*.

For Judaism today, the threat emanates not from educated and thoughtful atheists, but from disengaged and uncaring apatheists. These are the ones who go through the motions of religious participation when it suits them. They neither object to the practices of Judaism nor embrace them. They have no interest in changing any Jewish practice, because they simply find all Jewish practice unimportant. Whether or not women are counted in the minyan, for example, is not an issue for apatheists, because they would never consider attending a minyan anyway. And in the rare circumstance when they might attend – a baby-naming, for instance – they're content to accept with equanimity whatever the religious practice is of the synagogue in which it is held. While both theists and atheists share a passion for what they believe or do not believe, apatheists have no passion and no beliefs. It's not that apatheists are alienated from Judaism. They simply have no strong feelings about Judaism whatsoever.

As apatheists grow in number, Judaism is increasingly imperiled. Judaism can survive intellectual attacks against it. Judaism has always overcome the attacks of the elite. Judaism cannot survive the indifference of the masses. What might be done to stem the growth of apatheism or counter the apatheistic trend has not yet been put on the table for discussion by the community or by synagogues. Yet without urgent redress, the trend threatens the very future of Judaism in North America, if not beyond.

Rabbi Wayne Allen is provost of the Canadian Yeshiva and Rabbinical School.

Chanukah in November

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

As the end of August approached and Rosh Hashanah beckoned, we could not stop commenting on how early the holidays were this year. In fact, Rosh Hashanah will never begin earlier in the Gregorian calendar than its starting date of Sept. 5 in 2013.

What was said about this year's Yamim Nora'im can also be said about Chanukah, which this year falls mostly in November. (Our American friends are overwhelmed by this year's extremely rare coinciding of Chanukah with American Thanksgiving, leading to numerous *Thanksgiving-kah* programs, celebrations, and, *nebech*, sales!)

Judaic purists, of course, will note that the holidays this year are not early, that Rosh Hashanah, as always, was observed on the first and second days of Tishrei, and Chanukah, as always, will begin on the eve of the 25th of Kislev. Such purist thinking, however, overlooks the complexities of living Jewish lives in the context of the larger world, in which two calendars regulate our lives.

Even in Israel, where newspapers will note the Hebrew date, the "English" date will appear as well, and cheques are written according to 2013, not 5774. As Jews, we live in two worlds, and it's the navigation between those worlds that offers us both challenge and opportunity.

The challenge of functioning both in 2013 and 5774 is clear. We must decide, for example, whether the seventh day of the week is Saturday, a good opportunity to shop, travel and attend to household chores, or whether that day is Shabbat, a chance to withdraw from life's hectic pace to experience prayer and community in shul, to spend time together as families, to desist from the everyday, and to rest. Shabbat and Yom Tov enable us to favour 5774 over 2013, to allow our Jewish sense of time to override the secular schedule that otherwise dominates our lives.

This balancing act calls to mind the story of the Berdichever Rebbe, Levi Yitzkak, who, we are told, had two clocks on his living-room wall, one reflecting the time in Berdichev and the other the time in Jerusalem. Just as Jews through the ages and today have straddled the Jewish and secular calendars, similarly, for so many of our people through so much of our history, their bodies were situated in lands throughout the world, while their hearts found their way eastward, to Jerusalem.

So the challenge is clear: how are we to live successful lives in a largely non-Jewish environment while at the same time remaining true to our Jewish selves?

This year, when Christmas falls weeks after the last Chanukah candle will have burned out, there will be no Jewish holiday to compensate for the massively joyous celebrations that will surround us.

Our being able to cling to 5774 as 2013 winds down, while wishing our Christian friends, neighbours and family members well on their sacred festival, and our willingness to focus on our Jewish selves through synagogue, community, study and Israel will attest to our success in weathering the challenge of our dual-calendar destiny.

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U.S. promises to consult with Israel on Iran

David Horovitz
The Times of Israel

The United States will inform and consult with Israel about any nuclear deal world powers arrive at with Iran before it is carried out, because the Jewish state's security is paramount, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman said in an interview with Israel's Channel 10 on Sunday.

Wendy Sherman

"Whatever agreement we reach, Israel will know about, understand and [will have] consulted with us on, because Israel's security is bedrock and there is no closer security relationship than what we have with each other," she said.

Throughout the interview, however, the United States' chief nuclear negotiator refused to disclose details of the talks between the P5+1 countries (the United States, Russia, China, United Kingdom, and France, plus Germany) and Tehran, which are set to reconvene later this week.

Sherman noted that, unlike previous talks, the latest round with Iran showed "for the first time a serious and substantive negotiation," and Tehran's silence about the particulars of the talks "speaks to the seriousness of the negotiations."

She dismissed any comparison of the current talks to the Munich Conference in 1938, in which appeasement of Nazi Germany by British prime minister Neville Chamberlain administration compromised . Czechoslovakian security, helping trigger World War II.

"We haven't agreed to anything yet," Sherman said, reiterating the mantra of her boss, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, that "no deal is better than a bad deal." She emphasized that the United States had yet to agree to lift painful sanctions crippling Iran's economy. Nor, she said, would an initial time-buying agreement remove "the fundamental architecture of the oil and banking sanctions."

"We must... assure ourselves that Iran will not be able to have a nuclear weapon," Sherman said.

Answering a query as to whether the United States trusts the sincerity of Iran and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Sherman said there was a great deal of mutual distrust and that world powers "approach these negotiations to try to deal with Iran's nuclear program and [U.S] President [Barack] Obama's commitment that Iran not obtain nuclear weapons."

Addressing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's comments at the UN that Israel would stand alone against Iran if need be, Sherman remarked that the best resolution to the issue of Iran's nuclear program was "a peaceful negotiated solution" and that Netanyahu was well aware of the fact.

"Israel knows as well as any country, if not better than any country, the cost of war, the cost of military action," she said.

Timesofisrael.com

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eBay apologizes for Holocaust memorabilia

JTA

LONDON — The online auction website eBay apologized over the weekend for allowing Holocaust memorabilia to be sold under its auspices.

The site removed about 30 items for sale within hours of an investigative report published in the Sunday edition of the *Daily Mail*. The report went up on the newspaper's website late Saturday night.

"We are very sorry these items have been listed on eBay and we are removing them," eBay said in a statement Sunday. "We don't allow listings of this nature, and dedicate thousands of staff to policing our site and use the latest technology to detect items that shouldn't be for sale.

"We very much regret that we didn't live up to our own standards. We have made a donation to charity to reflect our concern."

Among the items being offered for sale were a complete Auschwitz uniform, yellow Stars of David armbands worn by Jews during World War II, a Holocaust victim's suitcase and a pair of shoes belonging to a death camp victim.

eBay makes 10 per cent of the final sale of items auctioned on its site.

According to the *Daily Mail*, the items were being sold by Viktor Kempf, a self-proclaimed historian living in Vancouver.

Kempf told the newspaper he bought the clothes from a reputable dealer in America. He was asking $18,700 for a striped uniform reputedly worn by a prisoner in Auschwitz.

"I understand why people may think profiting is wrong but I sell these items to document [them] and to fund my book projects. If I was a descendant of a victim, I would want to see how my relatives lived. I would want to buy these items to remember them," he told the *Daily Mail*.

"I have had criticism in the past and I find it upsetting. I don't want people to think I'm just doing it for the money. These periods in history are horrific, nobody should ever forget them," he said.

The *Daily Mail* reported that Kempf was also selling concentration camp "trousers" with an estimate price of between $8,300 and $9,300. The trousers are said to have belonged to a Dawid Bittersfeld, who died at Auschwitz, and, according to Kempf, were "bought many years ago in Krakow, Poland" from his family.

Earlier in the week, it was still possible to find pages of Nazi-related items for sale on eBay Canada, mostly books about the Nazi era, but some vintage photographs, currency, coins and postage stamps.

Online classified sites, such as Craigslist, commonly list Nazi-era items for sale. Earlier this week, you could find on Vancouver Craigslist a reproduction of an SS Panzer officer's hat for $125; Third Reich posters for $250; a Nazi-era coin, $10; an SS dress uniform ceremonial dagger, $200, and a Hitler Youth pin, $100.

B'nai Brith Canada praised eBay and urged Amazon to follow its lead and pull Holocaust and Nazi-related items from its online catalog. Amazon has been criticized recently for offering Nazi items and paraphernalia online.

"eBay has done the right thing in pulling Holocaust items from its website," said B'nai Brith CEO Frank Dimant, said in a statement. "We hope that Amazon will take its corporate responsibility seriously and do the same. Selling items of this nature is not only an affront to those who perished in the Holocaust, but all those who suffered under the Nazi regime."

With files from CJN staff

NSA reportedly spies on Israel

JTA

NEW YORK — Israel has been the target of spying by the U.S. National Security Agency and also collaborates on intelligence gathering with the United States, the *New York Times* reported.

The *Times* in its report published Nov. 2, citing documents leaked by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden, said the NSA tracked "high-priority Israeli military targets," including drones and the Black Sparrow missile system. The report also shows that the United States has spied on world leaders, including Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Modern Orthodox girls join protest

Hundreds gather at Wall for peaceful prayer

Times of Israel and JTA

The pluralistic prayer group Women of the Wall celebrated its 25th anniversary Monday, with hundreds of women praying at the Western Wall amid whistles and jeers, but no violence, to mark the start of the Jewish month of Kislev.

Some 700 women from throughout Israel participated in the special service on Monday morning, with hundreds of men surrounding them in solidarity.

Police were on hand to keep order for the monthly prayer meeting, which has been the source of tension, and sometimes violence in the past.

Girls affiliated with the modern Orthodox Bnei Akiva movement joined haredi girls at the Western Wall to protest the prayer service.

Women of the Wall arrive at the Western Wall to pray and read from the Torah at the beginning of each Jewish month, irking some worshippers with their prayer shawls and phylacteries, and tefillin, which most Orthodox rabbis maintain should only be donned by men.

Loud whistles and jeers rang out across the Western Wall plaza, centring on a packed women's section, and an observer said that a few small scuffles broke out, but were quickly broken up.

In recent months, leading haredi rabbis and activists have mobilized thousands of haredi girls to pray at the Wall during Women of the Wall's services, at times effectively blocking the group from reaching the Wall.

Monday marked the first time that modern Orthodox schools sent students to participate in the service by the haredi girls.

Women of the Wall spokesperson Shira Pruce told *JTA* that the move offended several of her group's members who are affiliated with Bnei Akiva.

"Many women are outraged that an organization that represents them would oppose Women of the Wall," Pruce said. "They're not saying the organization should take a side at all, but it's offensive to many that they would teach their children to protest a women's prayer at the Kotel."

Last month, the women's prayer service coincided with a special prayer session for the health of the ailing Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the former chief rabbi and the late spiritual leader of the haredi Shas party. Rabbi Yosef died several days later.

Also last month, Women of the Wall agreed in principle to transfer its monthly prayer services to a newly built egalitarian plaza and withdraw its demand to hold services in the women's section of the Western Wall.

However, the group stated that it would only do so once all of its 16 conditions were met, among them for funding equal to the traditional prayer sites and the creation of a continuous plaza at the wall to connect them all.

In August, the government unveiled the new platform for egalitarian prayers, but the group's chair Anat Hoffman harshly criticized the plan at the time.

"The government of Israel decided as a 'gift' for Rosh Hashanah to solve the issue... by building this sunbathing deck," she accused then, charging that the site "is a way of building a second-rate wall for second-rate Jews. I refuse to accept it."

TimesofIsrael.com.

Border police guard members of the Women of the Wall as they pray and celebrate their group's 25th anniversary at the Western Wall on Nov.4.

[*Miriam Alster/Flash90 photo*]

POLISH PRESIDENT WELCOMED: Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski, right, was welcomed by Israeli president Shimon Peres at his residence in Jerusalem, during an official vist Monday. [*GPO photo*]

Merkel talks Kristallnacht

Continued from page 1

Rabbi Noam Marans, the American Jewish Committee's director of interreligious and intergroup relations, will address a commemoration organized by the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace.

In Weimar, American expatriate musician Alan Bern is co-ordinating a sound installation that will include the ringing of hand bells at former Jewish homes and businesses; citizens will then broadcast the music of once-banned composers from their doors and windows. Also, church bells will be rung across the city.

"The city should be flooded with the sounds of bells and once-forbidden music, bearing witness to what happened in 1938 but also celebrating the freedom we have today," Bern said.

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Fri, July 4	Klaipeda, Lithuania	8:00 am	5:00 pm
Sat, July 5	Riga, Latvia	8:00 am	4:00 pm
Sun, July 6	Helsinki, Finland	9:00 am	6:00 pm
Mon, July 7	St. Petersburg, Russia	8:00 am	-
Tue, July 8	St. Petersburg, Russia	-	-
Wed, July 9	St. Petersburg, Russia	-	6:00 pm
Thu, July 10	Tallinn, Estonia	8:00 am	5:00 pm
Fri, July 11	Stockholm, Sweden	8:00 am	-

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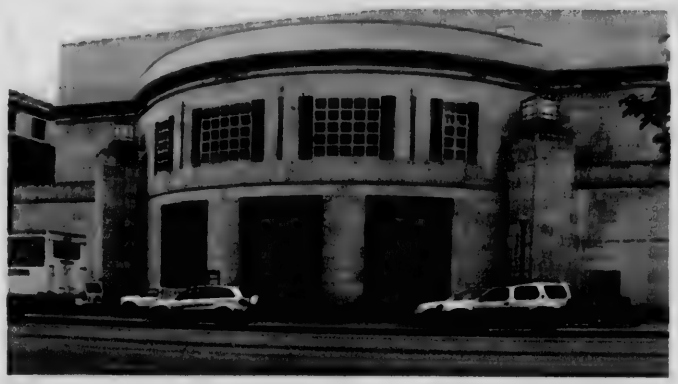
U.S. Holocaust Museum to get war crimes archive



United States Holocaust Memorial Museum located in Washington, D.C. *[Wikimedia Commons photo]*

JTA

NEW YORK — The United Nations will give the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., its archive documenting the actions of thousands of Nazi war criminals, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations said.

Samantha Power told an Anti-Defamation League conference on Oct. 31 that the entire archive will benefit scholars "at a time when Holocaust denial is embraced by many who prefer diversionary fantasies to inconvenient facts."

The unrestricted records of the United Nations War Crimes Commission, relating to more than 10,000 cases in Europe and Asia, were put online in early July by the International Criminal Court after an agreement with the UN. However, thousands of files remained restricted.

The War Crimes Commission was established in 1943 by 17 allied nations to issue lists of alleged war criminals.

Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel, addressing the ADL conference later on Oct. 31, announced the sale to Israel of six V-22 Ospreys, a tilt-rotor aircraft he said would "greatly enhance the range and effectiveness of Israeli special forces."

Hagel also said it was critical to explore all peaceful options in resolving tensions with Iran over its nuclear program, a note sounded repeatedly in recent weeks in Obama administration meetings with Jewish leaders.

"As we engage Iran along with our partners, we are very clear eyed about the reality in the Middle East," Hagel said.

"Iran is a state sponsor of terror, responsible for spreading hatred and extremism throughout the region. But foreign policy is not a zero-sum game. If we can find ways to resolve disputes peacefully, we are wise to explore them."

Differences between Israel and the United States have emerged over the last week over whether Iran should be allowed to maintain any uranium enrichment capacity as part of a deal to end the sanctions that have crippled its economy.

Hagel also announced that he would take action against a handful of states that are not abiding by federal directives to extend benefits to same-sex spouses of military personnel.

Neo-Nazi's appeal earns him extra year in jail

JTA

A Frenchman who helped desecrate 90 Jewish and Muslim graves had his jail term extended by one year following his failed appeal for a lighter sentence.

The Colmar court of appeals sentenced Nicolas Lecureur, 24, to a year in prison Oct. 30 for his actions, which he committed in eastern France in 2010 with two accomplices, Jonathan Husser and Matthias Leyer, according to *L'Alsace*.

All three men began serving an 18-month jail term in June 2012, but Lecureur appealed the sentence, claiming to have new evidence that proves his innocence.

But the court found the evidence – soundless footage of Lecureur speaking with an attorney of one of the other men – inadmissible and handed Lecureur another year in jail, *L'Alsace* reported.

The graves that the three men desecrated were in Strasbourg. The perpetrators painted swastikas on them and wrote "*Juden Raus*," German for "Jews out," on some graves, according to *Le Figaro*. They smashed other graves.

The court also learned that Lecureur was in the habit of punctuating text messages with the words "*sieg*" and "*heil*." Lecureur has at least one Nazi-themed tattoo and used to wear a Nazi Iron Cross pendant.

His father told the court Wednesday that the son's neo-Nazism was mostly a fashion statement. "He is not a political skinhead," the father was quoted as telling the court.

The judge also increased the $1,300 fine imposed on Lecureur last year to $6,400.

[L. to R.] Lazarus & Marion, granddaughter, Sara Grostern, daughter and son-in-law, Andrea Caplan Grostern and Dr. Richard Grostern, and daughter and son-in-law, Stephanie Caplan Pelcowitz and son-in-law, Robert Pelcowitz.

Caplans donate Ambulance to Magen David Adom

It may have been damp and cloudy but everyone was all smiles as family and friends gathered recently to help Marion and Lazarus Caplan celebrate the dedication of the Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance they have generously donated to Magen David Adom Israel in honor of their late parents on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

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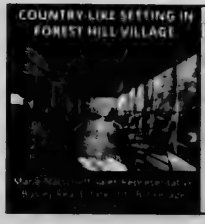

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Discovery Channel head started at the bottom

Paul Lewis

Rosalin Krieger
Special to The CJN

"I always had the need to tell stories," Paul Lewis confides.

The British-born, married, father of two girls and self-confessed "total nerd" is the president and general manager of Discovery Channel Canada. He is an affable but unassuming risk-taker with a distinguished Canadian media career that stretches back to 1979 with the CBC, where he spent 14 years as a journalist on *Sunday Report*.

In 1534, he jumped over to cable's fledgling Discovery Channel to launch television's first science magazine show, now called *Daily Planet*.

"My parents knew I was a creative person" who needed an outlet, he explained. But he rejected a "painful and solitary writer's life." He enrolled in Ryerson University's journalism program and paid his dues "right at the bottom" as a copy clerk, an entry-level position in Saskatoon, which he made the most of.

"I realized," Lewis said, "that you could just take the job at face value, do what you're supposed to do and do it probably for the rest of your life or you could seize the opportunity, make connections, offer to do more... be proactive, and that was a great strategy. I always gave them more than what they expected. 'Can I give you two more than that?' I would ask. 'Can I interview this person? Can I write this news story?'"

Lewis made a point of cultivating relationships, anywhere and everywhere.

"You'd bump into somebody in a bathroom and you start up a conversation and all of a sudden you're friends. It's like, 'Hey, can I help you out in some way?' You had to grab opportunities and I think that's even more so now, because broadcasting is shrinking."

So much work is contract based, he said, that you need to position yourself as a content provider.

Being the only Jew in a Saskatoon newsroom in 1979 was interesting.

"People didn't even know what a bagel was," Lewis joked. "I'd get them shipped to me and people were looking at them."

And they would tell him, "I've never met a Jewish person before." It was a great opportunity to educate, Lewis recalled with a smile.

Being Jewish is "part of my thinking, the way I approach things, my sense of humour, the way you relate to people, it's different. I've tried to take the values that I've learned at home and apply them in the work environment, the way I relate to people, the way I approach everything...things have changed now. At the beginning it was constantly explaining what I was doing, who I am," and that being Jewish is "such a broad definition, there's many different types of Jews."

Lewis said aspiring media-content producers should have a sense of humour. "It is *so* important, absolutely critical," he said Also understand that nobody's going to get it right all the time, so keep trying. You're "constantly reacting...its 24/7 on *shpilkes*."

It's not for the "faint of heart or people who don't like change."

Discovery channel is producing *The History of the Jewish Canadians* to air in September 2014. Based on the PBS series *Jews in America*, the two-hour program will cover the first arrival of Jews to Canada, and Lewis promises "lots of untold stories."

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Bendayan, Leon	Oct. 18/13	576 Cummer Ave
Weisz, Ben	Oct. 19/13	3 Meadowbrook Rd
Zusmanovsky, Semyon	Oct. 20/13	Private
Itzkovitch, Zune (Sonny)	Oct. 19/13	71 Rockwood Cres
Solomon, Lori	Oct. 19/13	Private
Hersko, Albert	Oct. 21/13	20 Harding Blvd
Gartner, Lilian	Oct. 22/13	115 Palm Dr
Pickard, Al	Oct. 21/13	85 Skymark Dr
Sivak, Mikhal	Oct. 23/14	Private
Kadarishko, Ichak	Oct. 21/13	Private
Sivak, Mikhal	Oct. 23/13	Private
Rubinstein, Maryla	Oct. 24/13	10 Senlac Ave
Stark, Judit Katalin	Oct. 24/13	
Caplan, Diana	Oct. 26/13	21 Chilmar Cres
Winkler, Murray	Oct. 25/13	205 Cummer Ave
Shames, Lina Isaakovna	Oct. 26/13	1131 Steeles Ave. W
Shlomov, Bela	Oct. 27/13	15 Robingrove Rd
Brener, Nathan	Oct. 28/13	Private
Cohen, Irene	Oct. 28/13	Private
Etkin, Maya	Oct. 29/13	12 Resan Rd
Iskov, Esther	Oct. 30/13	170 Red Maple Rd

HEBREW BASIC

Sarah Meirovich	Oct 18/13	3500 Bathurst Street
Polina Dontzis	Oct 26/13	9 London Crescent

Donald H. Sherman ז"ל

It is with love and sadness that the Sherman family marks the tenth anniversary of Don's passing.
Don was a warm and loving man - a real mensch. He loved his family, his friends, telling jokes, Las Vegas and scuba diving.
Don was our king and we miss having him here to share in our lives.

Janet, Darcie, Ilana, Jarrett and families.

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Murray Caplan	Sep 30/13	4350 Bathurst Street
Zeev Greenberg	Sep 30/13	147 Mossgrove Trail
Rose Katz	Sep 29/13	33 Glenayr Road
Albert Lerech	Oct 2/13	21 Mayfair Avenue
Benny Stark	Oct 4/13	2600 Bathurst Street
Fela Magnuszewski	Oct 2/13	28 Wasdale Crescent
Helen Burshtein	Oct 4/13	88 Promenade Circle
Luba Lasko	Oct 5/13	141 Brighton Avenue
Harold Halpern	Oct 5/13	2500 Bathurst Street
Shirley Sibulash	Oct 4/13	173 Glen Cedar Road
Benny Langbord	Oct 6/13	541 Finch Avenue, West
Evan Vaz	Oct 6/13	7440 Bathurst Street
Aviva Roth	Oct 8/13	177 Redpath Avenue
Jerrold Schiff	Oct 6/13	2881 Harbour Grace Court
David Nisker	Oct 8/13	209 Maxwell Street
Rose Rose	Oct 9/13	528 Rushton Road
Evelyn Frankel	Oct 7/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Fany Treschnok	Oct 10/13	120 Promenade Circle
Ruth Sax	Oct 12/13	143 Sandringham Drive
Pat Fromstein	Oct 12/13	29 Glen Cedar Road
Anita Enchin	Oct 12/13	718 Sheppard Avenue, West
Bernice Henry	Oct 13/13	784 Centre Street
Roslyn Dermer	Oct 13/13	3033 Sherbrooke St. W.
Ester Schwarzbaum	Oct 13/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Mac Adler	Oct 10/13	1 Faith Avenue
Morris Biderman	Oct 14/13	55 Ameer Avenue
Marvin Kulik	Oct 14/13	105 Westbury Court
Billie Samuels	Oct 15/13	645 Castlefield Avenue
Al (Blackie) Swartz	Oct 16/13	11 Barksdale Avenue
Esther Clara Garfinkel	Oct 16/13	3560 Bathurst Street
Georgina Rigor	Oct 18/13	400 Walmer Road
Irene Ungar	Oct 20/13	2 Sultan Street
Morris Kerzner	Oct 19/13	26 Glenarden Road
Barbara Rosenberg	Oct 21/13	19 Gardiner Road

Salient offers solutions in the healthcare realm

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

In business, it's not always best to take the acquisition of a new piece of equipment personally.

It is, after all, a vocation. But when your business is distributing and servicing medical technology, the kind that can change people's lives, sometimes it's hard to keep your personal feelings out of it, especially when the medical device can help restore eyesight to your mom.

Jay Herman is president of Salient Medical Solutions, a Toronto-area company that distributes some of the most innovative and up-to-date medical devices anywhere on the planet. One device distributed by the firm is designed to help people suffering from macular degeneration, a loss of vision in the centre of the visual field due to damage to the retina.

The disease is debilitating no matter the background of the person afflicted. But for his mother, Zina Perleroizen Herman, it presents a particularly cruel blow. Perleroizen Herman, 92, is an artist of some renown who still lives on her own in Chomedey, a Montreal neighbourhood. Her eyesight began to deteriorate 20 years ago.

With his mother's condition in mind, Herman had been making the rounds at trade shows and medical conferences, searching for something that could be of help. About seven years ago, he heard about a device that could one day do the trick. It took years for it to be developed, built and receive governmental approval.

Today, the Visioncare CentraSight treatment program uses a tiny telescope developed in Israel by Isaac Lipshitz, an ophthalmologist with 30 years experience, that is implanted inside the eye. It works by magnifying light on a healthy part of the retina.

It's something, Herman believes, that could benefit his mother as well as thousands of other Canadian patients.

The solutions Salient provides come in the form of surgical laser and diagnostic equipment, with applications in ophthalmology, dermatology, otolaryngology, gynecology, phlebology and urology.

Innovations are constantly being introduced to the marketplace. Salient has positioned itself to acquire the best of the lot, whether or not its product name is familiar to medical practitioners.

"What we wanted to do is get people back to real medicine and properly evaluate the products [so that] doctors aren't swayed by a product name, but by what it does," Herman said.

"The biggest hurdle to sales is that [clinics and hospitals] have bought so much equipment over the years that doesn't do what it's supposed to do."

With laser equipment selling in the $250,000 range and even more, it's important for Salient's clients to trust they're getting the best tool for the job.

Salient does the research, acquires the best equipment, provides training and maintenance. "We look for the best of brand product. We are your global research centre," Herman said.

Generally, the best new technology is sourced in Germany, California and Israel.

Israelis develop their products quickly, perhaps as a result of the "sense of urgency" in the country, he said.

They just need a little help marketing it, he added.

When performing his due diligence, scouting out new products, Herman likes to visit manufacturers' workplaces, looking for seemingly minor clues as to the corporate culture.

"I'll walk through the halls of a company and try to judge the personalities of the people," whether they're energetic or angry. "All that matters," he said.

Servicing the equipment accounts for a big chunk of Salient's income. Herman projects that half of the company's revenues will come from that aspect of the business. "We call it an annuity, recurring revenues," he said.

Salient is a continuation of Sigmacon Medical (Canada), which Herman joined nearly 14 years ago after a chance meeting with the former owner of the company at a martial arts club.

Salient Medical Solutions' management team, from left, Darrell Simpson, vice-president sales; Howard Miller, COO; Jay Herman, president *[Steve Arnone – Skylite Images]*

Herman had a background in the sciences and was working for a company in emerging health technologies. After some persuasion, Herman joined Sigmacon as vice-president of business development.

The company's business at the time included a lucrative aesthetic component – wrinkle removal, hair restoration and the like – but Herman was eager to advance its surgical side.

He attended medical conferences and devoured medical literature: "You're always up to 2 a.m. reading medical studies," he said.

He became an expert in medical technologies, even authoring a white paper distributed to eye doctors giving them the ammunition to dispel media-generated reports that greatly exaggerated the pitfalls of laser eye surgery.

The extent of his knowledge gives him credibility both with purchasers and manufacturers. He knows when he's being given a sales pitch: "I tell them, don't exaggerate. Stick to what it does well," he said. Medical practitioners can be confident he understands that the solution he's offering deals with the problem they're addressing.

Earlier this year, Herman joined with two partners to take over Sigmacon and rename it.

"We decided on a management buyout. We wanted to create a certain type of company, and we put together a group of investors and took over from the prior owners," he said. "It was the three amigos saying, 'One day we should do it' and we finally did it."

Herman was joined by Howard Miller, Salient's COO, who specializes in sales and marketing, along with a silent third partner.

Salient's financials are private, but Herman is happy to discuss the non-monetary aspect of the business – the helping side. He recounts a story in which a device supplied by the company was used to burn away a patient's tumor, while leaving healthy tissue unaffected.

"You just bought the guy five years," he was told by a doctor.

It's that kind of feedback that gives Herman lots of satisfaction. It's not something you can readily get in other lines of work.

"Medicine is a good field," he said. "You get those feel-good moments."

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Bonert's *Lion Seeker* up for Governor General Award

Bill Gladstone
Special to The CJN

The Lion Seeker
Kenneth Bonert
Random House Canada

The Governor General's Literary Awards will be announced on Nov. 13 and among the candidates in the English-language fiction category is *The Lion Seeker*, a debut novel from 41-year-old Toronto novelist Kenneth Bonert about a young Jewish man who immigrates from Lithuania to South Africa before the Second World War.

Bonert was born in South Africa and raised in Johannesburg; he came to Toronto with his parents in 1989. The author of several previously published short stories and a novella, he has said that much in his first novel originated with the stories his Yiddish-speaking grandmother used to tell him about her childhood in Lithuania.

The Lion Seeker is set in the tough streets of Doornfontein, a section of Johannesburg. It tells the coming-of-age story of Isaac Helger, the son of Jewish immigrants. From his mother Isaac attains an overpowering sense of his mission: to obtain a "house of our own" for the family and to remember always the family members left behind in their ancestral village of Dusat, Lithuania.

But terrible unspoken family secrets from the past haunt him and he faces a stark moral choice as war clouds darken the horizon and threaten the Jews of Europe.

Bonert's prose rings with a robust and raw energy; it seems he has invented a rich and colourful language all his own, with many Yiddish streaks. *The Lion Seekers* has been compared with J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* for its ability to render the South African experience universal.

Still, it faces stiff competition in the awards: Joseph Boyden's *The Orenda*, Eleanor Catton's *The Luminaries*, Colin McAdam's *A Beautiful Truth* and Shyam Selvadurai's *The Hungry Ghosts*. No matter which book wins, one thing is clear: Bonert has made a remarkable literary debut and seems likely to reach a great many readers.

• • •

The Newcomers
Lily Poritz Miller
Sumach/ Three O'clock Press

Very few novels have been written about the Jewish experience in South Africa – and yet, astonishingly, only four years ago another Canadian novelist produced a novel that delved into the same setting and milieu and featured South African Jewish characters originally from Lithuania.

Toronto-based writer Poritz Miller's debut novel *In A Pale Blue Light*, focuses on Libka Hoffman, a Cape Town-born daughter of Lithuanian immigrants who finds herself, in the 1940s, at odds with South African society. Libka cannot accept South Africa's racial laws and her innocent friendships mark her as a social outcast.

Poritz Miller has followed up with a second novel, *The Newcomers*. The book again focuses on Libka after she and her family relocate to a small American town in New England. The family saga now treads into the postwar era, after the devastation of their loved ones back in Lithuania.

Although not nearly as daring stylistically as Bonert, Poritz Miller creates realistic and memorable characters, and weaves a gripping tale that ultimately focuses on Libka's romantic and life choices: will she settle for a dull, traditional life partner whom she doesn't love or perhaps escape to some unknown future that seems impossible to envision?

Poritz Miller reads from *The Newcomers* at the Barbara Frum Library, 20 Covington Rd., Toronto on Nov. 13, 7 to 8:15 p.m. She will also be interviewed by author Ayelet Tsabari at a book launch at Ben McNally Books, 366 Bay St., Nov. 28, 6 to 8 p.m.

• • •

I Kept My Promise
Gerda Frieberg
Malcolm Lester

Toronto Holocaust survivor Gerda Frieberg has written this memoir about her experiences as a Jewish child in a small town in Upper Silesia in the prewar years, then as a concentration camp inmate "behind barbed wire, forgotten by an indifferent world" for three years.

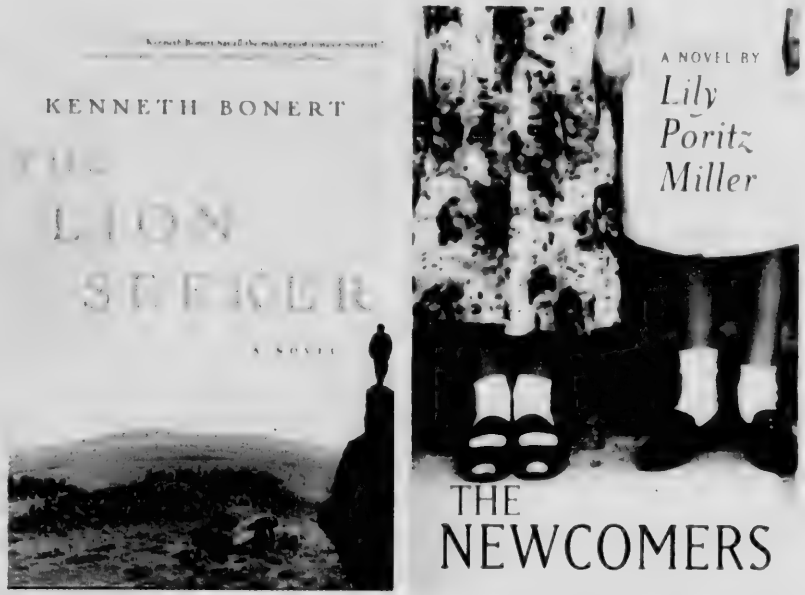
In 1940, Gerda escaped from the Jaworzno ghetto and travelled through Germany on a dangerous mission back to her hometown to retrieve an essential document for her father. Removing the Jewish star from her clothes, she donned a German pin and boarded a train. "With the pin on my lapel, and speaking fluent German, I carried on a conversation with [some German] soldiers, pretending I was one of them," she writes.

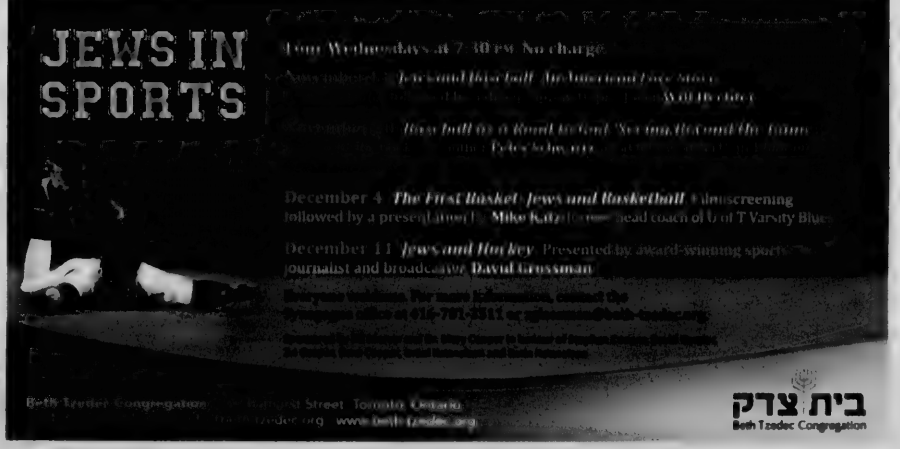
Although she attained the document and made it back to the camp, ultimately it didn't help because her father was eventually sent away to his death. "Take care of Mother till I return," were his last words to her.

Gerda spent the remainder of the war in Sosnowiec. She knew it was nearly over when an SS commander who had long tormented her suddenly became kind: he brought her some extra soup and asked her to remember that he had helped her.

The night before the Nazi commandants vacated, they told the inmates their barracks would be dynamited while they slept. Instead, the next day they were liberated.

This "legacy book" provides a succinct account of the author's story, beautifully illustrated with many photographs and documents.




JEWS IN SPORTS
December 4 The First Basket: Jews and Basketball
December 11 Jews and Hockey
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Beth Tzedec Congregation

EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

THREE CHOIRS JOIN IN CONCERT FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK

The Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir, Toronto Jewish Folk Choir and **Upper Canada Choristers** join together for two performances of a Holocaust remembrance concert, *Voices from the Whirlwind*, as part of Holocaust Education Week.

A scheduled highlight of the evening of songs in Yiddish, English and Russian is **Charles Osborne's** composition, *I Didn't Speak Out*, featuring the rueful words of German anti-Nazi theologian **Martin Niemoeller**. It is one of several pieces to be performed jointly by all three choirs.

Both concerts are free. The first takes place at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. on Nov. 6, 8 p.m. The second takes place at Temple Sinai, 210 Wilson Ave. on Nov. 15, 9 p.m., following 8 p.m. Sabbath services.

• • •

PJ Library Chanukah Concert: PJ Library is a program that sends free Jewish-themed books to children across Canada: the "PJ" stands for pyjamas and invokes that time of day when parents and children read books together. A *Chanukah Live 2013* concert sponsored by PJ Library features Juno-award winning performers **Judy & David**. Isabel Bader Theatre, 140 Charles St. W. Nov. 24, 3 p.m. Tickets $18 with discount code PJLibrary. www.pjlibraryToronto.ca

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Arts in Brief

•"The Evolution of Israeli Songs," a lecture with song clips by **Kobi Hass**, presented by the MNjcc Hebrew Institute. Free admission. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday Nov. 10, 2 to 3:30 p.m.

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Monsieur Batignole*, a deft mix of comedy and drama about a butcher in wartime France responsible for the arrest of a Jewish family above his store, who must examine his conscience after one of the family's children shows up at his old home. With guest speaker **Yves Etienne Massicotte** and refreshments. $15, $10. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Two screenings, Nov. 10, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at the door 15 minutes before screen times.

•Critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series on the films of **Robert Altman** with a talk on "Film Noir (Part Two) – *Thieves Like Us*." $11.25 drop in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday Nov. 11, 7 to 9 p.m.

•**Lily Poritz Miller** reads from her new book, *The Newcomers*, about a South African Jewish family with Lithuanian roots that immigrates to a New England town after World War II. Barbara Frum Library, 20 Covington Rd. Nov. 13, 7 to 8:15 p.m.

•Pride of Israel presents the **Robin Langdon Quartet** in concert, featuring an hour of music inspired by Jewish composers. $15, $20, $25. 59 Lissom Cres., Nov. 16, 7 p.m. 416-226-0111.

• • •

At the Galleries

•Waddington's auctions **Charles Bronfman's** Claridge Collection, comprising more than 900 contemporary works by 372 Canadian artists, including **David Bolduc, David Blackwood, Edward Burtynsky, Alex Cameron, John Massey, Alex Wyse, Alan Wood, Don Proch** and many others. Waddington's, 275 King St. E., 2nd floor. Nov. 6, decorative arts sale at 1 p.m., fine arts at 7 p.m. Proceeds to benefit Historica Canada. waddingtons.ca.

Joe King, left, met many of Israel's leaders including Moshe Dayan.

• Recent paintings by **Judi Lederman** are on view at the Leaside Public Library, 165 McRae Dr. until Nov. 30. Reception Nov. 7, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Artist present, Saturday Nov. 16, 1 to 5 p.m.

•**Harry Benson – the Beatles 50th Anniversary** is an exhibition of iconic 20th century images that includes the **Beatles** and other celebrity photographic portraits. Liss Gallery, 140 Yorkville Ave. Nov. 16 to Dec. 16. Opening reception with artist, Nov. 16, 6:30 to 9 p.m. RSVP to 416-787-9872 or info@lissgallery.com

• *Rhythm Distributed*, works by **Bernice Eisenstein**, on view in the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until Nov. 18.

• • •

Passages: Joe King, award-winning journalist, broadcaster and author of a host of books on Jewish Montreal and other subjects, died last week in Montreal at the age of 90.

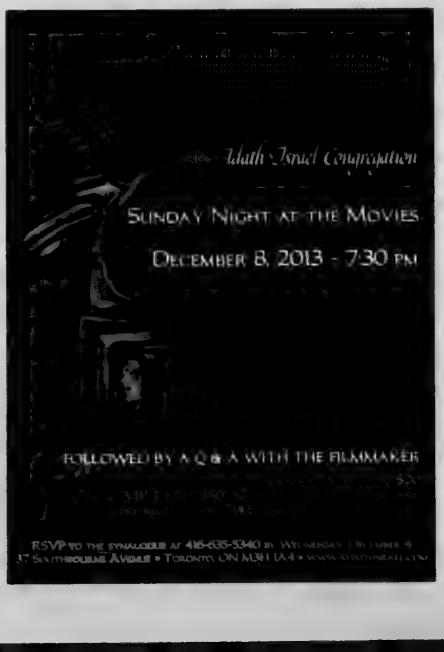
Born in Toronto in 1923, King got his first job as a copy boy at the *Canadian Press New Agency* and worked in radio for several years before joining the RCAF in the Second World War. Afterwards he helped establish CTV's television station in Halifax where he hosted and produced many television news programs.

He also served as director of marketing and communications for Montreal's Federation CJA for 20 years, during which he met most of Israel's political leaders including **David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan** and **Ariel Sharon**. An untiring champion of Israel, he visited the Jewish state perhaps 20 times and edited and distributed a pro-Israel geopolitical e-newsletter almost daily until several days before he died.

He once was invited into an "off-the-record" cabinet meeting headed by Meir, who noticed that he was taking notes and told him: "Young man, this is an off-the-record occasion." "I'm aware of that, I'm only taking notes with love," King replied, and Meir never said another word.

King loved Canadian Jewish history and made many intriguing discoveries about the Jews of Montreal. In his book *Fabled City*, he identified three villains – prime minister Mackenzie King, his justice minister Ernest Lapointe, and British high commissioner Vincent Massey – for failing to respond to the destruction of European Jews in the Nazi era.

His books include *From the Ghetto to the Main* (2000), *The Case for Israel* (2002), *The Jewish Contribution to the Modern World* (2004), *Baron Byng to Bagels* (2006), *Rekindling the Torch: the Story of Canadian Zionism* (2008) and *Fabled City: the Jews of Montreal* (2009).



The Valley explores painful subjects

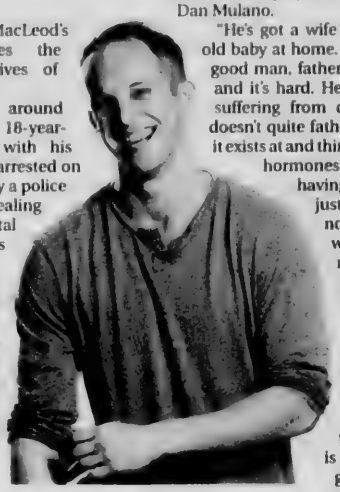
Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

The Valley, Joan MacLeod's latest play, explores the unexpected shared lives of strangers.

The play revolves around Connor, a troubled 18-year-old, who moves in with his mother. One day he is arrested on Vancouver's SkyTrain by a police officer who is also dealing with the effects of mental health issues within his own home.

Directed by Tarragon Theatre's artistic director Richard Rose, the Toronto premiere of *The Valley* runs from Nov. 6 until Dec. 15 at Tarragon's Mainspace.

"Ultimately the play is about healing, about the difficulty in healing and the different stages of healing," explains Stratford Festival veteran Ian Lake, who plays the 30-year-old officer, Dan Mulano.



Ian Lake
(Cylla von Tiedemann photo)

"He's got a wife and a five-month-old baby at home. He's trying to be a good man, father, cop and husband and it's hard. He has a wife who is suffering from depression and he doesn't quite fathom the depths that it exists at and thinks its post-partum, hormones from pregnancy, having just had a baby or just being tired from not sleeping," Lake, who prepared for the role by spending time with Stratford police officers, says.

"He just tries to fix things as any good man will want to do. What he learns as the play progresses is that the problem goes deeper than that and it is not just offering a solution... and that it is more of a disease than just a choice."

Lake says the play explores how humanity exists in all of us and how we all need people to understand our pain and not try to fix it.

"I think this is a subject that has a stigma about it, that people don't want to acknowledge when depression really exists in their life or household and I would hope that we can take that stigma down a little bit and just tell the story on a very common, human level and have people connect to that."

Susan Coyne plays Sharon, Connor's mother, Colin Mercer plays Connor and Michelle Monteith is Mulano's wife, Janie.

"When I come to work I feel like we have an embarrassment of riches in this play – the actors, the director Richard Rose and our writer Joan MacLeod who has written such a wonderful piece that I find very real," says Lake. "It is a nice experience to be working in a room full of such gifted people."

Many of Lake's first performances were on stage at the Peretz Centre, a Jewish community centre in Vancouver where he grew up in a secular home.

"I did my Birthright a few years ago and the thing I really connected to was there's real performance energy in our culture, and I mean that in a very positive way. There's a real vitality that I think is very infectious and I'm very proud to try and connect to that side of my Jewish self in my adult life. I think there is that fire in the blood that exists in my family; a feistiness which I think has really translated into who I am as a performer."

His extensive theatre training includes the Birmingham Conservatory for Classical Theatre and the University of Victoria BFA Theatre Program.

Lake just wrapped up his sixth season at the Stratford Festival—performing in *Mary Stuart*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Othello*. In 2009, Lake garnered Stratford Festival's Michael Mawson Award, awarded annually to a graduate of the festival's training program.

Lake also appeared on stage in *This is War*, *For This Moment Alone*, *Amadeus*, *Schoolhouse*, *Lost Heir* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. On film and TV, he was seen in *Bomb Girls*, *Pulling Rank*, *Flashpoint*, *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *SPIT*, and *He Was Perfectly Fine*.

For tickets to *The Valley*, call the box office at 416-531-1827 or visit www.tarragontheatre.com

Chosen actor wants to transport audiences to 1944 Brooklyn

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

Toronto actor Sam Rosenthal will play the role of Reuven in Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre's adaptation of Chaim Potok's bestselling novel *The Chosen* starting Nov. 13.

The story is about two young boys living in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1944 who first meet each other at a baseball game where their two schools are competing. Reuven gets hit in the face by a line drive thrown mistakenly by Danny. They become unlikely friends.

"One boy is a chassidic Jew and the other is a boy is growing up as a practising Jew, but he's not chassidic," explains Rosenthal.

"It's the story of the two of them growing up together trying to understand that both their fathers have very strong points of view in the community. I play Reuven, the narrator... the older Reuven looking back on his life, who guides the audience through the show."

The play takes place around the time of the creation of the State of Israel. Danny and his father, Reb Saunders, a chassidic leader, are both against the Zionists, while Reuven's father, David Malter, an Orthodox humanist professor, is a passionate Zionist driven to take action because of the Holocaust.

Continued on page 42

Sam Rosenthal, left, as Reuven Malter and Tal Shulman as young Reuven.

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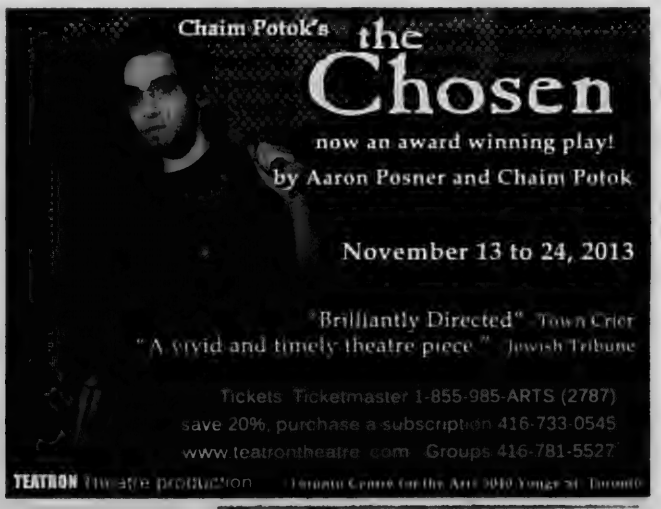
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TEATRON Theatre production

Top pianist to play Brahms with Toronto Symphony

Marvin Glassman
Special To The CJN

Classical musical pianist Emanuel Ax will showcase *Brahms Concerto No. 2* as the feature attraction of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra program this week at Roy Thomson Hall.

Earning his reputation as one of the top classical pianists in the world, Ax has chosen a Brahms piece to perform with the TSO that has four movements instead of the traditional three in the concerto.

"*Brahms Concerto No. 2* has much depth and has to be played with integrity and imagination as if it were a symphony. The audience will immediately hear and feel Manny's enthusiasm and be treated to an extraordinary performance," said Peter Oundjian, conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for the 10th season, who has performed multiple times with Ax.

Ax's reputation has him performing with the leading philharmonic orchestras in the world for over 30 years, excelling not only on the works of Brahms, Beethoven, Chopin, but also in chamber music.

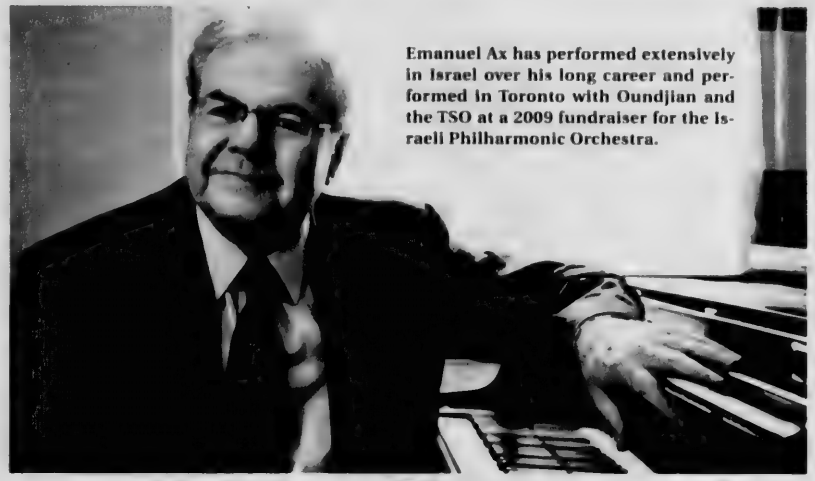
He has won seven Grammy Awards, two for solo performances and five collaborating with cellist Yo-Yo Ma in chamber music. Ax has also teamed with violinists Itzhak Perlman and Isaac Stern among other marquee musicians.

Earning a scholarship at the famed Julliard School in New York at age 12, Ax is now on the faculty of Julliard and has earned honorary doctorates in music from both Columbia and Yale universities.

"Even with all the awards and fame, I never stop rehearsing and working to be the best artist possible. The quest for quality never stops and I feel blessed to have a deep passion for music," said Ax.

Born in Lvov, Poland, the 64-year-old pianist's mother and father both were Holocaust survivors. His parents both saw their spouses murdered in the concentration camps and when Emanuel, their only child, was born they gave him the gift of a music education.

"I gave my parents their life. My father especially loved music and he was my first piano teacher. Music to a large degree kept my parents going through their tragedies, more than anything else and they were so pleased that I took so quickly to music."



Emanuel Ax has performed extensively in Israel over his long career and performed in Toronto with Oundjian and the TSO at a 2009 fundraiser for the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ax was a quick study- playing the piano like a master at age six. The family moved over the next six years from Poland to Winnipeg and eventually to New York, where Ax still resides.

His first taste of world success came in Tel Aviv in 1974 when he won the prestigious Arthur Rubinstein international piano master competition.

Ax has performed extensively in Israel over his long career and performed in Toronto with Oundjian and the TSO at a 2009 fundraiser for the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has been married to chamber music pianist Yoko Nozaki, whom he met at Julliard as a teen, for 47 years. They have two children, neither are musicians.

Classical pianist Emanuel Ax performs Brahms Concerto No. 2 *with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Nov. 6 and 7 at 8 p.m. at Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St., Toronto. Also on the program are* Haydn's Symphony No. 96 *and* Kulesha's Third Symphony. *Tickets are $33-145. For tickets, call 416-593-4828 or go to www.tso.ca*

Play is a window into Jewish passions

Continued from page 41

Rosenthal says it's the story of Zionism versus deeply religious Jews, who couldn't imagine the State of Israel being created by non-chassidic Jews.

"As a Jewish kid who grew up in Forest Hill, who went to synagogue three times a year, I have a great love for our religion and its traditions although I am not a practising Jew," Rosenthal said. "I am learning so much about our culture and heritage. I really didn't know much about chassidic Jews and this play is giving me a wonderful insight into what is Chassidism and the study of the Talmud and what is important about that."

Rosenthal says theatregoers are in for a real treat. "I want the audience to experience a night of great storytelling. If you come from the Jewish faith, then you are going to get a piece of our history and to be well-informed if you aren't already. And if you don't come from the Jewish faith, you get a look into this religion and to see some real passionate ideals from where these people are coming from. It's really fascinating.

"I want the audience to be transported to 1944 Brooklyn and get a sense of what it was like to grow up as a chassidic and non-chassidic Jewish kid in this culture... It is a window into this incredible world."

Rosenthal is married to former actress Michelle Suzanne, who now works as an astrologer. His list of theatre credits includes *Too Many Cooks, Hilda's Yard, When the Reaper Calls, Cherry Docs,* and *Same Time Next Year.* In January, he'll be acting in *The Other Side of the World,* at the Next Stage Festival, which also deals with Jews who fled Germany before the Holocaust.

He has also appeared in several television shows and movies. He was the artistic director for Tribal Productions for 10 years, followed by a two-year stint as the artistic director of the City Playhouse Theatre in Vaughan. This is his debut for Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre.

The production's cast also includes Howard Jerome, Michael Lebovic, Tal Shulman and Hershel Blatt.

The show runs at the Toronto Centre for the Arts Studio Theatre Nov. 13 to 22. For tickets to *The Chosen,* call Ticketmaster, 1-855-985-2787, or visit www.teatrontheatre.com

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HEEBONICS

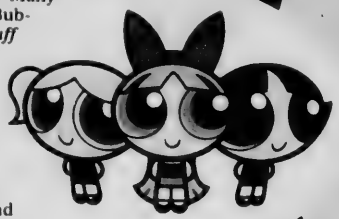
Versatile voice is key to success

With at least 28 credits in 2013 alone, Tara Strong is one of the most prolific voice actors

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

You may not have heard of Tara Strong, but if you've watched any cartoons over the past 20 years, you've almost certainly heard her voice.

It's hard to pinpoint which of her roles is the most famous. Many would recognize her as Bubbles from the *Powerpuff Girls*, while others might first think of Batgirl from the *New Adventures of Batman and Robin*, or maybe Timmy Turner from *The Fairly OddParents*.



Her highly versatile voice has helped her land roles in some of the most popular shows in the last decade or two.

Strong's career in voice acting began when she was just 13 years old, when she landed her first starring role in *Hello Kitty's Furry Tale Theater*. But she began practising years before then.

"I remember at [the Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto] at four or five years old singing in my classes," the 40-year-old voice actress said, adding that she liked animation, but her dream was to perform in general, not specifically to do voice acting.

But she was always good with voices.

"I always did funny voices with my mom. I'd say, 'Lets pretend we're from England' when we go into a store, and every stuffed animal had a funny voice."

By the time Strong had moved to Los Angeles when she was 20, she had more than 100 animated series on her resume. Although she said she sometimes misses members of her family who still live in Toronto, she really hasn't looked back.

"I just don't miss the cold. The weather in L.A. is so incredible," she said.

This year, she headed back to her hometown for the first time in five years, this time as a guest at Fan Expo, the Toronto fan convention that drew more than 100,000 people in August.

Among the crowds at the convention were a number of men dressed as unicorns or sporting shirts with Strong's *My Little Pony* character, Twilight Sparkle. These fans are known as "bronies" and there are a ton of them.

Although many would expect *My Little Pony* to target mostly young girls, Strong said it's not completely shocking that so many men are interested in the show.

"The creator who built this world also worked a great deal on *Powerpuff Girls*, which you could also say looked like a girl's show, but appealed to all ages and sexualities," she said, adding that she's never seen a fan base quite like the Pony fans. "They are the loveliest people watching a show that makes them laugh."

It was mostly thanks to these fans that Strong was able to raise more than $100,000 for a family whose child, known as Kiki, was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Her son met Kiki in kindergarten, and the two families became very close. Strong said Kiki and her family would attend all of Strong's Chanukah and Passover dinners. She described Kiki as the cutest, fun ball of energy.

But one day, she completely shut down, Strong said.

"It sent a shockwave through the school," she said. The family had to pay for expensive treatment, so Strong took to Twitter to ask for help.

"Literally from all over the world, donations poured in for this little girl," she said.

Unfortunately, Kiki passed away this year at seven years old.

But Strong is continuing her involvement with charities, one of them being Bronies for Good, a group of fans inspired by the altruistic messages of *My Little Pony*, trying to have a positive impact on the world. Last month, the group held a fundraiser with Strong on what would have been Kiki's eighth birthday.

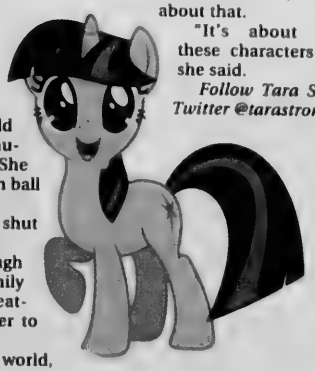
Strong said her Judaism is a big part of her identity – she loves the traditions, such as lighting the candles every Shabbat. It's also helped her with tweaking some of the Yiddishisms or Israeli accents in some of the scripts.

She also spent time as a teenager performing Yiddish theatre in Toronto, even though she doesn't actually speak Yiddish. She would memorize the lines phonetically, and was so good that sometimes, after the shows, audience members would come up to her and speak to her in Yiddish, expecting her to understand.

Although Strong has an incredibly successful career, she warned that voice acting isn't a particularly open-arms industry. Anybody thinking of a career in it should remember that it's a tough business, Strong said. People often tell her that they have a funny voice, so they are thinking of become a voice actor, but it's not about that.

"It's about bringing these characters to life," she said.

Follow Tara Strong on Twitter @tarastrong.



Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

What's New

By LILA SARICK

Deadline reminder: Nov. 11 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 21. Nov. 18 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 28. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnew cjn@gmail.com.

Saturday, Nov. 9

PYJAMA HAVDALAH

Beth David Synagogue hosts a teddy bear pyjama Havdalah with storyteller **Cheryl Thornton**, 6:30 p.m. www.beth-david.com.

PARENTING CLASS

Goldie Plotkin leads a parenting class today and Nov. 30, at 11 a.m., Chabad of Markham. No fee, but RSVP 905-886-0420, ext. 227, or lindsay@chabad-markham.org.

A PEOPLE UNCOUNTED

Or Hadash Synagogue shows the film *A People Uncounted*, about the the Roma, with director **Aaron Yeger**, 8 p.m., 451 Botsford St., Newmarket, 905-898-2220 or info@orhadash.org.

BNAI SHALOM

Bnai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel, a Conservative egalitarian congregation, meets today. 905-901-9889 or www.bnaishalom.ca.

Sunday, Nov. 10

UNCLE MOISHY

Uncle Moishy performs in a benefit concert for DANI, Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., For tickets, www.dani-toronto.com.

VE'AHAVTA AWARDS

Ve'ahavta's Tikun Olam Awards ceremony, featuring keynote speaker **Frank O'Dea**, will be held at Koerner Concert Hall. For tickets, call 416-964-7698 or www.veahavta.org.

FAMILY FUNDAY

Jewish Family and Child puts on a family fun day 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Prosserman JCC, with activities, performances and crafts. $10/$15. Tickets, www.jfandcs.com.

RAMAH OPEN HOUSE

Camp Ramah holds an open house, 12:30 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. RSVP info@campramah.com or 416-789-2193, ext. 2100.

PARENTS OF LONE SOLDIERS

A meeting for parents of lone soldiers in the IDF will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Bathurst/Eglinton area. Guest speakers include a representative from Heseg, which grants scholarships to discharged soldiers, and two lone soldiers. RSVP niraritenberg@rogers.com.

Monday, Nov. 11

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Toronto post, re-dedicates the Flames of Memory memorial, Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., 10:45 a.m. RSVP 416-635-2883, ext. 5181.

CANADA'S DEFENCE POLICY

Adam Chapnick discusses "Does Canada need a Defence Policy," 2 p.m. Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880.

BY BLOOD

Cynthia Good reviews *By Blood* by **Ellen Ullman**, Beth Tzedec Congregation. Lunch at 1 p.m., review at 1:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

WEEKLY CLASSES

Rabbi Shlomo Gemara holds a weekly class on the minor prophets, Mondays at 8 p.m.; **Rabbi Yirmiya Milevsky** holds a weekly class on the parashah of the week, Tuesdays 11:15 a.m. Congregation Bnai Torah.

Tuesday, Nov. 12

LUNCH AND LEARN

Sen. Linda Frum is the speaker at Beth Tikvah Synagogue's Lunch and learn. Call 416-221-3433 to register.

Gerald Ziedenberg discusses *Steve Jobs: An American Success Story*, Temple Har Zion. Bring your lunch at noon, program starts at 12:30 p.m. $3/$6

HOME ORGANIZATION

Brenda Orenstein of Organized Zone discusses home organization, Beth Emeth Synagogue, 7:30 p.m. RSVP 416-633-3838

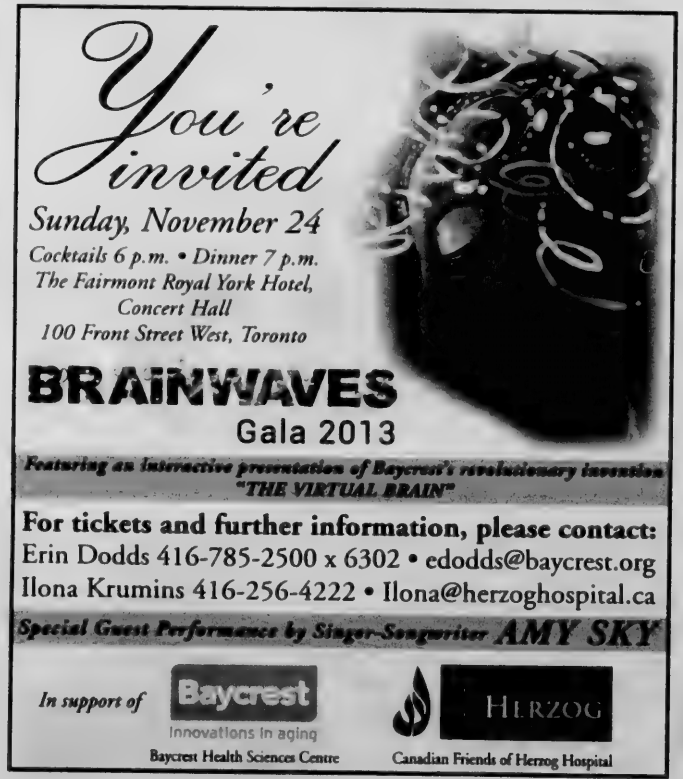
BIBLICAL CURRENT EVENTS

Rabbi Michael Dolgin discusses "Using Ancient Texts to Understand Modern Israeli Society," in a 3-week series, Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m.

CHRONIC PAIN

Sharon Prasow discusses how to help those struggling with pain and disability, 7:30 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

Continued on page 45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Continued from page 44

JEWS IN CHINA

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein discusses the Jewish communities of Kaifeng, Wolfond Centre, 8 p.m. 647-799-3557.

CHANUKAH WORKSHOP

Beth David Sisterhood holds a Chanukah workshop with actress **Tracey Erin Smith,** 8 p.m. $5.

LONG-TERM CARE

Learn about long-term care options and substitute decision-making, 6:30 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre, RSVP 416-635-2900, ext. 499. Sponsored by Family Caregiver Connections.

ZAREINU FASHION SHOW

Zareinu holds its annual fashion show with host **Jeanne Beker,** Bellevue Manor, 8083 Jane St., 7 p.m. Tickets, 416-661-1800, ext. 227 or www.zareinu.org.

Wednesday, Nov. 13

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

"Sammy," a survivor of human trafficking, York Regional Police Detective **Thai Truong** and reporter **Tamara Cherry** discuss human trafficking, with National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto section, 4700 Bathurst St., 7 p.m. Free, but RSVP required at 416-633-5100.

OPEN HOUSE

Netivot HaTorah Day School holds an open house, 18 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, 7:30 p.m. RSVP **Mashie Feintuch,** 905-771-1234, ext. 234.

JEWS IN SPORTS

Film producer **Will Hechter** discusses *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story,* 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation, Free, but RSVP, 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

THE LOSS OF A CHILD

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario presents a panel discussion and healing service on "The Loss of a Child," 7:30 p.m., Beth Sholom Synagogue. No cost, but RSVP: lmarmer@jfandcs.com or 416-638-7800, ext. 6312.

Thursday, Nov. 14

A NIGHT OF WONDER

Small Wonders, an organization that supports Jewish couples experiencing infertility, is holding a "Night of Wonder," 7:15 p.m. For tickets, see smallwonders.ca, or call 416-742-0090.

MY HERZL

Beth Sholom Synagogue screens the film *My Herzl,* 7:30 p.m. 416-783-6103.

Other News

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Nov. 7. Mordechai Ben-Dat discusses "History of the Jewish Press in Europe and the Role of the Media during the Holocaust," 7 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

David Abramowitz discusses "Stalin's Holocaust," noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. www.yiddishvinkl.com.

The White Rose, a play by **Lillian Groag,** runs Nov. 7, 8 & 10 at City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Thornhill. For tickets, call 905-882-7469.

Nov. 9. Rabbi Erwin Schild shares his memories of Kristallnacht, at Adath Israel Synagogue, Shabbat morning service.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett discusses the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 10. Eric Beck Rubin discusses "The North American Narrative of the Holocaust," Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, 18 Wynford Dr., 7 p.m.

Carol Lipszyc discusses "Reconstructing Trauma Across Genres Through Language," Pride of Israel Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 12. Bernd Wollschlaeger discusses his journey from the Wehrmacht to the IDF, 8 p.m., Chabad of Markham, 83 Green Lane.

Nov. 15. ***Voices from the Whirlwind: A Choral Concert.*** Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir, Upper Canada Choristers and the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir perform music created before and during the Holocaust. Temple Sinai, 8 p.m.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney,** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Looking Ahead: A 6-session group for newly separated or divorced individuals. Starts Nov. 7, 7 p.m.

Living with Teens: A 6-session group for parents of teenagers. Starts Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m.

Parenting the Child/Teen with ADHD: A 4-week group for parents of children diagnosed with ADHD. Call 416-638-7800, ext. 6215 for a pre-group assessment.

Healthy Dating & Relationships for Teens: A 2-part workshop for teens ages 15 and older, starts Nov. 21, 5 p.m., Schwartz Reisman Centre.

Stop the Roller-coaster: A workshop for parents or professionals who want to learn more about the change in teenagers' behaviour and attitudes. Nov. 27, 7 p.m.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women who have lost a spouse and want to move forward. Nov. 28, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333 or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Bernard Betel Centre, 416-225-2112. Nov. 12, **Robin Mednick** discusses "Changing the World – Get Out Your Hammer and Chisel," 10 a.m.; Nov. 13, Yiddish entertainment and movie, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Nov. 14, **Jenny Zawaly** discusses "Allergies and Food Sensitivities," 1:30 p.m.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Nov. 20. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays mah-jong 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Email lisar@mnjcc.org. Nov. 14, **Dr. Michael Gordon** discusses "The Challenges of Aging and Families." Refreshments at 1:30 p.m., program at 2 p.m.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis,** 905-889-5722.

Edithvale Community Centre, 416-665-9050. Feldenkrais Awareness through Movement, Mondays 10 a.m. $60/5 classes.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Prosserman JCC Daycare and Preschool hold an open house, Nov. 17, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Call **Kailah Rubin,** ext. 4250.

Osnat Lippa explores modern Jewish artistic culture in Israel, Nov. 12, 1 p.m.

Yossi Eiran of the Weizmann Institute presents fun math with magic, Nov. 18, 5:30 p.m.

Be part of the Prosserman JCC Shalom Singers. No auditions needed. Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 a.m.

Try Nia, which combines martial arts, dance and healing arts. Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Melt and stretch exercise method, Fridays. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Kobi Hass presents "The Evolution of Israeli Songs," Nov. 10, 2 p.m.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Monsieur Batignole.* Guest speaker **Yves Etienne Massicotte.** Nov. 10, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets at the door, only. $15/$10. Ext. 606.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Nov. 11, Film Noir: *Thieves Like Us.*

Jewish Chanting Circle with **Rabbi Miriam Margles,** Nov. 12, 7:30 p.m. Email music@mnjcc.org.

Beyond Bubbie: An evening of food, family and stories, hosted by **David Sax,** author of *Save The Deli,* Nov. 14, 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $10. 416-635-5391, ext. 5187.

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574.

MELT Method: Self-treatment techniques to help prevent pain and heal injury, Wednesdays 11 a.m. to Nov. 30; MELT Method one-day intensive, Nov. 17, 11 a.m. $40/$50; Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m.to Dec. 18.

Rhythm Distributed, works by **Bernice Eisenstein,** are on display in the gallery until Nov. 18.

Chanukah at the JCC: Poolside Chanukah Party, Nov. 30, 6:30 p.m.; Community Chanukah Celebration, Dec. 1, 10 a.m.; 44 in 44: 44 Jewish titles reviewed in 44 minutes by **Belinda Keshen** and **Sharoni Sibony,** Dec. 1, 10:30 a.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200

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BRIDAL

FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב

Shira & Sol Lev and sister Bayla Pearl announce the birth of Alana Gila. She is welcomed by proud grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins.

Judge Irwin & Audrey Lampert of Moncton, N.B., Barry & Terri Applebaum, announce the birth of their granddaughter, Annie Joyce Applebaum, Oct. 14., to Derek and Mindy (Lampert) Applebaum.

Rhona & Joey Sobol and Naomi & Richard Blumer are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Amanda and Daniel. An August 2014 wedding is planned.

Mazel tov to Ryan William Dworzak on becoming a bar mitzvah, Oct. 14. Love, Mom, Dad, Jaycie, Bubbie, Zaidy, Grandma & Grandad xox

Mazel Tov and Happy 90th birthday to Mirla Rosenblat. With lots of love, hugs and kisses from her children and grandchildren.

Mazel tov Mom/Bubbie (Fayga Orzech) on your 80th birthday! May you be blessed with many more. Love always, your children and grandchildren

Email your digital photos to cbleiman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

The puberty party

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

As my twin daughters' bodies start to show the first signs of womanly development, I can't help but think back to my own experiences.

My first trip bra shopping was a department store nightmare. It felt embarrassing enough just needing this extra piece of delicate clothing to hold my body parts in place, but to have a nosey salesperson in the change room with me, adjusting, inspecting and viewing the goods was way too much.

In those days the 13-year-old version of me suffered the indignity silently, returning home with a hideous bra that spoke nothing of the sensuality of growing into a woman. I'm determined that my daughters' experiences will be completely different.

I'm imagining a celebratory mom-daughter shopping trip for that first bra, of scouting out the cutest, perkiest options online and finding bra-panty sets that are chic and make the girls feel good about their changing bodies.

My first bra looked comparable to the ones my mother and grandmother were wearing – that dull, flesh-coloured piece of apparel with no lace, ribbon or anything remotely pretty in sight.

My daughters' bras are going to be colourful, cutesy and practical. Sexy I don't need – hopefully it will be many years before a boy's fumbling fingers reach to undo those back clips. But the bra does have a significant dual function: it needs to hold "the girls" in place, and it needs to make my daughters feel good about the fact that their breasts are growing – not embarrassed, annoyed or self-conscious.

The onset of their first period is another milestone I want to be prepared for – with a planned celebration for that, too.

"We're going on a special mom-daughter experience when it comes," I announced to my girls today.

I'm thinking some cute, new underwear will fit the occasion, along with a nice dinner out at their favourite restaurant and a mani-pedi to festivize this bloody occasion.

There's nothing fun about the tampons and sanitary towels they'll learn to use, nor the stomach cramps that often accompany "that time of the month." So we have two choices: a morose acceptance of the implications of the first period, or a celebration of healthy, changing bodies. The latter sounds way more fun.

Every woman remembers the arrival of her first period, and when those stories are divulged the word "celebration" isn't commonly used as a descriptive adjective.

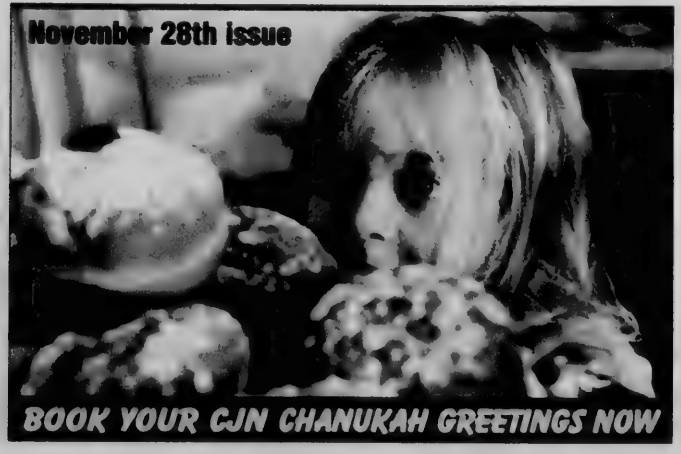
Mine – in a restaurant washroom while I was on vacation, far from home – stained my memory with disgust, embarrassment and annoyance at the sheer inconvenience. I'd known it would come sooner or later, but, I remember wondering, did my body really *have* to surprise me right then and there?

At the time it was a big, ugly pubescent secret and with it came excruciating cramps that forced me to learn how to swallow pills for the first time. Now that's a skill I can say I've mastered. But that stain of embarrassment is hard to erase.

I don't want my girls to feel that way. It's why I'm going to find bright toiletry bags to keep in the car, stocked with new underwear, hygiene items necessary to take care of the details, and a little gift that somehow says mazal tov!

If nothing else, I'm going to be prepared on their behalf, ready with solutions, a big smile and a willingness to celebrate their entry into womanhood.

It's going to be a rocky road, so we might as well make it a fun one!



A rice dish par excellence

Sue Epstein
Special to The CJN

A small, but long-grained, aromatic rice with a nutlike flavour and aroma, basmati rice is of Southeast Asian origin, and has been cultivated for thousands of years. It has an earthy, perfumed fragrance all its own. It's a very light, delicate rice and is perfect with curries and for pilafs.

CRISPY BOTTOMED BASMATI RICE WITH LENTILS

The first time I ate this was at the home of Iranian Jews. I would have happily passed up everything else on the table in favour of this dish. It is time consuming, but not difficult to make, and it's memorable. The crusty part on the bottom is the best part.

3 cups basmati rice
2 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. salt
4 tbsp. olive oil
1 large onion, finely diced
2 cups brown lentils, washed and dried
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. paprika
1 bunch fresh basil leaves, cut julienne

Wash the rice in several changes of warm water until the water runs clear. Soak the rice for 6 to 8 hours, or overnight, in cold water to cover, with 1 tbsp. of the salt. Alternatively, to save time, soak the rice in lukewarm water with the salt for 30 to 45 minutes.

Heat a large, heavy-bottomed skillet over medium heat. Add 2 tbsp. of the olive oil and the onion. Cook until the onion becomes translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the lentils, garlic, pepper and paprika. Continue cooking 2 minutes. Add 2 cups of water, cover, and cook until tender, about 45 minutes.

Season with the 1 tsp. salt, or to taste. Stir in the basil. In a large saucepan over medium high heat, bring about eight cups of water to a boil with the remaining 1 tbsp. of salt. Drain the rice from the soaking liquid and add it to the boiling water. Return to a boil and cook for 10 to 12 minutes, uncovered, stirring occasionally. Test a grain of rice for doneness; it should be cooked entirely except for a small part in the centre. Strain the rice in a colander and rinse with warm water. Drain well.

Heat the remaining 2 tbsp. of olive oil in a large, well-seasoned or nonstick stock pot with a tight fitting lid, over medium heat. Add about 2 tbsp. water and sprinkle the cooked rice evenly onto the bottom of the pot a spoonful at a time until two thirds of the rice has been distributed.

Spread the lentil mixture evenly over the rice. Cover the lentils with the remaining rice, mounding it slightly in the centre. Use the handle of a wooden spoon to poke about 5 deep holes in the rice from the surface of the rice to the bottom of the pot to allow steam to escape. Cover the pot with a thick cotton dish towel and place the lid on tightly. Reduce the heat to medium low and cook for 35 to 40 minutes, turning the pot occasionally.

Fill the sink with cold water 1 or 2 in. deep. Remove the cover from the rice and have a large, round platter ready. Place the pot in the sink for 1 minute, watching so that no water enters the pot. Remove the pot and dry off the bottom, then invert the rice cake onto the platter. It should unmould itself in one piece and be golden brown. Bring the platter to the table and serve family style. Cut individual wedges from the rice cake, similar to cutting a pie. Makes 6 servings.

CHANUKAH COOKING TIPS

(A) If chopping onions for latkes irritates your eyes, place onion in the freezer for a few minutes before cutting. This will make the liquid in the onions slightly frozen, and less likely to splash as you cut.

(B) To keep latkes from getting soggy, remove from frying pan while still crisp; place on a cooling rack (set inside a pan, so the dripping oil will not go on your counter) while you refill the frying pan with raw latkes to cook. Transfer cooked latkes to a tray lined with paper towels.

(C) If you are watching fat intake spray a light coat of olive oil on a cookie sheet. Form latke batter into small round portions on cookie sheet. Spray top of each portion with a very light coat of oil. Bake at 450°F until golden brown, 15-20 min.

(D) Half-cooked latke/beaten egg/fried onion latke batter can be frozen ahead of time and finished up before ready to serve.

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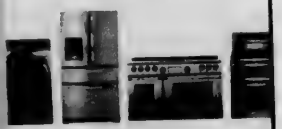
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Clementines make cake sweet and light

Sue Epstein
Special to The CJN

I am often asked if it's really necessary to grease and flour cake pans when baking. There are a few answers to that question.

If you are making a layer cake that you'll frost and want it to look smooth, definitely grease and flour your pans. If it's a chocolate cake, use cocoa instead of flour for the pan.

If it's a sheet-type pan (brownies or squares) that you will be serving from the pan, you can just grease the pan or line it with parchment paper.

For gluten-free cakes, line the pan with parchment paper. Gluten-free flour is very gritty and if you substitute cornstarch for the flour in "grease and flour" you may not like the taste.

If you are using a bundt pan it's very necessary to grease and flour the pan very well, even if it's a non-stick bundt pan; they are not 100 per cent non-stick. Don't use butter or margarine to grease them either, and don't use non-stick sprays such as Pam, unless it's the new ones on the market that also contain flour. It accumulates each time you bake and eventually you'll have a scummy coating on the pan that will be almost impossible to get out.

CLEMENTINE CAKE

This is a delicious light cake to make. It is moist, creamy and is like a pound cake but with more texture.

3 medium clementines, unpeeled
1-1/2 cups sugar
¾ cup softened butter or margarine
3 eggs
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. vanilla extract

Icing:
1 medium clementine
2 tbsp. softened butter or margarine
1-1/3 cup powdered sugar
1 tbsp. orange liqueur

Grease and flour an 8-cup bundt pan. Wash and remove stems of clementines, cut into quarters and remove pits. Process unpeeled clementines with sugar in a food processor until smooth. Add butter or margarine, then eggs, processing after each addition until smooth. Add flour, baking powder, and process until combined. Spoon into pan and bake 50 minutes or until golden and top springs back when touched. Cool on a rack for 10 minutes. Remove cake from pan and cool on rack. Drizzle icing over cake.

For the icing, grate the rind and squeeze juice from one clementine. In a food processor, measure 2 tsp. rind and 2 tbsp. juice, add butter or margarine, powdered sugar, liqueur and process until smooth.

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THE LOLA STEIN INSTITUTE JOURNAL

ISSUE #14 | FALL 2013

THIS ISSUE

WHAT MAKES A SCHOOL THOUGHTFUL?

THE SCIENCE OF COLLABORATION

TORONTO HESCHEL SCHOOL AT 18: A PARENT'S GRATITUDE

DR. DAVID GOLDBLOOM TALKS THEATRE WITH RABBI JOE KANOFSKY

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Ideas generated and insights learned will be shared in **think** magazine, Spring 2014

think
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Integrated Jewish Studies espoused by The Lola Stein Institute are delivered at The Toronto Heschel School, a Jewish community day school in Toronto, Canada.

Lola Stein z"l was an early female pharmacist in South Africa, but her special talent was in hospitality and friendship. She cared for family and friends, at home and abroad, individually, uniquely, and lovingly. We honour her memory in a way that also reaches out to many.

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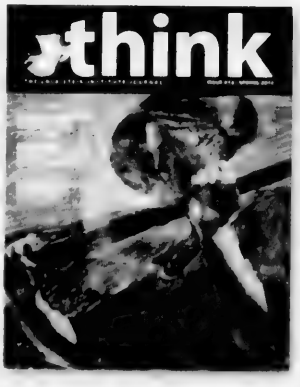

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ACADEMIC SKILLS AND CHARACTER AT THE SAME TIME

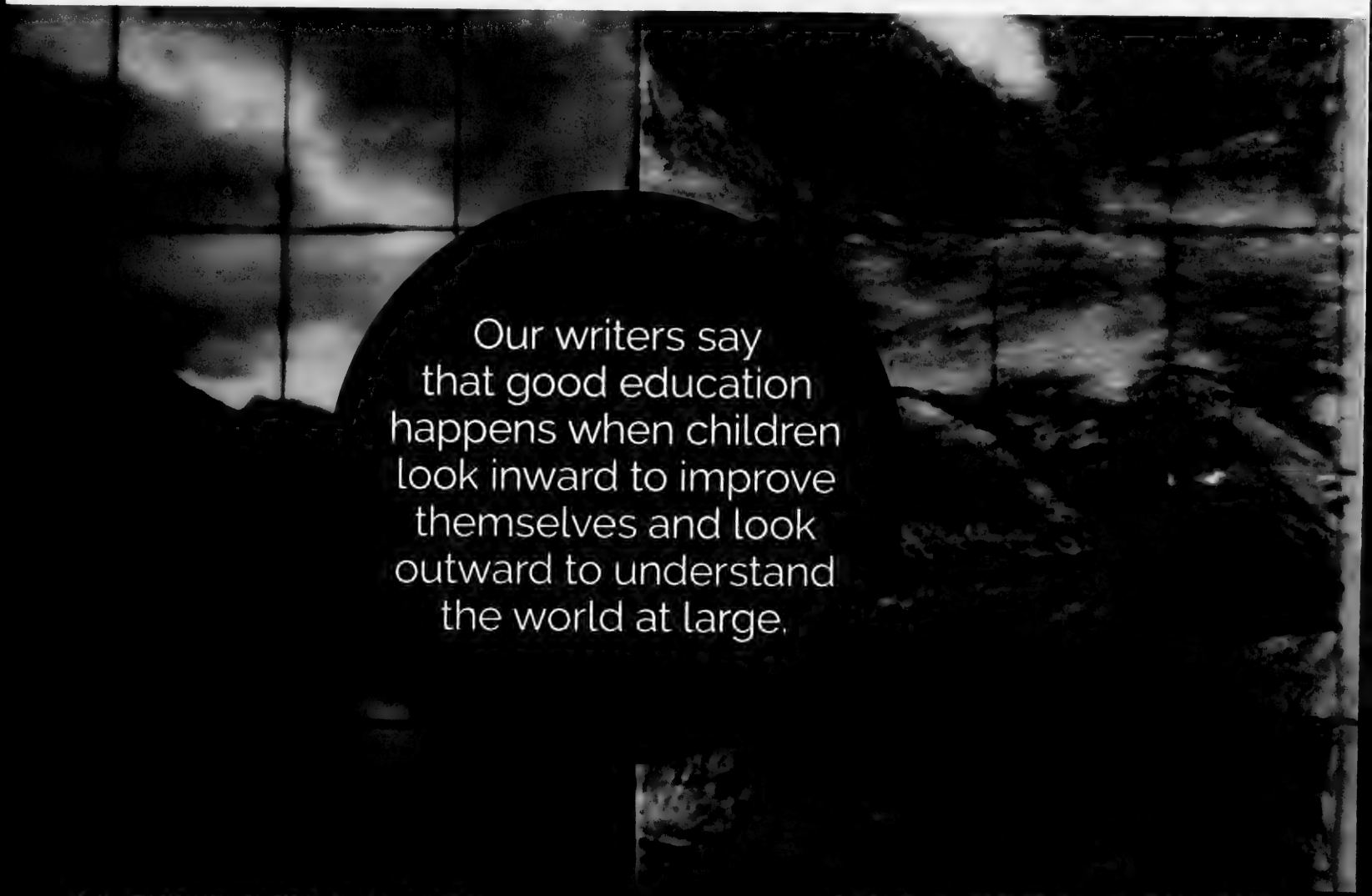
"Talent, knowledge, success are important to human existence. Yet talent without dedication, knowledge without reverence, success without humility may end in futility."

A.J. Heschel

A.J. Heschel's statement nicely summarizes the challenge that good educators face. The best educational strategy will deliver academic skills and build character at the same time. In this issue, we explore these layers. We look at specific educational practices that advance child development even as they expand the students' academic reach. Our writers say that good education happens when children look inward to improve themselves and look outward to understand the world at large.

At *think* our priority is thoughtful education, especially thoughtful Jewish education. In a two-part feature, Greg Beiles looks at how collections of ideas and traditions coalesce into "schools of thought." He then considers what constitutes a "thoughtful school," where thinking through a particular vision and practice creates an intentionally unique school experience.

Gail Baker uses role play to embed an understanding of social action in her students; creative drama flexes their imaginations and engenders empathy which is valuable



to students' interpersonal relationships as well as to their social conscience and appreciation of civil rights. Lesley Cohen advances junior high writing skills through a process of peer editing among her students that motivates self-improvement; her technique demands that students develop their composure and critical integrity which also serve to strengthen friendships and class community. Brandeis University researchers Orit Kent and Allison Cook find that when learning Judaic texts in junior high is carefully structured using the age-old Jewish modality of *chevrutah* (two students working together on one text), textual knowledge arrives with an emergent ethical and spiritual sensibility in each preteen.

Daniel Abramson reflects on his observations of scientists at the McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine who are combining efforts of leading-edge research and discovery: as a teacher Daniel explains how he structures classroom collaboration for discovery, while remembering that good teaching and successful teamwork hinge on respect for the individual. As Heidi Friedman and Talya Metz introduce five-year-olds to self-reflection, the children's personal victories become common cause in Senior Kindergarten; the youngsters learn to address their personal challenges over time as skills to be mastered. Lisa Richler highlights the insight and self-confidence garnered by sixth graders who experience what elderly and junior collaborators can offer to each other in an intergenerational program. Toronto's literary rabbi, Joe Kanofsky, discusses theatre and emotional well-being with Dr. David Goldbloom. Thankfully, learning through the arts is a lifelong activity and one that we all can enjoy!

This year is The Toronto Heschel School's 18th anniversary. Michelle Shulman shares why the school means so much to her.

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We will ask: Is the body "holy" or a source of sin and temptation? What do Jewish approaches to sexuality teach about body and gender? What do Jewish ethics teach about our responsibilities for our bodies and health? How has Jewish history in the Diaspora and State of Israel affected Jewish attitudes towards the physical body?

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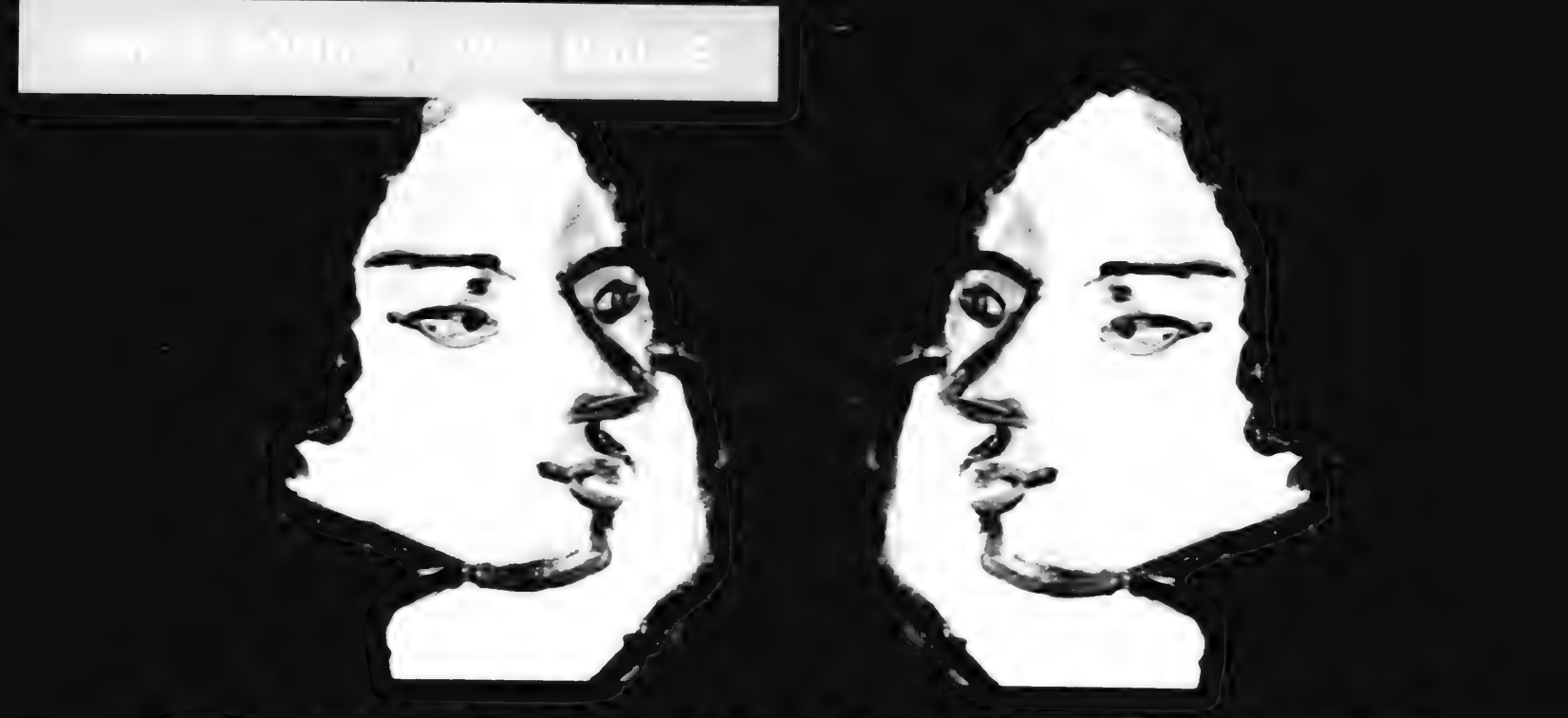


SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

PART ONE: WHAT MAKES A SCHOOL JEWISH?

Scholars have long debated whether Judaism is a religion, ethnicity, or civilization. I wonder if it is more apt to describe Judaism as a "school of thought." Without question, we should consider schools of thought when we think about Jewish education.

The term "school of thought" refers to more than a collection of "thoughts" or "ideas." In philosophy, art, architecture, or politics, a school of thought denotes interrelated elements such as values, beliefs, practices, communal forms, even political and economic systems. Judaism does this; it integrates a value system based on a theology, daily practices and rituals, strong communal forms, a prophetic politic that demands justice, and an economic system based on the principle of *tzedakah* (fairness). Judaism is an example par excellence of the confluence of ideas and practices that characterizes a school of thought.

A school of thought also involves a group of people engaged in dynamic productive conversation. Nowhere is this more evident than in the rabbinic tradition where sages ardently debate all matters of law and diverse interpretations rule the day. Sometimes Talmudic debates ensue between smaller "houses" within the larger school of Jewish thought. Long before the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry gave us the Houses of Gryffindor and Slytherin, the School of Judaism gave us *Beit Hillel* – the House of Hillel, and *Beit Shammai* – the House of Shammai.

Beit Hillel and *Beit Shammai* represent two, typically opposing, schools of thought that trace back to the scholars named Hillel and Shammai of the first century BCE. While later rabbis generally adopted the rulings of *Beit Hillel* for their practicality and compassion over the stricter decisions of *Beit Shammai*, the views of both houses were regarded as valid – or, in the words of the Talmud, both espoused "the words of the living God."

When we ask what it means today for our Jewish schools to be Jewish schools of thought, the question helps us consider the kinds of Jewish schools we desire. The Jewish school must ask, "What is Jewish about the way we teach and learn here?" It's not enough to name the school after a great rabbi, thinker, or leader, a Jewish school of thought must teach and

learn Jewishly; its Jewish connection must live and breathe in daily practices and community spirit.

Jewish ways of learning can inform teaching and learning at all levels. PaRDeS is an acronym for a rabbinic technique that calls for multiple approaches to reading a text:

P for *peshat* means considering the "simple, plain meaning."
R for *remez* means looking for "clues" or "inferences."
D for *drash* means engaging in "interpretation."
S for *sod* means "secret" and refers to exploring deeper meanings.

Although PaRDeS was developed for reading Jewish texts, it applies widely to reading in any language, solving mathematical problems, interpreting science experiments, and even addressing interpersonal conflicts such as bullying. It is a Jewish method of analysis with value across the curriculum; it offers students a Jewish lens.

Of course, the key to teaching "Jewishly" is to have Jewish teachers whose own Jewish learning continues. Several years ago when I ran a middle school, our biweekly staff meetings began with a *devar* Torah that connected the weekly *parshah* (Torah reading) to our craft of teaching and learning. One week we studied Moshe's encounter with the burning bush and saw him pass through several important stages of learning: he consciously turned his attention from a previous task to the task at hand; he examined the strange phenomenon closely; he wondered, posed a question – and, only then, did the voice within the burning bush speak to him.

Great schools of thought glean new ideas from ways of thinking, that are beyond their comfort zones. Judaism has engaged with many diverse schools of thought over the centuries – Babylonian, Greek, Roman, European, and, most recently, North American. As the Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig evocatively writes, Judaism "continuously assimilates itself outwardly in order again and again to set itself apart inwardly."[1]

Just as Judaism enriches its identity through interaction with other cultures, so a Jewish school polishes its pedagogy by studying other schools of educational thought. A few years ago my colleagues and I took a strong interest in the framework of Teaching for Understanding, as developed by Howard Gardner and his associates at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Gardner was integrating his theory of multiple intelligences with new research showing the cognitive efficacy of learning through the arts and teaching particular "Habits of Mind."

As we investigated Teaching for Understanding as a foundational educational approach, we explored how Gardner's insights meshed with Jewish thought. We asked what was, or might be, "Jewish" about Teaching for Understanding? Were Gardner's notions of experiential education reflected in the signature Jewish idea of *na'aseh venishmah* (first do, then understand)? How did the Habits of Mind articulated in Teaching for Understanding relate to the components of artisanship described in the Torah – *chacham lev* (the skilled heart) and *nadiv lev* (the generous heart)? Are there certain Jewish habits of mind that can be nurtured through particularly Jewish practices such as *tefillah* (prayer) or *chevruta* (studying in pairs)?

A school of thought focuses its internal conversation on how to implement its core vision and practices. Working to improve the "how" is the most challenging school ethic: How do we implement a dynamic Torah program that is based on *chevruta*? How do we teach second-language fluency (whether French or Hebrew) through drama? How do we embed performance of *middot* (Jewish virtues) as Habits of Mind? As one teacher at The Toronto Heschel School said recently, "These days, we aren't talking so much about 'what' to do but about 'how' to do it."

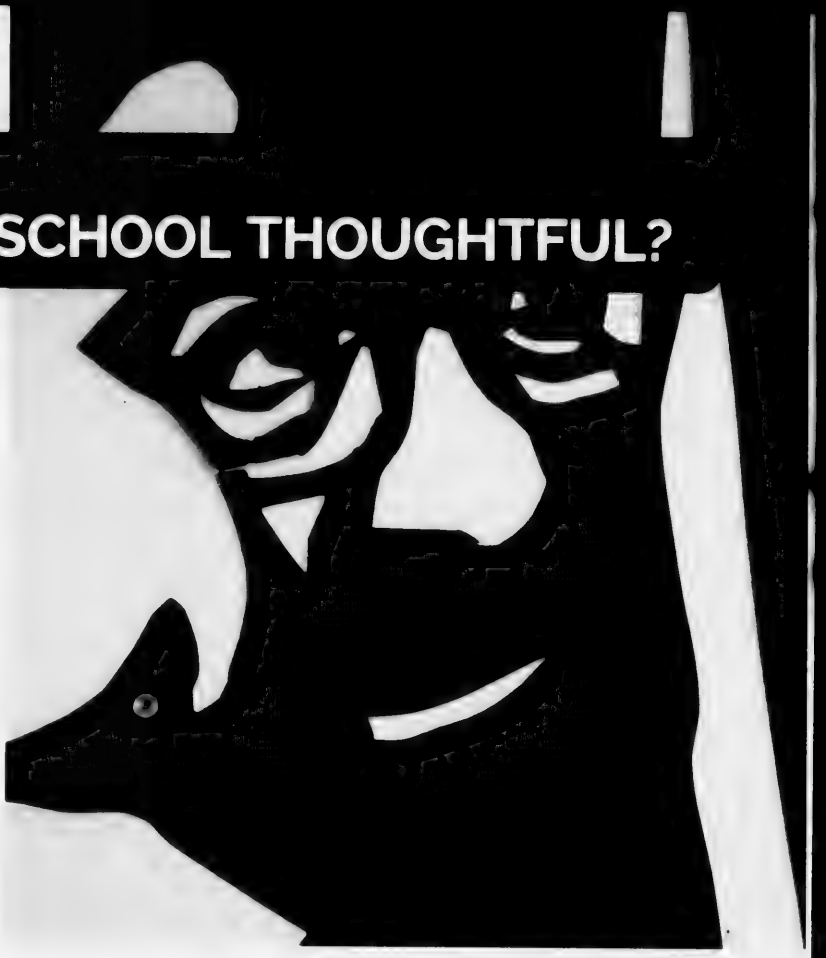
The key to being a school of thought (and, especially, a Jewish day school of thought) is to determine a set of practices, optimize them, and implement them with consistency and discipline. Here again, Judaism gives guidance. Two thousand years ago, the rabbis canonized the Hebrew Bible; they included some books and excluded others. The idea to consciously delimit boundaries models educational practice for a Jewish school.

By "drawing a circle around the text," the rabbis established a remarkably rich tradition of interpretation. They forced a custom of self-assessment and a wealth of literature on standards for the canon that we call the Torah. The practice reaches into what we define as our domain as Jews and searches its depths – a tradition that continues to this day. Likewise, schools need a clear definition of their vision and mission for their school standards, accountability, and creativity to be effectively measured.

Also like Judaism, a Jewish school of thought is distinguished by committed participants and a living culture. Its students love to learn and, one day, they will build their own schools of thought.

1 Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), p. 427.

PART TWO: WHAT MAKES A JEWISH SCHOOL THOUGHTFUL?



BY GREG BEILES

For the past 17 years I have had the privilege to be associated with a thoughtful Jewish school. I could also describe this school as dynamic, innovative, progressive, caring, and mention other positive attributes; yet, when it comes down to it, I prefer to call it a "thoughtful" school and this is what I mean:

A "thoughtful" school is intentional and considers all aspects of its students' educational experience. A thoughtful school is based on a well-honed educational philosophy which permeates everything from the choice of curriculum and teaching methods to the design of its classrooms and timetable, from the way it nurtures a sense of community among its teachers, parents, and students to how it guides individual students to comport themselves in class and on school excursions.

Examples of thoughtful schools with embedded philosophies of learning include the Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia schools. Each has a distinct educational philosophy that pervades the school's environment. Whether it is the use of natural materials and craft in a Waldorf school, independent learning centres in a Montessori school, or the *atelier* – the school studio and laboratory – in a Reggio school. Each draws its inspiration from specific sources: German Romanticism and the thought of Rudolf Steiner in the case of Waldorf, and the community-centred ideas of Loris Malaguzzi for Reggio Emilia. For a *Jewish* school to be a *thoughtful* Jewish school it must root its educational approach in Jewish thought and historical context.

The thoughtful Jewish school, with which I am most familiar, sources its educational philosophy in the ideas and life work of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel. Born in Poland to a Hasidic dynasty, A.J. Heschel was educated in modern philosophy at the University of Berlin where he also attended a non-denominational rabbinical seminary. He escaped Europe for the United States in 1938, where he first taught at the Hebrew Union College (HUC), the main seminary of Reform Judaism, and then, for most of his career, at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS), the main seminary of Conservative Judaism. All the while, Heschel remained dedicated to his own practice of traditional *halakhic* Judaism.

Heschel is best known for combining three essential ingredients: a deep sense of Jewish spirituality (what he called "awe and wonder"), a respect for the dignity of every person "born in the image of God," and civil activism inspired by the prophetic tradition of the Bible. He strongly supported the American Civil Rights movement and openly opposed the Vietnam War.

Heschel's relationship to diverse articulations of Judaism, and his animation of Jewish spirituality through ethical activism, made him a unique figure for his time. It also made him an ideal representative for a school in Toronto that wished to grow from a deeply rooted, authentically Jewish, yet modern educational philosophy. Each aspect of The Toronto Heschel School connects back to Heschel's ideas about Judaism and the purpose of human existence. The ideas were not his alone; they derive, as he would readily agree, from ancient Jewish thought and tradition. Heschel lived and taught these ideas in practice as a modern Jewish citizen.

The school's pluralistic philosophy emerges from Heschel's experience across the denominations. His thinking echoes the phrase "We were all at Sinai," the traditional Jewish notion that each Jew was present to hear the revelation of the Torah, and therefore, each has something authentic to contribute to its understanding and fulfilment. Heschel recognized that each stream of Judaism has something to offer.

Inspired by Heschel's ideas, each child at The Toronto Heschel School is recognized as a legitimate and valued contributor to classroom discourse. Classrooms are arranged in a circle or small groupings; children face one another and not each other's backs. Practices of respect for the learner nurture children who sense their legitimacy as participants. This results in students who have reputations for asking the best questions when they go on field trips, as well as graduates who are identifiable by the questions they ask when they sit in high school classes with students from other schools. It begins with respect.

Heschel wrote, "Wonder, not doubt, is the beginning of knowledge."[1] He regarded radical amazement at all of God's creation to be essential for learning; he called for "awe and wonder." The Toronto Heschel School classroom is designed to inspire wonder and is filled with objects, texts, and images that spark curiosity, questions, and discussion. Teachers display remarkable examples of nature – a beehive, a conch shell, a magnificently curled shofar – to evoke each child's natural sense of wonder and to inspire investigation. The school's full commitment to environmental stewardship is grounded in Heschel's deep respect for creation and his view that the natural world is our "sibling," co-created with us,[2] and deserving of our care and concern. It begins with wonder.

When The Toronto Heschel School founders investigated Howard Gardener's work on multiple intelligences, they were attracted not only by its pedagogical efficacy but also by its reflection of Heschel's respect for each human being as a unique learner. Likewise, the school's arts-based approach is developed from the recognition that the arts can inspire awe and wonder and offer opportunities for exploration and interpretation – Jewish and universal alike.

Heschel was a rigorous thinker who demanded the highest standards from himself and his students. He placed tremendous emphasis on study, and stated that "the role of learning is decisive" for human living. He saw learning as "the greatest adventure" and as "a source of joy." He believed that the highest purpose of learning was to discover "the importance of self-discipline; that a life without self-discipline is not worth living."[3]

The Toronto Heschel School has made Heschel's three purposes of learning the pillars of its educational philosophy: joy, adventure, and self-discipline. Contemporary educational research, including the discoveries of neuroscience, correlates remarkably with these principles. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's well-known concept of "flow"[4] tells us that learning occurs best in the engaged state of mind and correlates with Heschel's notion of "joy." Recent research that one of the most important determinants of academic success is the strength of "executive function" or "self-regulation" echoes Heschel's view that self-discipline is the "decisive" outcome of learning. The same principles apply whether children are learning a text from Torah, engaging in a difficult math question, or learning to pace themselves as they run laps around the school's outdoor field.

For Heschel, personal dignity, discovered through learning prayer and *mitzvot*, was the preparation for an even higher form of Jewish activity, namely, civic activism. Heschel's writings accentuate the prophetic tradition in Judaism that holds redress of inequity and injustice as the core teaching of Torah. The Toronto Heschel School integrates *tzedakah* (fairness) projects into its academic curriculum with programs such as Jewish civics and the requirement for each graduating student to prepare and deliver a speech about human rights. Practices such as "Weekly Middot" and "Derekh Eretz" (ethical actions) develop students' respect for one another on a daily basis. Social action and community participation are standard school fare in the tradition of A.J. Heschel.

Not surprisingly, the Heschel-inspired Jewish education attracts thoughtful teachers and thoughtful parents. Toronto Heschel teachers are those who aspire to a higher standard of Jewish teaching and learning and who want to enhance their professional growth. The school is disciplined in its support for educators; teachers are afforded professional development, ongoing mentorship and guidance, as well as specialty courses. Likewise, it is no surprise that the Heschel-inspired school sees the evolution of a school community of families who share an interest in learning for their children's sake and their own, who support the ethos of community action and want their children to become responsible participants in society.

Thoughtful education doesn't happen by accident; it takes the discipline of deliberate, painstaking, and rigorous foresight. Following in the footsteps of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, the thoughtful school walks the talk.

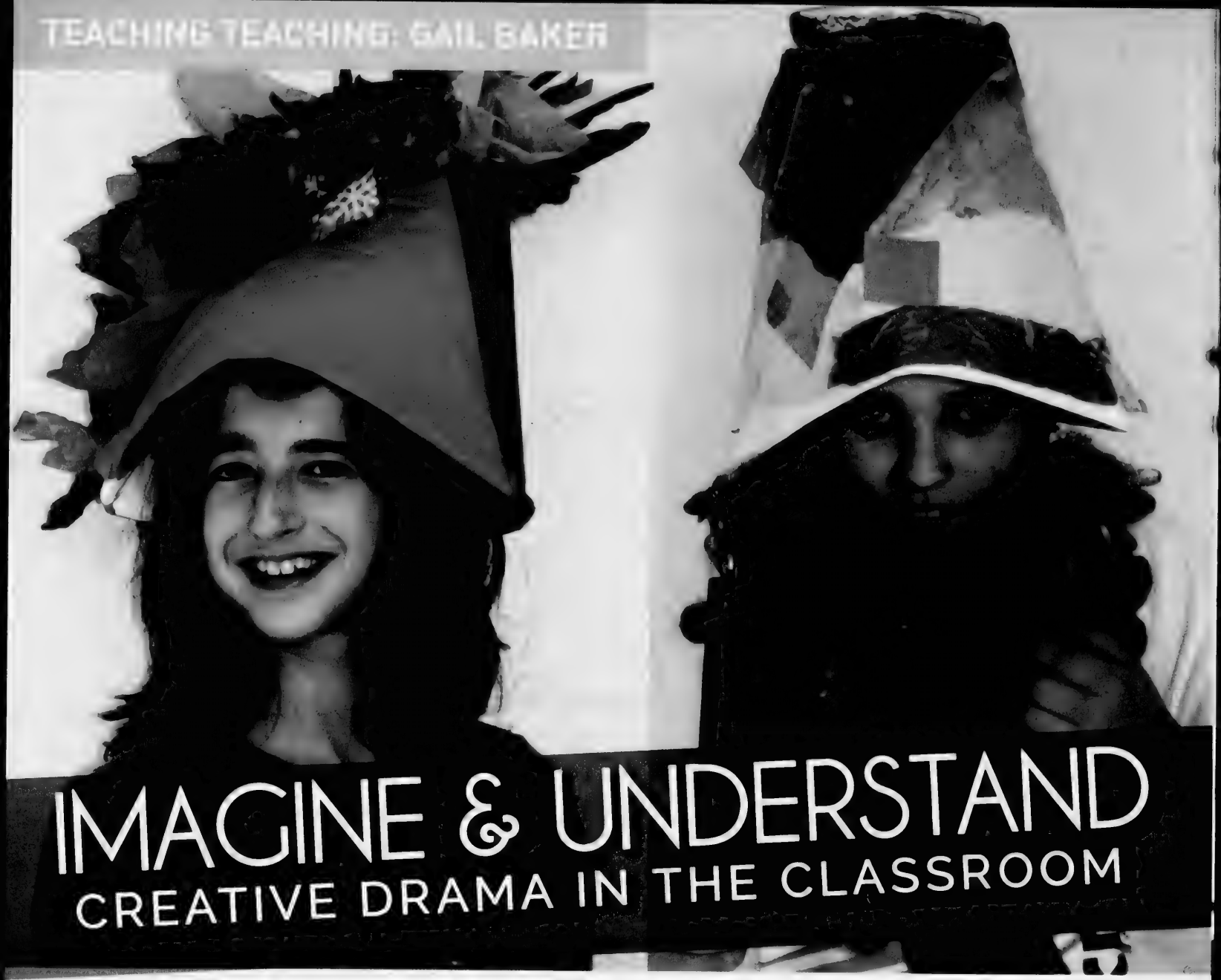
Greg Beiles is Director of The Lola Stein Institute and Curriculum Consultant at The Toronto Heschel School.

1 A.J. Heschel, *Man Is Not Alone* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1951), pp. 11–12.

2 A.J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1955), p. 94.

3 A.J. Heschel interview with Carl Stern, in A.J. Heschel, *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity* , ed. Susannah Heschel (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996), p. 369.

4 Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008).



IMAGINE & UNDERSTAND

CREATIVE DRAMA IN THE CLASSROOM

We want complex thinkers. We want our children to be ready when complications arise. Creative drama offers students a truly dynamic opportunity to explore the clash of values and "real life" dilemmas through their imaginations. When they attempt to solve problems wearing someone else's shoes, they are trying on different points of view and considering what various opinions may or may not mean. Creative drama sets up the kind of *reflective practice* that expands a student's understanding of human nature and fosters the development of empathy.

We developed one particular creative drama project for a Grade 8 course studying the respective roles of Rabbi A.J. Heschel and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights struggle. The course encompassed the tension between the individual and social responsibility, something very much on the minds of emerging adolescents.

The imaginary context of the project placed the students in a southern U.S. town in the 1960s: civil rights workers from the North were coming to demonstrate and were asking members of the local synagogue for housing during their stay. Local residents were up in arms. As their teacher I was not looking for a "right" answer. I wanted them to experience that dilemmas can be complex and to see that the capacity to carry on an emotionally charged dialogue is a critical skill when important decisions need to be made.

To carry on an emotionally charged dialogue is a critical skill when important decisions need to be made.

Initially the students agreed that the synagogue should billet the civil rights workers because it was such an important cause and certainly the right thing to do. Then we gave

each student a specific personality to role-play: each student was to be a member of the synagogue's board of directors charged with deciding whether or not to billet the demonstrators. One was a shopkeeper who feared how he would support his family if his store was fire bombed by the town folk who were against civil rights. Another was disinclined to support the demonstration because her sister in Chicago told her that forced integration didn't work. Several members out and out demanded that hospitality be offered. We asked the students to argue the differing points of view as if they were sitting around a boardroom table. They found the experience challenging, and I believe this was due to the power of creative drama.

Reflecting later, the students made comments such as:

"Learning this way really helped me to understand the situation."

"Because of the role play, I had to rethink my original opinion and think of different perspectives."

Creative drama is just as valuable in the younger years. For a Grade 2 science class, where students were studying water, its properties and importance to survival, we created a drama based on the work of drama educator David Booth. In his work, he uses *The King's Fountain* by Lloyd Alexander. So we decided to incorporate this story into our project.

We could see the political action wheels beginning to turn.

One morning I entered the Grade 2 classroom in the role of queen. I gathered the children and told them that they were my villagers and that I was going to build a beautiful fountain to the glory of my kingdom. I described it to them in evocative detail and they were mesmerized. I did mention that the fountain would mean a loss of water for them but that I didn't care. Then I left the room.

The classroom teacher, my partner in the program, suggested to the class that as villagers they should protest. What the queen had announced had dire consequences for them and their families. The children wrote out their concerns to present to the queen the next day. As the queen, I engaged the villagers in an energetic dialogue: I challenged their assumptions to the right to have water and they answered back why it was my duty to let them have water and why they felt that way.

One of our goals was to have the children experience how decisions can be made through a Jewish lens; they knew from Chumash class that God had created the world and that it was up to each of them to partner with God as co-creators who are responsible for the goings-on around them. This imaginary scenario let them feel the social action impetus that is part of the Jewish tradition.

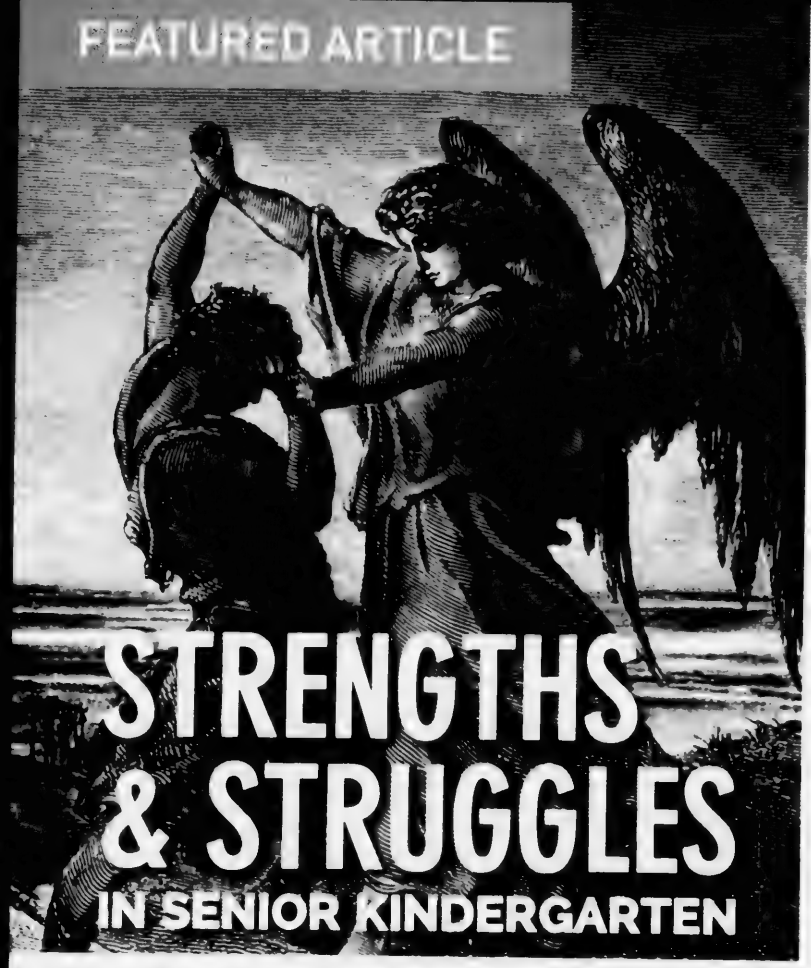
Our discussions were very animated with the children fully immersed in the discussion. Because I was participating in character with them, the students felt respected, entitled to play act to the hilt, and willing to take risks with their communications and sensibilities in this monitored yet open environment. We could see the political action wheels beginning to turn as social justice and *B'zelem Elokim* – in the image of God – motivated our seven-year-old villagers to stand up for what they felt was right.

At all ages, our students are called upon to make decisions. Creative drama is an exercise in improvisation, a life skill that is essential to have as children mature. It involves making decisions in real time, taking risks with opinions, actively listening; practising improvisation trains students to remain mindful in the moment. In creative drama, as in daily life, we cannot control what another person is going to say or do, but we can control our own responses. Developing this control empowers students to assume roles and elicit reactions that are more thoughtful and perhaps not as impulsive.

When my students engage in dramatic play, their learning is visible. As they act out their roles in the various scenarios, I observe their thought processes. This "window" into their thinking allows me to know whether or not they've understood the issues at hand and whether or not their thoughts on these issues are clear and sensible.

Critical and creative thinking, collaboration and communication, innovation, tolerance, and understanding are descriptors of core competencies for the 21st century learner. Creative drama enhances these standards and offers students a dynamic way to explore social justice.

Gail Baker, M.Ed., is Head of The Toronto Heschel School and Learning Community Director of the Lola Stein Institute.



STRENGTHS & STRUGGLES IN SENIOR KINDERGARTEN

BY HEIDI FIEDERMAN AND TALYA METZ

In 1995, Daniel Goleman published his groundbreaking book *Emotional Intelligence* and prompted the academic community to rethink definitions that traditionally framed intelligence. It used to be that intelligence was defined as "a set of cognitive abilities, which allows us to acquire knowledge, to learn and to solve problems."[1] Goleman defined emotional intelligence as:

> ... a different way of being smart. It includes knowing your feelings and using them to make good decisions; managing your feelings well; motivating yourself with zeal and persistence; maintaining hope in the face of frustration; exhibiting empathy and compassion; interacting smoothly; and managing your relationships effectively.[2]

Goleman's work engendered the practice of social and emotional learning (SEL) in schools. With renowned educator Linda Lantieri and other leaders, Goleman founded the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. CASEL defines social and emotional learning as

> ...the processes of developing social and emotional competencies in children. SEL programming is based on the understanding that the best learning emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful; social and emotional skills are critical to being a good student, citizen, and worker. Effective SEL programming begins in preschool and continues through high school.[3]

To incorporate SEL in a focused manner into our classrooms, The Toronto Heschel School developed the Strengths and Struggles Program. It is now an integral component of the Senior Kindergarten curriculum and encompasses the five skill sets that comprise emotional intelligence:

> Self-awareness: Identifying your thoughts, feelings, strengths, and limitations.
>
> Social Awareness: Identifying and understanding the thoughts and feelings of others; developing empathy.
>
> Self-management: Handling emotions; setting long- and short-term goals; dealing with obstacles that may come your way.
>
> Responsible Decision Making: Generating, implementing, and evaluating positive and informed solutions to problems.
>
> Relationship Skills: Avoiding negative peer pressure and working to resolve conflicts.[4]

The Strengths and Struggles Program is based on two kinds of self-reflection: understanding one's own behaviour and navigating social interactions. Children contemplate their individual strengths and personal struggles. (What are you good at now and what are you working to improve?) They also assess how their classroom community fares as a whole. (Do we all help tidy up? Are we listening attentively to our friends when they speak?)

Preparation for the Strengths and Struggles Program begins with the school year; the teacher establishes a classroom environment that makes the room an emotionally safe place to work and play, a haven where children and teachers feel comfortable to communicate thoughts and feelings with each other and the group. Preparation includes ongoing informal non-judgmental observation as the teacher discerns and records patterns in each child's behaviour. For example, Jerry has trouble sharing toys and this creates conflict in his social interactions. The teacher chats with him about this from time to time and during one conversation he acknowledges that he does not like to share but prefers to build structures alone using all the toys at hand. Jerry identifies that he has a struggle with sharing.

Once the teacher has collected enough information and the class has had time to experience itself as a community, the Strengths and Struggles Program is ready to be launched. The program is introduced openly to the whole class together as a forum for self-reflection and self-improvement. The stated goal is to encourage the children to work together to turn individual struggles into personal strengths.

Sitting in a circle, the children and teacher share a strength and/or struggle which is noted on a card and placed in the Strengths and Struggles Book (or kept private if preferred). Including the teacher in the conversation highlights that social and emotional learning is a lifelong journey; the fact that the teacher shares his/her struggles as well has a strong positive affect on the children.

The Strengths and Struggles Book is an interactive visual representation that charts each student's progress. Each student's card is moveable, and as a struggle becomes a strength, the card is repositioned in the book to show the achievement. The children find it highly motivational to watch their struggles become strengths. They feel proud and are excited that they'll have a new opportunity for further self-reflection when the process is repeated.

To help turn their struggles into strengths the children are offered specific strategies. For example, Jerry learns techniques that develop sharing skills. This might involve asking a classmate whose strength is sharing toys to support Jerry's struggle.

The collaboration between the two children helps in two ways: one child's personal struggles are addressed and two children have the chance to practise social awareness, relationship, and empathy. This simple collaboration has a long-term advantage as the children begin to learn how to work openly and confidently in a group.

A class is a microcosm of society; understanding social dynamics this early and this thoughtfully is an invaluable foundation. The children identify their classroom community's challenges and achievements and place them on cards in a separate section of the Strengths and Struggles Book. They are very happy to watch their collective accomplishments develop and grow.

The hidden gem of the Strengths and Struggles Program is that it introduces children to the possibility that their own successes lie within their reach. Even at the young age of five years they can become conscious of the role that emotions and feelings play in their capacity to transform struggles into strengths. This fundamental awareness is an important understanding that can help children develop a healthy sense of well-being.

Linda Lantieri writes: "When social and emotional skills are taught and mastered, they help children succeed not just in school, but in all avenues of life. Social and emotional learning is like an insurance policy for a healthy, positive, successful life."[5] In the Senior Kindergarten class at The Toronto Heschel School, the dream is that each student passing through the doors will be equipped with the inner strength and resilience to approach the challenges of life.

Heidi Friedman, M.Sc. (Ed.), views education holistically, with goals to teach academic skills, foster critical thinking and inquiry, and help children navigate their social world. With expertise in leadership as well as teaching, Heidi believes in the infinite potential of children. She is a Literacy and Learning Specialist at The Toronto Heschel School.

Talya Metz, B.A. (McGill), M.A. (UofT), holds degrees in Psychology, Child Study and Education. She has taught in the Jewish Day School system for five years. Talya is particularly interested in social and emotional development, which is the focus of her Senior Kindergarten program at The Toronto Heschel School.

1. Bard Value Analysis and Standardization: Systematic Steps to Support System-Wide Change (June 2009), retrieved August 20, 2013, from http://www.crbard.com/uploadedFiles/CorpSite/Healthcare_Professionals/emotional-intelligence.pdf
2. D. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995); quote cited by O.W. Leslie, *Newer Views of Learning: Highlights on EQ* (March 2005), retrieved August 20, 2013, from http://www4.uwsp.edu/education/eilson/learning/emot.htm
3. Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (2011), retrieved August 20, 2013, from http://casel.org/about-us/our-people/collaborator-network/
4. Adapted from L. Lantieri, *Building Emotional Intelligence* (Boulder: Sounds True, 2008), p. 18.
5. Ibid., p. 19.

peer editing

CRITICAL FRIENDS MAKE GOOD WRITERS & STRONG COMMUNITY

BY LESLEY COHEN

The development of trust is essential to the growth of young students. At The Toronto Heschel School, we foster collaborative learning as a key step in anchoring the student experience and building a sense of community, each of which is of immeasurable value to all of our students. Working closely with peers can offer our students much-needed academic support as they push through challenging curricula, and it fosters the all-important dynamic of mutual engagement and respect.

Students challenge themselves and their classmates personally and academically.

While trust is instrumental for a team to successfully reach a common academic goal, it is even more critical when the target of that success has a personal meaning to one individual in the group. An example of this is the practice of peer editing, in which a small group of students reviews another student's writing. Peer editing requires students to challenge themselves and their classmates personally and academically: it assigns them the roles of both the "editor" and the "edited."

As the editors, the students delve into another person's work. They examine it closely, attempt to understand it, and suggest improvements. In turn, when others edit their writing, the students must hear and accept comments from their peers, shedding feelings of vulnerability and insecurity along the way. For many students, this is a daunting task, but with preparation and attentive teacher support, peer editing can become a revolutionary strategy for building community and deepening the bonds of trust within the classroom walls.

At the junior high level, "Heschel-style" *chevrutah* rarely pairs students with the same partners repeatedly; the students come to know that on any given task, they may be working with any of their classmates, or perhaps in a group of three. They learn not to rely on a consistent buddy or partner, but understand their class as a jigsaw puzzle of shifting pairs or trios that is continually rearranged. Students come to trust that each classmate has something to offer in this collaborative process; each can enrich the learning in new and different ways.

At Heschel, peer editing is embedded throughout our entire Grade 6 language arts curriculum. We begin in the fall with a poetry unit, where students use peer editing to strengthen one another's poems. They next peer edit each other's formal artist statements during the winter preparation for their Eco-Seder, and in the spring, they apply the peer-editing process to their creative short stories in the unit that explores life before the Second World War. Different thematic questions guide the students through these three editing experiences, but a few key elements remain consistent.

The first of these elements is to improve students' writing skills. Knowing that changes will inevitably be made to their words, our young writers learn not to "fall in love" with their first drafts. This openness to change is foundational to students actively improving their writing; it orients them to key habits of mind as they acclimatize to thinking flexibly and meta-cognitively about the writing process.

The second element is to teach students the difference between critique and criticism, between providing feedback and exacting judgment. The ability to wonder is essential to peer editing; editors learn to give thoughtful consideration to the writing and the writer's ideas. According to A.J. Heschel, wonder lies at the root of all knowledge. To encourage wonder, we ensure that students know they are not being asked to *evaluate* their peers' work but to *engage* in the work – to ask questions, to probe, and to thoughtfully consider what they are reading.

A third critical element is to understand the common purpose of helping the writer accomplish his/her objective, which might be to complete a strong final draft of a poem or an essay. A student editor does not work independently through a classmate's writing and then return a heavily marked-up assignment without questions or discussion. Instead, students work in groups of two or three, posing questions to the one being edited as they read their peer's writing. The editors can offer suggestions only when they understand the writer's topic, thought process, and intention.

Through this process, the students begin to see themselves as *critical friends* – which is defined by educational consultants Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick as "a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person's work as a friend." Costa and Kallick emphasize that this individual "takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work."[1]

Another benefit of peer editing is developing compassion in students. Each student knows that he/she will be reading and editing another student's work and that his/her own work will undergo the same rigorous treatment. This reciprocal interaction creates and establishes empathy. Our student editors must proffer a piece of positive feedback before a critical one, and pose questions before suggesting improvements. These guidelines develop a level of respect among peers that is not cultivated on the playground or in the traditional classroom setting.

Motivating the desire for self *and* peer improvement is fundamental to helping students become better writers. Students are very interested in what their peers produce, and even feel pride in each other's finished products. The peer-editing process develops a vested interest in each other's success and the class begins to demonstrate a key characteristic of a community that is engaged and that shares a sense of communal accomplishment.

Our writers learn not to "fall in love" with their first drafts.

When the school year begins, students might be reluctant to change their own way of writing, but as the months roll by they become enthusiastic about opening up to peer scrutiny and become more willing to make changes that are needed. Often in my class when a student has been absent on a peer-editing day, and has missed the group interaction, other students volunteer to go through the process with him/her during free time. Students want the critique and their peers want to give it.

One of the objectives of education is to inspire young people to maintain a thirst for learning. As such, it is incumbent upon us as educators to equip our students with the skills to persevere, the confidence to ask questions, and the strength to reflect and revise. One path to this overarching goal is to guide students as they examine their own efforts through the eyes of a trusted, critical friend. In doing so, we not only inspire our students to become better learners but also encourage them to become better people.

Lesley Cohen received her teaching degree at OISE, and also holds a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. in Religion and Cultural Studies. This is her second year teaching at The Toronto Heschel School, where she teaches Grade 6 and junior high music.

1 A. Costa and B. Kallick, "Through the Lens of a Critical Friend," *Educational Leadership* 51(2) (1993), pp. 49–51, retrieved July 8, 2013, from http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct93/vol51/num02/Through-the-Lens-of-a-Critical-Friend.aspx

FEATURED ARTICLE

COLLABORATION IN SCIENCE AND THE SCIENCE IN COLLABORATION

BY DANIEL ABRAMSON

Last year, I had the pleasure to bring my Grade 8 class to the McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine. It was an amazing opportunity for students to see scientists at the cutting edge of their fields working to solve real problems in a first-class laboratory. Under the microscope we saw beating heart cells that were grown from stem cells in a Petri dish, and bone marrow that was engineered from a patient's own cells. The Centre has assembled a world-class team to pursue research here in Toronto and to translate their discoveries into cures for diseases today. Even in our short time there, we came to see that collaboration is a cornerstone of the McEwen Centre's philosophy; it is a foundational belief that they will achieve their goals faster if they work together as a team and collaborate with other institutions worldwide.

I was very inspired, not only by the scientific accomplishments of the McEwen Centre but also by how it fosters an environment that supports collaborative work at its best. They make cooperative, interactive, integrated teamwork look easy, even seamless, but anyone who has worked as part of a successful crew knows that real collaboration is far from easy. It requires very specific skills that, like all competencies, need to be fostered and practised. I believe it behooves all teachers to help students learn these skills.

For example, I could ask a student to move a heavy load from one place to another. If the load were weighty enough, logically the task could require the efforts of multiple students. The students could work in concert, with a shared goal. They could each contribute the same skill in the same way and achieve something together that could not be accomplished by one of them alone. While there is some value in this cooperation, I don't think it's enough.

I would rather ask our group of students to lift a load that they could never budge, even if trying it together. This would force the group to devise a strategy that addresses the problem in a new way, beyond combined muscle power to collective invention. I would ask each member to consider what the group could do differently and to offer suggestions that the team could consider and try. Eventually, when members of the team develop a successful strategy, they will walk away from the collaboration with knowledge that they did not have before. This is the kind of inventive collaboration that science teachers should target.

To stimulate this level of cooperation, a learning environment needs two key features: classroom culture that encourages individuals to create and share ideas, and tasks that are real, complex and in need of inventive thinking. The best collaborative teams, such as the scientists at the McEwen Centre, create an atmosphere where team members feel confident that their ideas will be heard. McEwen scientists meet weekly over lunch to share their progress and reflections; they call their lunches "Working in Progress." Hard challenges, like curing deadly disease, build great resolve and long-lasting professional satisfaction. We also want our students to understand how empowering real success can be.

In Grade 7, we ask students to create functional wind turbines that generate enough power to light a small bulb. The task is daunting, but when the light goes on, the students' gratification glows with it. Students use their knowledge

of energy and integrate independent research with models of wind technology observed on field trips. When each student has developed an idea to offer, we assemble collaborative teams to evaluate, build, and test an initial design. Each team assesses its own success and that of the others and then revises its first design based on its observations. The exercise creates a model for high-quality collaboration: the students bring their individual expertise to the team and the team builds on this collected knowledge to create an idea that did not exist before the team convened. In this carefully supervised and structured way, teaching collaboration fosters a core value of our school's science curriculum: innovation.

The approach also builds resilience in learners. When we set out to accomplish a task that is too difficult without the creation of new knowledge, we must expect trial and error, i.e., initial failures. In class, I describe how scientists fail in their experiments and use failure to learn. I remind my class that no one has yet fully discovered how to cure all cancers, yet scientists persist in their investigation and learn from each task they target. As individuals and team players, we want students to learn persistence and perseverance, and to appreciate the value of both unsuccessful and successful efforts.

Currently, in education, business, science, and society at large, the trend seems to be valuing the skill to work as a team player. My job is to prepare my students for their world, and in doing so I am cognizant that collaborative work is not antithetical to individual work, that it is not one way or the other. To teach our students collaborative skills, we teachers should take care in how we frame tasks and define teams. We must provide adequate time and space for students on teams to develop their individual thinking. Otherwise we risk overlooking the preconditions that allow innovation and creativity to flourish.

Collaboration skills need to be fostered and practised. Scientists use failure to learn.

In a recent interview on CBC Radio, Canadian astronaut Julie Payette beautifully presented the delicate balance between the individual and the team. She described how in her interview for the Canadian Space Program she was asked to talk about a time when she had worked as a team player. She answered that she had sung in choirs for 20 years. To sing in harmony and in tempo to create beautiful music, she explained that you need to be able to listen to others and to adjust your own performance accordingly.

In the end, there is an art to the science of collaboration.

Daniel Abramson has long explored learning through creative self-expression. Before earning his teaching degree at York University, he coordinated arts and culture at Hillel of Greater Toronto. A lifelong camper, Daniel's passion for nature drives him to connect his students to the world they inhabit. He teaches junior high at The Toronto Heschel School.

LIKE DREAMERS

THE STORY OF THE ISRAELI PARATROOPERS WHO REUNITED JERUSALEM AND DIVIDED A NATION

YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

AUTHOR OF *AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE GARDEN OF EDEN*

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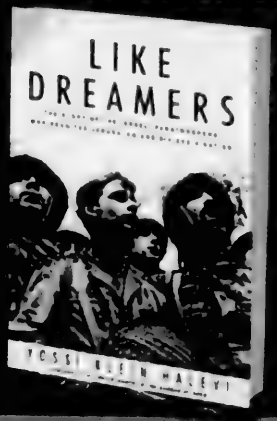

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HAPPY 18TH BIRTHDAY TORONTO HESCHEL & THANK YOU!

BY MICHELLE SHULMAN

As we meet in the halls, on the field, or socially, I find myself frequently talking with other Heschel moms and dads about how grateful we are for The Toronto Heschel School. It is a wonderful feeling to be so confident in your choice of school for your children and to have your decision validated so often. This fall, as Toronto Heschel turns 18 years old, I have been reflecting on why I feel so grateful.

Our teachers travel to Harvard to study, lead seminars at international math conferences, and engage in serious Jewish learning with the Shalom Hartman Institute.

Some days, I think I am most appreciative of Heschel simply because of the intellectual training that my children are receiving. The questions that they discuss at home and in the car, the topics that they raise, and the debates that they pursue all show me that my children are becoming thinkers. Daily they receive encouragement to be curious and are challenged to ask questions. I can hear for myself that they are learning the art of thoughtful conversation.

Other days I am grateful that their teachers understand that a joyful nurturing environment offers children the best advantage to reach their full potential. In this age of emotional intelligence and neuropsychological discovery, it feels good to know that my family is at a school that keeps itself at the forefront of educational research. Whether it's how to advance reading, writing, or math skills, or how to establish a class environment where students are empowered so they can stretch to reach their potential, the school continually re-evaluates its techniques and practices. I see our teachers travel to Harvard to study, lead seminars at international math conferences, and engage in serious Jewish learning with the Shalom Hartman Institute. As a parent I feel secure knowing that my children's teachers take their own continuing education seriously.

I am very glad that academic skills go hand in hand with contemplation at Toronto Heschel. The school's firm expectation of academic mastery exists within a culture of deeper thinking. My children are being introduced early in their lives to big questions; they are seeing how academic disciplines intertwine and what universal themes look like when observed through a Jewish lens; they are learning that human rights are Jewish ethics and that conservation shows respect for creation. We are not just preparing our children for high school; we are preparing them to participate successfully as citizens in a new world. I am so grateful for the foundational learning they are receiving now.

We are not just preparing our children for high school; we are preparing them to participate successfully as citizens in a new world.

I want my children to have a meaningful Jewish identity, yet I often wonder exactly what this means. Of course, I want them to love Shabbat and appreciate the holidays, to respect the *mitzvot* and traditions. I want them to be able to pick up a Siddur anywhere in the world and feel comfortable to lead or join a service, and I profoundly want my children to be emotionally and spiritually attached to Israel. But I want more.

For me Judaism is not only for Pesach or Sukkot. Jewish history is not simply for Yom HaShoah or Tisha b'Av. I want my children to cherish Judaism as a living and breathing

ethical blueprint that will accompany them on their journey through life. Deep in their hearts and souls I want them to know that our Judaism is one of the great, moral traditions and philosophies of the world.

Amazing as it sounds, I see this all supported by a day school curriculum at Toronto Heschel which seamlessly integrates Jewish and secular subjects. All day long Jewish values, texts, and ideas are interwoven with science, writing, reading, mathematics, history, and geography. The integration is invaluable to the students' understanding of Judaism and compatible with the blended identity of the North American Jewish child in 2013. I am truly thankful for the beautiful and pervasive Jewish sensibility that The Toronto Heschel School engenders in my children.

But often, I think that I am most grateful to be at Toronto Heschel because of the way I see the children in the school behave towards one another, to guests in the school, and to others when they are out in the broader community. I know this is the result of an intentional philosophy that seeps into all parts of our children's education. There is a sense of community that is carefully nurtured from the moment a child walks into Junior Kindergarten. I remember thinking 10 years ago that this was sweet and lovely, but now as my children have grown, I see clearly that this ethic of mutual respect and dignity has helped to shape my children and their peers into confident, empathetic, and responsible individuals.

Heschel is a destination school for families from all over Toronto, from all the Jewish affiliations and backgrounds.

I am overwhelmed this birthday year by the enthusiasm and appreciation we are receiving from current families, alumni, and alumni families. Those of us who have been around the school for many years know what we have. The buzzwords featured on advertisements for schools around town today reflect ideas that have been mainstream at Heschel since 1996 when the doors first opened – the whole child, learning through the arts, environmental programming, critical thinking, creativity, character development, experiential learning, ethics. This year we celebrate 18 years of leadership in these areas.

I am very grateful for the Heschel school community. Heschel is a destination school for families from all over Toronto, from all Jewish affiliations and backgrounds. The result is a warm and special collection of families who want their children in a nurturing and educationally advanced Jewish environment. Everyone is so happy about the 18th birthday and the milestone that it is. We are families who have a school we call home, and I am thankful for it all.

Michelle Shulman has been a Toronto Heschel School parent for 10 years and will be there for six more. She is Vice Chair of The Lola Stein Institute.

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AWE AND ENGAGEMENT: A PSYCHIATRIST AND A RABBI TALK THEATRE

A THINK INTERVIEW WITH DR. DAVID GOLDBLOOM BY RABBI JOE KANOFSKY

Scott Wentworth (centre) as Shylock with members of the company in *The Merchant of Venice*. Photo by David Hou

"Though this be madness, yet there is method in't," says Polonius in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (act 2, scene 2).

While there's no guarantee that theatregoing will improve your mental health, there is a lot to be said for theatre attendance. I can recall the experience some 20 years ago of sitting in a theatre with tears welling up in my eyes during the climactic scene of Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. I had already read the play several times and even memorized some scenes, yet seeing it presented on stage affected me in a way it never had before.

What made an even greater impression on me was what I saw and heard when the house lights came up and the audience stood and made its way to the exits. I was truly stunned by the amount of sniffles that I suddenly became aware of, and of the Kleenex and handkerchiefs that appeared in my fellow audience members' hands. So many of us were moved to tears by a script, a 50-year-old text that we probably already knew well. The audience experience had touched something inside us deeply and profoundly; we felt something at the core of our beings.

It's quite well known that acting in various forms has a significant place in several forms of psychotherapy, be it role playing, the empty-chair technique, or psychodrama. But what can be said about the experience of the observer of drama, the theatregoer? Of what benefit is it to be part of an audience watching a play unfold on stage, to be witness to a performance as opposed to taking part in it? There must be something to it. After all, theatre is one of the enduring literary and artistic forms of Western civilization, a spectrum from classical Greek drama to the Shakespearean tradition to the contemporary *Purimshpiel*.

I deepened my insight and appreciation of theatregoing in a recent conversation with Dr. David Goldbloom. Not only is he the Senior Medical Advisor of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and a professor of psychiatry at the University of Toronto, he is also the chair of the Board of Governors of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada, and he has been an actor and theatregoer most of his life.

We first discussed a few very practical elements in the theatre experience that distinguish it from other forms of entertainment in our world, from cinema to home DVD viewing to TiVo to YouTube.

"A theatregoer is having an experience in real time, with real people," Dr. Goldbloom noted. "This makes it different from the experience of watching a television show or a movie, for several reasons ... Sitting in a theatre, you are in a darkened room with your cellphone off. Distractions are minimized, and for some of us, going to theatre may provide some of our closest experiences with focused, sustained attention In our hyper-connected world, it may be one of the only times in our lives when we are awake without our cellphones threatening to divide our attention at any moment."

I agreed that this kind of intense focus is increasingly rare in our world. We continue to deceive ourselves that we can "multi-task" efficiently as we busily pay partial attention to two, three, or four directions at once.

The theatre experience is immediate, whole, and complex. A film or a TV show is likely filmed out of sequence, and the pieces later edited together. As Dr. Goldbloom pointed out, "There's no way to know in which order the scenes were shot; or whether you are watching the third take or the thirty-seventh." This gap admits distance between the observer and the drama.

Further comparing the screen to stage, Dr. Goldbloom added, "You also have no certainty as to voice dubbing or other mixing effects that go into film production ... Sitting in a theatre you are almost near enough to touch the actors.

You can see the fullness of their movements, positioning, and body language." Watching theatre differs even from reading a script or listening to the live reading of a play. A reader has only one voice, but when a play is acted out on stage, the range and combination of interpretive possibilities is really endless.

Theatre is a living performance, which, Dr. Goldbloom emphasized, distinguishes it from any other kind of audience experience, "There is a certain peril in live performance which underscores and magnifies the achievement. It adds a sense of infectious excitement and expectation to watching a performance on the stage that we will never experience with recorded media ... Once a film has been released, we know that the filmmaker believes it to be a finished product. This is never the case on the stage even though the play has been well rehearsed, directed, and stage-managed. The audience literally watches the action unfold. Human frailty being what it is, anything can happen." It can be an outstanding performance, or a dud. It can scale the heights, or an actor can drop a line or miss a cue.

When I asked Dr. Goldbloom to recall a theatre highlight, a memorable or transformative moment in his theatregoing experience, he recalled an opening a few years ago of Stratford's production of Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*. The lead and lone actor on stage, Brian Dennehy, opened the play with an approximately two-minute long silent look of awe and wonder.

"It allowed everyone to empathize, to project their own thoughts onto the character," Dr. Goldbloom said. "In our world, it is noteworthy that moments of silence still have power. The moment allowed each audience member to embroider onto the actor's silent awe whatever he or she was thinking and feeling."

Dr. Goldbloom cited the work of Dr. Vivian Rakoff, a psychiatrist who writes about the psychological aspects of theatre and describes theatre as a safe venue to explore our most horrible emotions such as hatred, murder, lust, jealousy. When I asked why someone playing an interactive video game couldn't explore the same emotions, Dr. Goldbloom explained that the video game experience doesn't force the player to think in a deep and sustained way about the questions. Nor does it offer any sense of objectivity or transcendence to the player's experiences of violence or other strong emotions as he plays.

In one of this season's repertory plays at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, *Mary Stuart*, the storyline involves murder as well as politics. Elizabeth I of England holds her cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, prisoner and deliberates whether to execute her. Elizabeth's anxiety over her course of action introduces the notion of "plausible deniability," a watchword coined during the Kennedy Administration and commonly connected to Watergate in late 20th-century politics. It's quite interesting that the play is over 200 years old. It was written by Friedrich Schiller, and debuted on the German stage in the year 1800.

"In our world, it is noteworthy that moments of silence still have power."

In another Stratford production this year, *The Merchant of Venice* is set in a different Italy than the Italy that Shakespeare imagined; Stratford sets the play in 1938 under a fascist regime. The staging of the end of the play connects it to the actuality of the Holocaust, underscoring the questions and conflicts that Shakespeare raises about identities, both of Shylock and of the other characters in the play.

The two plays demonstrate the enduring capacity of theatre to touch on universal, even transcendent themes. The engaged and attentive audience member has the latitude to be removed and objective while at the same time intensely engaged with nuances of character and plot. Seeing ever-present human tensions presented on stage allows us to observe conflicts and interactions that are difficult, even tragic. We can either digest them or let them continue to bother and trouble us long after we've walked out of the theatre.

"I don't go to the theatre to improve my mental health. However, as a story unfolds over two hours on stage, I'm surprised by the awe and engagement that I feel by the end of the production," says Dr. Goldbloom.

Seeing live theatre lets us develop an increasingly rare and challenging skill; we practise our capacity to minimize distraction and focus on a matter at hand. Theatre allows us the intimacy to experience the story line of a play for a brief finite period and to willingly suspend our disbelief, in Coleridge's terms. We can find ourselves being quite amused, deeply enraged, genuinely fearful, or absolutely mesmerized by a scenario as we are drawn in to its real-time and real-life tension. The theatre's ability to develop in its audience the capacity to focus, reflect, empathize, and even experience catharsis remains unique among the performing arts.

Joe Kanofsky is the Rabbi of Kehillat Shaarei Torah. He holds a Ph.D. in Literature and was an Honors Thespian.

INTENTIONAL CHEVRUTA LEARNING

CULTIVATING ETHICAL AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN LEARNERS

BY ALISON COOK AND ORIT KENT

Jewish educators are drawn to using *chevruta* learning in their classrooms for many satisfying reasons. As a traditional mode of Jewish study, simply studying text in pairs lets students experience a valued Jewish way of learning.[1] Educators and students alike get excited about the intellectual possibilities – picture images of lively pairs fulfilling the Talmudic adage of "iron sharpening iron."

As talk of twenty-first-century learning enlivens educators' professional discourse, the intellectual and social potential of *chevruta* learning heeds the call for critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. *Chevruta* learning also provides a fertile laboratory for social skills. It is compelling to see how the pedagogical structure of *chevruta*, when thoughtfully designed and supported, meets today's educational ideals and indeed surpasses them with intriguing potential as an ethical and spiritual practice. There is a lot that Jewish educators can do to deepen their use of this learning structure and become designers of an intentional *chevruta* learning practice that will nurture their students intellectually, socially, ethically, and spiritually.

Consider this component of a *beit midrash* (house of study) exercise designed to induct students into what we call "intentional *chevruta* learning."

> Take a few minutes to write about a time when you felt that someone else really understood you. Then write about a time when you felt misjudged or misunderstood. What happened there? What did the other person do or not do to make you feel understood or misunderstood? Share your stories with your *chevruta*.

For the seventh graders who participated in this exercise, vivid and heartfelt memories of being understood – or not – emerged easily. Stories of teachers, parents, friends, and peers who demonstrated understanding or misunderstanding contributed to a list of attitudes and actions that students' characterized as leading to understanding on the one hand or to misjudgment on the other. Students explored the idea that their study in a *chevruta* partnership was not only about decoding a text or taking turns talking, but also about "seeking to understand" and "being understood." Throughout the *chevruta* learning, exploration of the *intent* "to seek understanding" remains a focal point alongside the teaching of standard text study skills. Through the thoughtful use of intentional *chevruta* learning, learners develop ethical and spiritual, intellectual and social capacities in tandem.

We use two main research-based frameworks that help students grow in multiple dimensions. The first framework is "the *chevruta* triangle,"[2] which opens discussion and

builds imagery for an ideal *chevruta* partnership. This is not a partnership of two, but a partnership of three: two people and the text. "The *chevruta* triangle" can be drawn as an equilateral triangle with one partner at each corner. We "seek to understand" not only that our partner has her/his own ideas, thoughts, and voice, but also that the text has its own "voice" and multiple meanings. Each partner works to demonstrate his/her openness to listen, understand, and respond to the other's ideas and to achieve new understandings and interpretations.

The shared imagery of the *chevruta* triangle lets students monitor their own activity within the partnership; they can assess how well they hold open the triangle and whether all three partners have a presence and a voice. Here are some reflections from seventh graders on what they learned through their *chevruta* partnerships after a few sessions:

> "I need to take a breath and tune in to what I am doing and be more conscious of my partner and myself."
>
> "I need to analyze [the text] more than once and leave my mind open to other views. I also learned not to judge it [the text]."
>
> "It's hard to share power but I must."

The students express an unprompted "I need to" or "I must" message about being a *chevruta* partner to both the text and their peer, implying that their *chevruta* partnership *obligates* them to behave in certain ways for themselves and their partners. This sense of obligation and responsibility to the other taps into an essential and ethical underpinning of the *chevruta* relationship: we are responsible to and for one another and through this mini-universe of obligation we gain new knowledge, interpretations, and insights.

In the student reflections we also hear overtones of a spiritual vitality that allude to attunement, wonder, and a sense of connection. A student reminds herself to "take a breath," "tune in," and "become more conscious," there is a sense of needing to slow down and pay attention. Another student seeks "remaining open," a stance towards sustaining wonder.

It is one thing to identify the importance of becoming more attuned to one's partners or to remain open to different ideas; it is another thing to know *how* to do it. The "how" is where our second major framework comes in: "the six practices of *chevruta*."[3] This framework builds the skills needed to establish the relationship and realize the learning possibilities of studying texts closely with others.

Through lessons, tools, exercises, and feedback, we work with students to enact and enhance "the six practices of *chevruta*" – listening and articulating, wondering and focusing, and challenging and supporting. Each set can entail intellectual, social, ethical, and spiritual engagement, particularly when applied to all three *chevruta* partners. Notice how a *chevruta* student refers to his own experience of "listening and articulating":

> I think that the text is *telling* you something that makes it a partner but you have to *listen* to what it is telling you... you can't do that with the text...just by scanning it...the same with any person. You really have to get to know them... (Our emphasis.)

What begins as an intellectual exercise in closely reading a Jewish text becomes reframed as a practice of "listening" to a text that has something to "articulate" to readers. Even the text engages in listening and articulating and through our own use of these practices we can "really get to know" and connect with the text and with people. The student's reflection shows both ethical and spiritual reverberations: an ethical responsibility to seek textual understanding – beyond a cursory look – and the spiritual understanding that the text will speak to us if we listen.

We hear similar reflections from students using the "challenging and supporting" set of practices. These require critical thinking and introduce the idea of "evidence" to build and evaluate ideas together. Students embrace these practices not only as the tools of intellectual creativity and refinement, but also as the means to develop the ethic of intellectual honesty. When students describe the "voice" of the text as "challenging" or "supporting" their ideas, again we see the spiritual significance of *chevruta* practice.

To design and participate in intentional *chevruta* learning requires time and energy. In the words of one pair of seventh graders looking back over their *beit midrash* program: "We worked hard!" For these students and for many others, the pedagogy of intentional *chevruta* learning opens possibilities for growing in multiple ways, a reward that is well worth the effort.

Allison Cook is a Research Associate and **Orit Kent** is a Senior Research Associate at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University where they develop, research, and teach "Havruta Inspired Pedagogy." Both are long-time teachers and teacher-educators.

1 There is scholarly debate about when *chevruta* became a common mode of Talmud study in yeshivot. Today, *chevruta* is used across a spectrum of Jewish settings to learn a range of texts. || 2 M. Raider-Roth and E. Holzer, "Learning to Be Present: How *Hevruta* Learning Can Activate Teachers' Relationships to Self, Other and Text," *Journal of Jewish Education* 75 (2009), pp. 216–39; Orit Kent, "Interactive Text Study and the Co-Construction of Meaning: Chevruta in the Delet Beit Midrash" (PhD diss., Brandeis, 2008). || 3 Orit Kent, "A Theory of Chevruta Learning," *Journal of Jewish Education* 76, no. 3 (2010), pp. 215–45.

TAKING TANENBAUMCHAT TO THE NEXT LEVEL: MEET THE NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL

A **think** INTERVIEW WITH RABBI LEE BUCKMAN

BY BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI

Rabbi Lee Buckman always knew that he wanted to be a Jewish educator. He was drawn to Torah when he was a child and was a regular tutor during his university years. But, it was in 1999, after spending nearly a decade as a congregational rabbi in Milwaukee, that he got his chance to combine his two passions of Torah and teaching in a school setting: he founded The Frankel Jewish Academy of Metro Detroit and developed new curriculum for it.

Ten years later in 2009, Rabbi Buckman became the head of school at the struggling Greenfield Hebrew Academy in Atlanta. He turned the school around by instituting a culture of philanthropy and setting higher board expectations and fiscal standards. As a respected educator, he has consulted across North America on ways to improve Jewish education. Last spring, Rabbi Buckman was appointed the head of school of TanenbaumCHAT in Toronto. *think* spoke with him to find out more about his educational philosophy and what he plans to do at his new school.

What attracted you to Jewish education?

I love children and teaching, and I love Torah. Teaching combines all three passions. I initially worked as a congregational rabbi where I focused a lot on family education. After a decade of doing that, I wanted to narrow the focus of my rabbinical work on education at school.

What's your approach to Jewish education?

My goal is to instill a love of *Yiddishkeit* in our children in a school setting, so that they're living, loving, and breathing Judaism. I want them to find it so meaningful and compelling that they want to continue deepening their Jewish learning and living. It's my mission statement wherever I go.

How do you do that?

There are three components to it. In a formal school setting, it's about getting the absolute best teachers that a school can recruit, teachers who will inspire children and challenge them. I mean teachers who are not only experts in subject matter but also character educators, people who are good role models and who see that it's not just about imparting information but helping to transform lives.

The second component is breaking down the silos among different Jewish institutions that have a similar mission. To the extent a school can partner with Jewish camps or synagogues or Jewish youth movements, the school will achieve its mission more readily.

The third is strong partnerships with parents, because ultimately a school can teach material, but it's the parents who teach meaning.

What are some of the challenges that Jewish educators face today?

The challenges relate to my three components. Recruiting excellent teachers is hard; recruiting excellent teachers in Judaics is even more difficult. They are often not as valued as other professionals in terms of being appreciated both financially and emotionally. The profession lacks a sense of security and so it's a less appealing profession to go into. Teaching is a difficult skill to master: Judaics teachers do need to be experts in their subject matter, but they also need to know pedagogy.

Many institutions think they can do it alone. It takes a great degree of humility to say we have a mission, but here's something we don't do well and we need to do it in collaboration with others.

Finally, we're all a part of a world where there are things that compete with Judaism in the market place, and so we need constantly to make the case for what the school is trying to accomplish. We have to articulate a vision and present a case to move kids and families into the system and through the system. And we need to stay with them well after they graduate.

How has Jewish education changed over the years?
People argue that certain things have changed, but really a lot hasn't changed at all. We hear a lot about the affordability crisis in Jewish day school education today. I believe the issues of affordability, not just in Jewish day school but in Jewish life, have been around for decades: synagogue dues, camp tuition, the cost of Kosher. True, the costs may have gone up, but proportionally the issues are the same.

One significant positive change in Jewish day school education has been that it's become much more professionalized over the past 15 years. That's because of foundations and organizations like the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education or the AVI CHAI Foundation in New York. We've taken the best practices in private school education and brought them into Jewish education.

Do Jewish people still value Jewish education?
It's one of those things people say, that, in the good old days, Jewish education was of top importance. Even though I didn't live in the good old days, I know that 50 years ago there were other things that competed.

When Jewish immigrants first came to America they wanted to fit into the culture and one gateway to that was the public school system. That's where they learned English and math, but they also learned baseball and apple pie. So American culture was competing with sacred traditional values and Jews were abandoning Judaism in search of how to be a better American.

Now the question is no longer how do I become a good American, but how do I become a good Jew. People are trying to understand how to be a more committed and passionate Jew and how that makes you a better citizen of the world around you.

We still need administrators and leaders and board members to continue making the case of why Jewish education is important, but that is something that people have needed to do throughout Jewish history.

What do you plan to do at TanenbaumCHAT?
My challenge for the next six months is to really get to know the TanenbaumCHAT family and learn, through their eyes, about norms and culture and the history of CHAT. I have to learn its strengths and challenges. With what I learn from people's hopes and dreams, I'll be able to formulate some shared goals and shared plans; that will really be the way I can take CHAT to the next level

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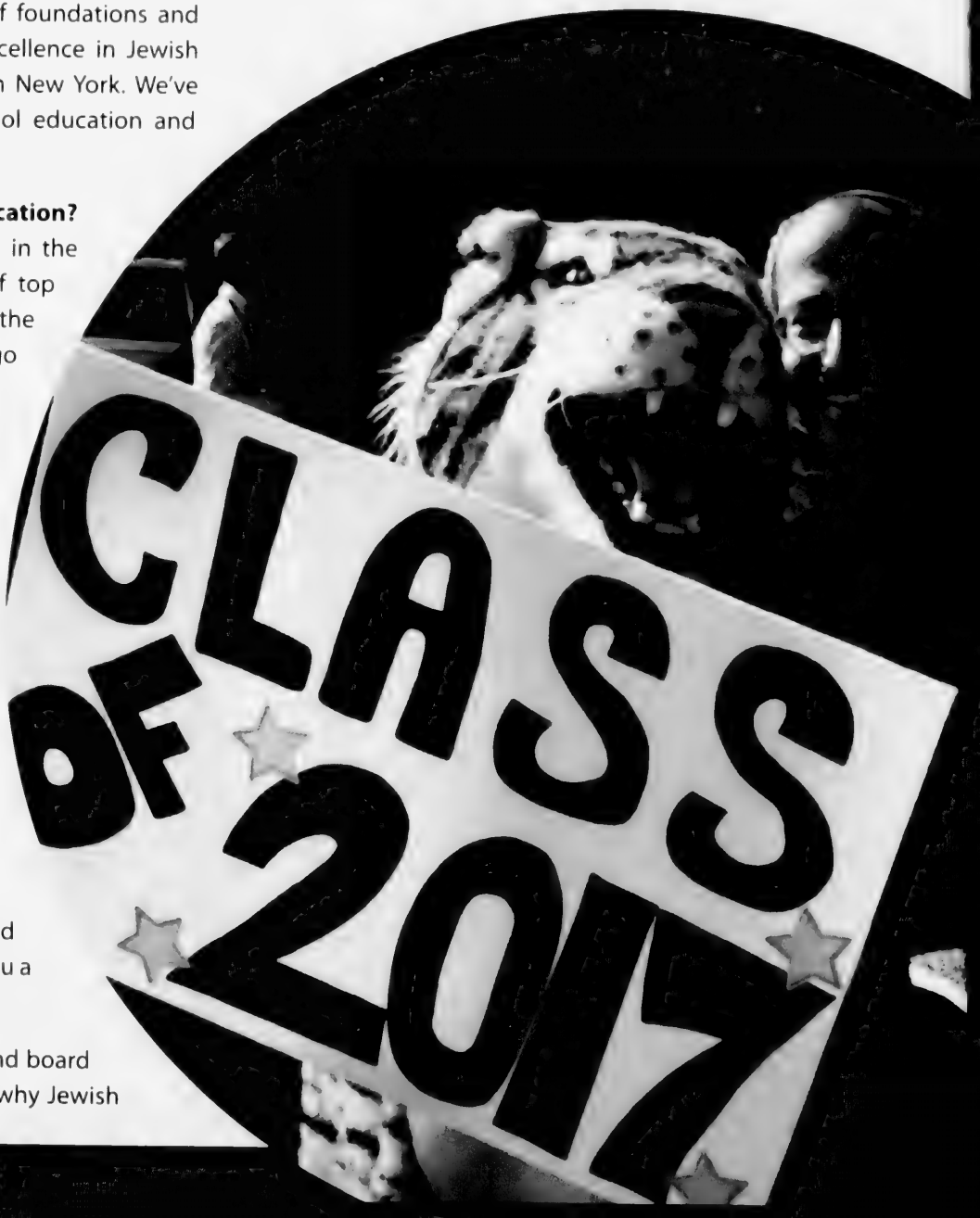
Bryan Borzykowski is a Toronto-based journalist and Toronto Heschel School parent. He's written for the BBC, *The New York Times*, and *The Globe and Mail*, among other publications.



NEW FRIENDS, *Old Friends*

THE BENEFITS OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

BY LISA RICHLER

When a group of Baycrest residents entered the halls of The Toronto Heschel School last fall, one might have guessed they had come to watch a play, hear the choir, or see an art exhibit. The truth is that the group of seniors, ranging in age from 86 to 99, had come to school to be students. The visit was part of an Intergenerational Learning Project that was piloted throughout the year by Heschel and Baycrest.

Members of the Baycrest team first approached Heschel because they were interested in the school's expertise in learning through the arts. Baycrest scientists like Dr. Sylvain Moreno, who are leaders in cognitive neuroscience research, have been investigating the brain's plasticity and how arts-based contexts can improve brain function. According to Bianca Stern, Baycrest's Director of Arts, Culture, and Innovation, "what Toronto Heschel was doing with kids, we wanted to push forward with the elders."

Gail Baker, Head and Co-Founder of Toronto Heschel, explains her interest in the partnership, "We are always looking for new ways to meaningfully enhance students cognitive and social growth; to challenge our students with unfamiliar activities that will increase their ability to sustain attention and persevere through a task." The Heschel team developed a pilot project in which a group of Baycrest seniors would pair up with Grade 6 students, and over the course of the year they would work together on three separate units of study: Poetry, the Eco-Seder, and Life Before the War.

Intergenerational learning takes some getting used to. When the sixth graders and seniors met for the first time last fall, Heschel teacher Lesley Cohen recalls that "the kids were a bit awkward, and the seniors were a bit nervous." Everyone was coming to lessons "from different entry points." The seniors obviously had vast life experience to draw upon, but it had been a long time since any of them had been asked to complete a school assignment. At the outset, many felt they were in over their heads. That initial meeting took place at the greenhouse in the Baycrest Terraces, where Cohen led a poetry lesson. Each sixth grader was paired up with a Baycrest resident, and the partners were instructed to choose a plant in the greenhouse, study its properties, and compose a poem about it. Despite the participants' initial discomfort, Cohen believes that writing poetry "really broke the ice" between the students and their Baycrest partners. "Poetry is such a great place to start, because it's so free. You don't feel constricted by various grammatical structures and punctuation … There are so few rules."

The students returned to Baycrest several times to revise, edit, and extend their work with their partners. The unit culminated in a Poetry Café at the school, where both generations of students recited their poems and socialized over hot chocolate, tea, and cookies. A few Baycrest residents read poems that they had written as early as their own adolescence.

Baker remembers, "I don't think there was a person watching who was not profoundly moved by the interactions." Both Baycrest and Heschel staff participants could see that the experience was drawing the children and the seniors closer, allowing them to understand one another.

Cohen points out, "We often acknowledge seniors' ability to recall their own youth when interacting with young people. However, we don't often think about how children can see that same thing – they now saw an 85-year-old woman as a 13-year-old girl, and developed more empathy for the senior in the process. They didn't just see them as a Bubbie or Zaida but as a young girl or boy much like themselves." Baker adds that, for the Grade 6 students, "working with elders was a means to develop respect for them. Our students could see the insights they can offer. This breaks down stereotypes that distance the generations from each other."

In the winter, the Baycrest residents came to Heschel to create ceramic Seder plates for the Eco-Seder, an integrated Grade 6 program that combines Passover themes with studies in environmental issues, math, science, and the arts. Judith Leitner, Director of Arts and Co-Founder of Heschel, recalls that a few Baycrest residents were insecure about connecting

themes and ideas across different disciplines. "Our kids are *hip* to integration," explains Leitner. "They are used to making connections and thinking through various layers of art – the math, the science. The challenge was teaching people in their 80s and 90s how to think this way."

What was interesting, is that sometimes the children would mentor the seniors, and sometimes the seniors would mentor the children; but the switch happened naturally.

Leitner believes that one of the greatest benefits for the children was that they had the chance to play the role of teacher for their partners. "The kids had to reach inside themselves and explain a concept, and they gained a much deeper understanding of what they were learning by having to teach it."

"What was interesting," says Baker, "is that sometimes the children would mentor the seniors and sometimes the seniors would mentor the children; but the switch happened naturally. All participants, young and elder, would teach what they knew and learn from their partners. The result was visible cooperation and partnership. For the children, it was an awakening to new avenues for gathering information."

The intergenerational classroom levelled the playing field. Sure, some students were older and some were younger, but everyone saw themselves and the others as able and intelligent participants in a lifelong learning continuum. As Baker suggests, "Sometimes, younger people are afraid of elders, particularly in our society that doesn't always allow for natural interactions. The intergenerational classroom allows for a more normative relationship."

The Intergenerational Learning Project ended with the unit Life Before the War, an inquiry into the Jewish experience before the Second World War. The sixth graders and seniors studied the work and lives of artists Marc Chagall and Mayer Kirshenblatt and explored what life was like for European Jews before the Holocaust. The seniors had personal stories to tell: some shared memories of growing up in shtetls in Poland; others, born in North America, remembered their families' experiences in Europe and the "transplanted shtetls" in which they had grown up in Toronto, Montreal, and New York. The seniors' personal stories stuck with the sixth graders, and often surfaced in later class discussions. According to Cohen, the seniors' remembrances colourfully supplemented her students' "academic knowledge" and rendered the learning of history relevant and real.

Baker is pleased with the benefits that intergenerational learning brought to her students:

The pilot project was experiential, which is the most authentic way to learn; all of the modules had a hands-on and face-to-face component. It fostered students' interpersonal skills as they interacted in new ways with new people on new topics; to understand one another the seniors and youngsters had to talk to one another and then talk more. The inevitable awkwardness of new relationships and the struggling through to make their ideas understood was great both for (the students') social and academic skills. They had to produce high-quality work in a new environment.

The project proved to the students that in life the learning process never ends and that all ages can anticipate trying new things and absorbing new knowledge. Leitner describes the atmosphere during the collaboration as "joyful and optimistic ... the sky is the limit." Toronto Heschel and Baycrest are pursuing a second Intergenerational Learning Project this year.

Lisa Richler, M.A., earned a Master of Arts in Humanities at the University of Chicago and worked as a writer and teacher before having kids. She now volunteers in various roles at The Toronto Heschel School and The Lola Stein Institute.

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Jewish Federations General Assembly convenes in Israel

Netanyahu rails against 'bad deal' on Iran

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu once again took a hard line against Iran's nuclear program in an address to the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly (GA) in Jerusalem.

Speaking Sunday on the opening night of the GA, Netanyahu also repeated his demand that, in order for Israel to reach a peace deal with the Palestinians, Palestinian leadership must recognize Israel as a Jewish state.

He finished by calling for a continued strong bond between Israel and the North American Jewish community.

On Iran, Netanyahu criticized the compromise proposed in recent multilateral negotiations over its nuclear program, several times calling it a "bad deal."

"What is being proposed now is a deal in which Iran retains all of that capacity" to build a nuclear weapon, Netanyahu told representatives of Jewish communities across the United States and Canada. "Not one centrifuge is dismantled – not one. Iran gets to keep tons of low enriched uranium."

Western powers and Iran failed to reach agreement in negotiations last week on easing sanctions against Iran in return for the Islamic Republic freezing its nuclear program for six months. The sides are expected to meet again in 10 days.

Netanyahu said he would continue to criticize such an agreement and called on his audience to join him in advocating against it. Later he suggested that Iran has plans to attack the United States.

"When it comes to Jewish survival and the survival of the Jewish state, I will not be silenced, ever," he said to loud cheers from the crowd, "We are the Jewish state. We are charged with defending ourselves and speaking up. All of us, all of us, have to stand up and speak up."

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"When it comes to Jewish survival and the survival of the Jewish state, I will not be silenced," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Jewish leaders Nov. 7. *(Flash90 photo)*

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Quebec secularism bill tougher than expected

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

Jewish groups denounce Bill 60 for violating minority rights

MONTREAL — After two months of leaks and preliminary guidelines, the Parti Québécois government on Nov. 7 tabled a bill for the "Charter of State Secularism" that is even more far-reaching and restrictive than the proposed charter of Quebec values.

Bill 60 was vigorously denounced by Jewish groups, which say it violates fundamental rights.

Both the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and B'nai Brith Canada say they will take legal action, if necessary, should the bill become law.

"We are disappointed that, rather than heeding the advice of a cross-section of Quebecers, including Quebec's human rights commission, health institutions and teachers' unions, the government has hardened its position by introducing even more stringent measures," Eric Maldoff and Luciano Del Negro, respectively CIJA chair and vice-president for Quebec, said in a statement.

This "intransigent government is sending the message to Quebec minorities that our rights are dependent on the majority, rather than being protected and guaranteed as they should be under the rule of law," they stated.

The organization is particularly disturbed by Section 38 of the bill, which it says opens up the possibility of preventing elected officials from sitting in the National Assembly because of their outward religious identity.

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Vayishlach
Candlelighting: 4:35
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Greater Toronto Area

Creating a perfect simchah
Party Planner — Section B

Israeli disaster relief heads to Philippines — please see page 31

CANADA

Extradition Appealed

OTTAWA — An Ottawa professor accused of a deadly 1980 shul bombing in Paris was in court last week appealing his 2011 extradition order for the crime. Crown lawyers defended handwriting evidence linking Hassan Diab, 59, to the bombing, which killed four and injured dozens. Diab, a Canadian of Lebanese descent who was arrested for the crime in 2008, maintains his innocence and has produced expert opinions disputing a French expert's claim his handwriting and the presumed bomber's signature on a hotel slip are the same. The Crown supports an earlier ruling that French courts must weigh the evidence, even if it doesn't meet Canadian standards.

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WORLD

Fraudster Sentenced

NEW YORK — Semen Domnitser, the Claims Conference employee who was found guilty of leading a $57-million fraud scheme at the Holocaust restitution organization, was sentenced to eight years in jail last week. Domnitser, 55, was also ordered to pay $57.3 million in restitution. Since 2010, 31 people have been charged with taking part in the scheme to defraud the Article 2 Fund and Hardship Fund programs directed by Domnitser. Twenty-eight pleaded guilty, and three – Domnitser, Torontonian Luba Kramrish and Oksana Romalis – were convicted in May. Kramrish was sentenced Sept. 20 to 37 months in jail. Romalis is scheduled to be sentenced Nov. 26. The fraud, discovered in 2009, dated to 1993.

Jews Urged To Act

NEW YORK — The Oneida Nation is calling on Jewish communities to heed the call of two Washington-area rabbis and boycott the Washington Redskins name. "I believe our cause will resonate through the Jewish community," Ray Halbritter, head of the New York-based Oneida Indian Nation, told *JTA*. "We hope that rabbis will stand by these rabbis to be on the right side of history." The Oneida Nation has been a leader among Native American groups urging the NFL franchise to change its name. The rabbis, Aaron Frank and Shmuel Herzfeld, urged other rabbis to support them. The Anti-Defamation League also backs the call.

Ausmus Picked To Manage Detroit Tigers

DETROIT — Brad Ausmus, who managed the Israeli national team's bid for the World Baseball Classic, is the new manager of the Detroit Tigers.

Brad Ausmus

Ausmus, 44, was a three-time Gold Glove catcher for four teams in his playing days. His Israeli team failed to qualify for the World Baseball Classic in 2012, losing to Spain, 9-7, in 10 innings in the final game of the qualifying tournament.

A Connecticut native who was educated at Dartmouth, he has never served as a manager or coach in Major League Baseball. He has been a special assistant in the San Diego Padres' front office since 2010, the year he retired as a player.

Ausmus joins a short roster of Jews who have managed major league teams, including current Oakland A's manager Bob Melvin – both have Jewish mothers and non-Jewish fathers. The first was one of the earliest Jewish players, Lipman Pike, an outfielder-infielder who managed the Cincinnati Red Stockings in 1877.

Ausmus had two stints playing with the Tigers and last played with the Los Angeles Dodgers. He spent most of his career, which started in 1993, with the Houston Astros. He succeeds Jim Leyland, who stepped down following Detroit's loss to the eventual world champion Boston Red Sox in the AL Championship Series.

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Business mogul finds long-lost WWII letter

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

James (Jimmy) Kay, is a man well-known in Canada for his monumental success with Dylex Ltd., – the now-defunct billion-dollar clothing consortium – as well as his Jewish philanthropic endeavours.

But a recent discovery by Elaine Kay, Jimmy's wife of 50 years, prompted her to tell a different, less-known story about her 91-year-old husband – one that paints him as a decorated World War II hero.

The story begins when Elaine, 75, invited a relative of hers, a war veteran, to dinner at the Kays' opulent Yorkville home months ago.

"He said, 'Wasn't Jimmy a captain? He was very famous in the war. He got a million medals.'"

At his urging, Elaine called Veterans Affairs Canada in Ottawa for a package containing his medals, information about where and when he served, and a copy of his attestation papers, all of which arrived last summer.

According to his attestation papers, Winnipeg-born Jimmy was 18 years old and a slight 143 pounds when he enlisted with the Canadian Forces in September 1939.

By 1942, Jimmy was serving as a lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC). He later became a captain and saw active service in Britain and northwest Europe until he returned home in 1946.

In recognition of his service, Jimmy was awarded a number of medals, including the 1939-45 Star, the France and Germany Star, the Defence Medal, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, the War Medal 1939-1945, and the General Service Badge.

But it is a letter from Jimmy's troops –which had been filed away for decades until it was stumbled upon a few weeks ago – that has become the Kays' most prized possession.

"We had an office on Bloor [Street], and we dismantled it a few weeks ago. There was this portfolio that had a few things from the war, and in it was this letter that he was talking about all these years," said Elaine, speaking for Jimmy, who suffers from dementia.

Continued on page 13

Jimmy Kay, holding the letter his troops wrote to him in 1946, and his wife, Elaine, holding the Dutch guilder note they gave him, sit in their Yorkville home among his medals and other war memorabilia.
[Sheri Shefa photo]

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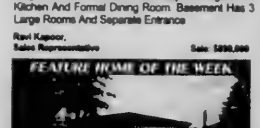
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Will 'hydro-relations' bring Israel peace – and praise?

It was just a few years ago that, with increasing frequency, Israeli officials were issuing dire warnings about a pending drought in Israel. Given the perilously low level of water in Lake Kinneret, the country's main source of fresh water, numerous measures were put in place to try to reduce per capita water consumption. Rainwater that fell in the precious few winter months, if it fell at all, was measured by the millimetre as a much-needed source of water replenishment.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

It was, therefore, surprising earlier this year to learn from *Times of Israel* editor David Horovitz that, according to Alexander Kushnir, head of Israel's Water Authority, Israel's water crisis is, for the foreseeable future, over. Horovitz wrote (Feb. 26) that "as of early 2013... the Water Authority feels it can say with confidence that Israel has beaten the drought."

This outcome was the culmination of two factors in Israeli planning: large-scale water recycling and the construction of major desalination plants.

That was a stunning and unexpected announcement, but it came as a most welcome piece of good news.

It is one thing for Israel to declare an end to drought, especially in an area of the world almost always on the brink of one, but quite another to be able to reveal, just a few months later, that Israel has a surplus.

That additionally stunning news was the focus of a cover story by Judith Sudilovsky in the Oct. 21 issue of *Jerusalem Report* magazine.

Citing the work of Prof. Eilon Adar, director of the Zuckerberg Institute for Water Research at Ben-Gurion University, whose team is in the forefront of developing Israel's high-tech water innovations, Sudilovsky wrote that "this desert nation now has water to spare, thanks to technologies ranging from water purification and desalination to improved water infrastructure that leaves Israel with the lowest municipal leakage rate in the world of about 15 per cent."

She quoted Adar: "In Israel, there is more water being produced than God has provided. We are doing it through desalinating seawater and brackish groundwater and cleaning effluents. Since we already need to bridge demand and supply with artificial water, we need to keep producing more and more efficient ways to create water." According to Adar, Israel's water supply is secure for the next 20 years.

Sudilovsky also interviewed Abraham Tenne, head of the desalination division of the Israel Water Authority, who spoke about how Israel's innovations in water technology have important implications for peace: "Historically, water has always been a reason for war or fights. We think that water is a bridge to peace, and this is why we need to deal with water to try to build up confidence between us and our neighbours, to let them share in what we have already succeeded in doing, and let them step ahead with this water sector."

Tenne includes the Palestinians, Jordan, and the Gulf states among those who can benefit from Israel's expertise.

Israel's know-how – something Shlomi Dinar, an expert in environmental politics at Florida International University, calls its "hydro-relations" – is being picked up around the world: in Latin America, Africa, Central Asia and even Europe.

The Oct. 31 *Times of India* reported about a talk Brett Jonathan Miller, Israel's consul general in Mumbai, gave at Goa University. Incorporating lessons from Israel about water and agricultural management, Miller said, India can feed the world in the future. Miller pointed out "while more than 50 per cent of water in areas like Mumbai is wasted even before it reaches homes due to poor pipelines, Israel recycles 70 per cent of its water for use."

Israeli high-tech water firms are also taking their innovations to Europe. As the Nov. 6 *Times of Israel* reported, Netavim, a leading Israeli company in irrigation management technology, is applying its expertise to improve agricultural yields at nine European sites.

Israel's central role in helping to improve water management and food production around the globe is a story just beginning to be told.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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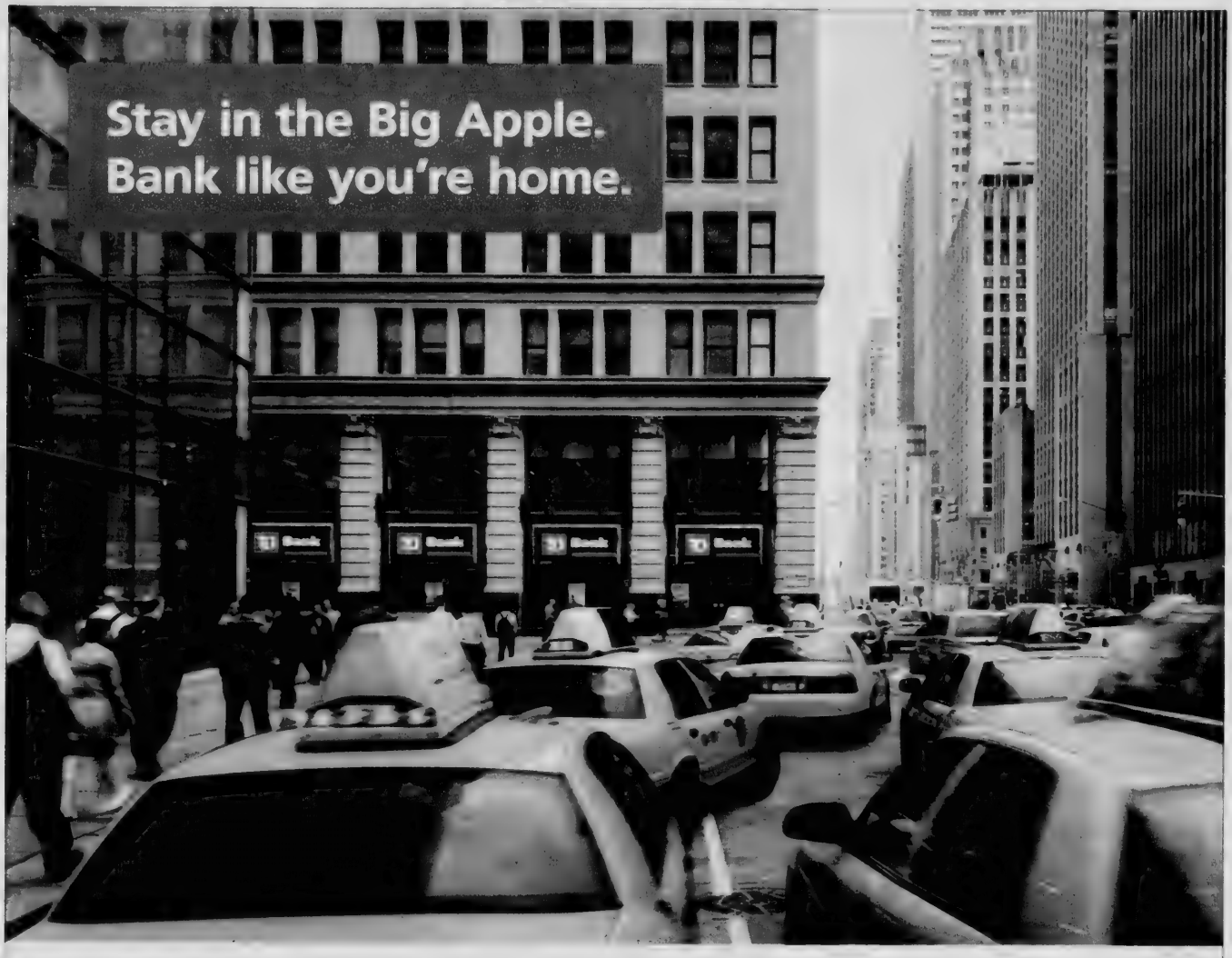
A TASTE OF ISRAEL: Leo Baeck Day School's *shinshiniyot* (Israeli emissaries) brought a taste of Israel to the recent Downtown Jewish Community Family Fun Fair at the Miles Nadal JCC. From left are Maayan Sharon, Lior Doron and Taly Epstein, who are in Toronto for a year of national service. They operated a booth teaching children how artistic it can be to decorate cookies Israeli style.



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Let's set a new tone

Guest Editorial

Last month, I had a fabulous evening in Toronto. A former student and his wife – who have become good friends – hosted a book party and fundraiser at their home for 25 of their friends. We donated the proceeds to Birthright Israel, given our shared passions for Israel, Jewish education and Jewish identity-building. More important than the money raised that night, however, was the consciousness raised by the great discussion.

The participants were successful Toronto Jews in their 30s and 40s, building their careers and their lives."There must have been 50 [academic] degrees in that room," my host said. Even more impressive than their career credentials were their smarts and their passion. These were thoughtful, interested people, trying to navigate in a complex world and wondering where their Jewish identity fit into it all.

These are the people who will build our community's future. My short introduction noted that we are all traumatized by living in this age of Israel-bashing, and I challenged them to develop a modern, positive Zionist vision that takes Jewish peoplehood and Israel personally.

Participants then asked about Zionism and anti-Zionism. They asked about Israel and the recent Pew study showing U.S. Jewish secularization. They asked about Jewish educational dilemmas and parenting challenges. I expected us to end after an hour, but – only because it was "a school night" – we finished after two hours of intense discussion.

One of the exciting things about visiting Toronto is that it is a flourishing Jewish community. What most struck me, however, was how welcoming the reaction was when I criticized certain aspects of Jewish life we often take for granted, from the big, cathedral-style Judaism that has most Jews entering synagogue three times a year and focusing more on the fashion show in the pews than the needs of their souls, to the rampant careerism that emphasizes good grades over good values in most Jewish schools.

Of course, we emphasized the positives, too – that's why we all showed up and stayed. But the evening confirmed my sense that most Jewish discussions today – except about Israel – are too polite. Young Jews, in particular, need to hear older, more established Jews being critical, candid and controversial. Too many leaders prefer the two "Ds" of defensiveness and denial to these three essentials "Cs." They heard my frustrations, but saw that I'm still engaged, still showing up, still fighting. Too often, Jewish critics are dismissed as disgruntled dissidents, not loving liberators.

I left Toronto convinced that, for the Jewish community to grow, we should set a new tone of constructive criticism and self-criticism. We should start convening more such evenings, not as gripe sessions but as true encounters. Let's engage Jewish texts as a way of engaging Jewish issues. And let's remind ourselves – and teach others – that engaging seriously involves recognizing the good and the bad, sifting, assessing, and judging – without delegitimizing but with a view to relegitimizing and reviving.

The renewed *Canadian Jewish News* should facilitate this debate. It should use these pages as a platform for the open, rollicking debate this community needs. *The CJN* should also convene various community forums, from informal living room salons to formal synagogue evenings to book clubs, to push the community to stretch, grow, and thrive.

Gil Troy

Dry Bones EURABIA

WITH EUROPEAN BIRTH RATES FALLING
AND MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS GROWING IN NUMBER
EUROPE IS NOT CHANGING ITS OPINION . . .
. . . IT'S CHANGING ITS POPULATION.

Israel must halt settlements in capital

I am writing as a member of JSpace Canada, a progressive Zionist organization that is committed to a democratic Jewish state alongside a viable Palestinian state.

We are dismayed by the recent announcement by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to greatly accelerate settlement expansion in east Jerusalem. This exacerbates the occupation and undermines the creation of a Palestinian state. Settlement expansion is an act of provocation and bad faith during peace talks.

If a peace treaty is not achieved soon, Israel risks losing its status as a democracy, and with that, the support of progressive Jews who cherish the values in Israel's Declaration of Independence. It also risks leaving a legacy of war and insecurity for future generations of both Israelis and Palestinians.

We call on Israel to halt settlement construction and make a good-faith effort to achieve a just peace. We urge world leaders to take a strong position condemning actions by both Israelis and Palestinians that may undermine the success of these historic talks.

Barbara Landau
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

• • •

Intermarriage's root cause is lack of relevance

While Rabbi Reuven Bulka utilizes the Pew Report statistics to make his point about abuse in Jewish homes, which does of course exist, he is not, I hope, suggesting that abuse is a root cause of the rising rate of intermarriage ("The elephant in the Jewish room," *The CJN*, Nov. 7).

A root cause that we should be examining is the seeming lack of relevance of religion itself in our daily lives. After all, if intermarriage has risen, non-Jews as well are complicit. Religion preaches exclusivity, but fewer people are listening.

If we are concerned about a Jewish continuity that includes adherence to our religious traditions, when are our religious leaders going to recognize that what they are preaching and how they are preaching it is failing in today's society? This, I respectfully suggest, is the real elephant in the room.

Ron Hoffman
Toronto

• • •

Action is needed to stop intermarriage

The high intermarriage rate is threatening Jewish survival. Respectfully, I take issue with Rabbi Dow Marmur's recommendation to "not preach against it, but do God's will as best we can – and leave the rest to God." ("What should we do about intermarriage?" *The CJN*, Oct. 31).

Taking the proactive approach, as suggested by Prof. Jack Wertheimer (whom Rabbi Marmur quotes), to have communities do a better job at organizing opportunities for socializing and by making greater efforts to encourage non-Jewish marriage partners to embrace Judaism, is at least a step toward ensuring our survival. Can we brainstorm as a community to figure out why so many Jews are opting to intermarry?

Does Rabbi Marmur have any suggestions as to how we can help people see that Judaism is a religion rich in joy, beauty and wisdom, and that maintaining Jewish continuity should be considered a top priority in our values?

Debbie Bauer
Toronto

• • •

U.S. must not reduce sanctions

There is understandable fear in Israel and by Jews around the world that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, with his words of peace and reconciliation at the United Nations, has seduced U.S. President Barack Obama into thinking that a reasonable settlement of Iran's nuclear ambitions is possible ("Rouhani declaration of openness to nuclear talks met with skepticism," cjnews.com, Sept. 25).

Obama has a bad track record in his dealings with Arab and Muslim leaders. His love affair with Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood turned out to be a disaster and made it necessary for the Egyptian military to move in and remove president Mohammed Morsi.

Forcing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to apologize to Turkey's president over the attempt to breach the Gaza blockade was again a terrible miscalculation on the part of Obama. Israel must persuade American congressional leaders not to reduce the sanctions imposed on Iran until, as a positive first step, Iran ends – subject to independent confirmation – its pursuit of atomic weapons.

Bert Raphael
Toronto

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Peace would unleash huge economic potential

Arie Raif

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry spent a good part of last week shuttling between Israeli and Palestinian leaders trying to salvage the peace talks.

On Nov. 6, he pledged an additional $75 million (all figures US) in aid for the Palestinians for infrastructure and educational programs. The funds, *The Times of Israel* reported, were designed to show the Palestinians a tangible result from the peace process.

Opinion

Israel also stands to benefit. As Ehud Olmert, Israel's former prime minister, put it starkly: "Without a Palestinian state, the State of Israel is finished."

The price of the conflict for Israel – holding the territories and protecting the settlers – is astronomical. The Israeli government spends more on building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories than it does on housing, education and health combined.

Israel's social fabric has been destroyed since the Six Day War, as governments, left and right, have obfuscated as to how much they were really spending on the settlements.

Since 1967, when Jewish settlement began in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the expenditure has risen to more than 110 billion shekels ($31 billion).

It costs Israel 1.5 billion shekels annually to protect the settlers. The country's defence budget is one of the highest in the world and constitutes about 17 per cent of state spending.

At the same time, the government feeds public fears about "the security threats" that would result if Israel gave up the West Bank, at a time when the government's real priority is how to stay in power by preserving the ruling coalition cobbled together after each election.

Of course, the price paid to keep these improbable coalitions intact translates into billions of shekels to buy the co-operation of coalition members.

Palestinian-Israeli business and economic relations could serve as an anchor of stability and prosperity, which are key factors in achieving peaceful relations in this region. Economic relations can greatly impact both economies, promoting win-win outcomes for Palestinians and Israelis in the long term.

Palestinians demonstrate against the high cost of living in September, 2012. Their economic situation is well below that of Israelis and Europeans, Arie Raif writes.

Israeli President Shimon Peres' vision of a New Middle East is relevant today more than ever: "Peace would yield a tourism momentum, the opening of modern factories, joint projects relating to energy, water, preserving the environment, free trade. Virtually in every field, the new generations will use iPhones instead of stones."

The economic situation of Palestinians is well below the standard of living of Israelis and Europeans. Their per capita income is $2,900 per year, while the per capita income of Israelis is $32,000 per year, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Israel, for many years a country under siege, is now strong and confident, and has much to offer the region. As Peres observed, "Our main effort until now was to defend Zion. Our main effort now is to convey a message that Israel is powerful and strong and has something to offer."

Peres' New Middle East peace plan is based on market liberalization and regional economic co-operation. The idea is embedded in the globalization process, which can bring an end to regional conflicts and replace national interests with multinational interests.

HAVE YOUR SAY:

Will economic development in the PA promote peace? Are Israel and the Palestinians missing out on a peace dividend?

Write to: cjninfo@gmail.com

The idea is rather simple: globalization calls for market liberalization and a more powerful role for business. Economic prosperity would create incentives for people to act peacefully, because they'll want to participate in and gain from the economic growth.

The economic benefits for the Palestinian side are clear.

Palestinian exports could cumulatively rise to some $11 billion per annum (compared to $500 million in the last few years). Palestinian employment would similarly benefit through the creation of more than 500,000 new Palestinian jobs, nearly doubling the number of jobs that were on the market six years ago, from 600,000 to more than 1.1 million.

The cumulative contribution to Palestinian GDP (in value added terms) would amount to approximately $8 billion, thereby tripling it from some $4 billion in 2005 to approximately $12 billion.

The economic benefits for Israel are even greater.

If one looks at the value of Israeli exports alone, one can see that exports cumulatively could rise by more than $17 billion through the creation and development of two new major export-oriented growth-engines: the Arab Free Trade Area bloc (AFTA) and the Palestinian Authority market will give Israeli exports a potential market of $12 billion, while Holy Land tourism has the potential to transform Israel and the PA into important players in the global tourist market.

But before the two sides can reap these benefits, they must make a strategic decision to live side-by-side under a two-state solution, which would be conducive to stability, security and an improved economy. Economic co-operation is the only avenue that promises strong and immediate benefits.

The Palestinians can take advantage of the size of the Israeli economy and their geographic proximity to Israel, which can absorb a large volume of Palestinian exports and give the PA access to Israel's technological know-how and advanced industrial infrastructure and products. These are important advantages for Palestinian producers, who can gain access to western markets via the use of Israeli marketing platforms.

Moshe Dayan, the former Israeli defence minister, was right when he declared, "If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends, you talk to your enemies."

Arie Raif is an Israeli political activist and a former Israeli diplomat in Canada. He's currently vice-chairman and CEO of the Canadian Peres Center For Peace.

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Reality contrasts sharply with anti-Israel propaganda

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

In Syria, the inhuman violence of an ongoing civil war has taken at least 100,000 lives, including more than 1,000 victims of chemical weapon attacks.

In the sharpest contrast imaginable, in an Israeli hospital in Safed – less than 100 kilometres away from this carnage – Jewish and Arab doctors are saving the lives of hundreds of Syrian civilian victims, and in early November, a baby was born to a young refugee mother. The delivery room nurse, Mira Eli, told reporters, "We gave her a hug, a shower and food... She's a very young woman who came without her husband or anyone else... and it was her first delivery... Our job is to ensure that every new mother remembers her delivery as an unforgettable, positive experience, whatever her ethnic, national or religious background."

While this might seem entirely unexceptional, history has hardly been conducive to such aid. For more than six decades, Syria has been at war with Israel, and before 1967, Syrian artillery on the Golan Heights regularly pounded the Jewish towns below, near the Sea of Galilee. Some of the harshest treatment of Israeli prisoners of war took place at the hands of the Syrians, including frequent torture.

Nevertheless, Israelis have opened their arms and treated hundreds of wounded Syrian civilians, including many children and the elderly, some with horrendous injuries, providing them with the best possible medical care. The IDF has been centrally involved in evacuating and safely transporting these unlikely patients from the war zone into Israel, under difficult conditions. No one has been asked to cover the costs of this treatment, and no payments are expected. In addition, and with no publicity, Israeli aid agencies are helping hundreds of thousands of Syrians now living in Jordanian refugee camps.

However, none of this has blunted the propaganda campaigns and political warfare that falsely accuse Israelis, including the IDF, of "war crimes" and wholesale violations of human rights. On university campuses in Europe and North America, ritual chants of "Israel apartheid" and immoral boycott, divestment and sanctions activities continue. In some churches, groups such as Sabeel are given platforms to promote hatred under the facade of peace and human rights, and in the United Kingdom, the Methodist church is currently conducting another round of anti-Israel activity, again exploiting moral language. The same is true for some labour unions that have been captured by the anti-Israel warriors, particularly in Canada.

As part of this attack, a tiny group of Israeli and Jewish zealots are often trotted out to validate this modern blood libel. For example, a fringe group known as Breaking the Silence is currently doing a world tour spreading false "war crimes" allegations, including a recent appearance on CBC Radio. This organization was quoted as a source 27 times in the discredited Goldstone report published in 2009, but the CBC neglected to inform its listeners of this salient fact, as well the other evidence contradicting their ideologically motivated "testimony."

Breaking the Silence is supported by generous funding from political groups such as the New Israel Fund, as well as anti-Israel organizations in Europe and biased aid groups such as World Vision. This money promotes anti-Israel campaigns around the world instead of aiding Syrian war victims, for example.

While the zealots are beyond reason, journalists (including at the CBC), academics, government officials and members of organizations seeking to promote human rights and humanitarian aid might be able to recognize the contrast between the propaganda and the reality. For this group, the story of a 20-year-old Syrian living on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights who was evacuated by the IDF from the war zone in order to give birth safely at Ziv Hospital in Safed should at least raise some questions about the narrative they've been peddling for many years.

The young mother's words might also give them pause: "I don't feel like I am in an 'enemy' country. The staff are all helping me and worrying about me... My baby too is getting wonderful, devoted care."

Such behaviour reflects the Israeli reality, far from the propaganda campaigns that have done so much damage.

Righteous Gentiles and their righteous progeny

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

Several years ago, I used this space to describe the excitement I experienced helping my then-seventh-grade daughter with her school roots assignment.

My dad was born in Holland, and I grew up knowing that he and his nuclear family, and one second cousin, were the only Lootsteens to survive the Holocaust. Through my daughter's project, I learned the names of almost 100 Lootsteens sent to their deaths by the Nazis. I also discovered one Lootsteen, a woman we previously knew nothing about, who had spent her 70-plus years till then certain she was the only Lootsteen to have survived the war. I can't describe how special it was when, several months later, my sister, my father and I travelled to the Netherlands to meet our new cousin and her family.

I grew up feeling the Shoah was a uniquely Jewish story, that only we could truly understand the depths of the atrocities and the scope of the numbers. And while the more universal aspects of the genocide did not escape me, it was clear that gentiles could neither properly fathom the enormity of our collective loss nor grasp the individual suffering.

Recently, just days apart, I was privileged to meet two unrelated grandchildren of Righteous Gentiles, each with her and his reasons for exploring their grandparents' past. These almost chance encounters have left their marks on me, allowing me to better understand that the Holocaust has not only profoundly, personally affected Jews.

Olivia, from Amsterdam, is in her early 30s. She's been to Israel a couple of times to get to know the country better and to spend time with Israeli friends she met while travelling the world some years ago, one of whom is my wife's niece. She stayed with us when in Jerusalem, visiting the Old City, the Israel Museum, the Machane Yehuda market, Yad Vashem and other sites.

At Yad Vashem, she decided to delve into her paternal grandfather's past. She didn't know him well. He died years ago, and her father doesn't speak about him much. But she did remember hearing something about him saving Jews during the war. She went to the research department and soon discovered that both her grandparents had helped save several Jews in the small town of Eibergen in eastern Holland. As well, they had both been recognized as Righteous Gentiles, they both had the honour bestowed upon them by Israel's ambassador to the Netherlands, and they had both even visited Israel a couple of times.

After returning home, Olivia continued her search with family members, eventually finding a photo of her grandparents receiving their honour from the Israeli ambassador. She emailed me about the experience being very special to her.

Not 10 days later I met Richard at my parents' home in Rishon Lezion. He was visiting them together with Danny, one of my dad's childhood friends, and with Danny's wife, Ora. It turns out that Richard was born in Holland and had immigrated with his parents to Australia when he was two, to somewhere not far from Brisbane. In his mid-40s today, he has four kids and works as a journalist.

He'd decided to take an almost three-week vacation to travel all the way to Israel and stay with Danny and Ora in their home in Netanya. Although he'd never met Danny before, he'd heard his grandfather had saved Danny's life during the war and wanted to get the story down in writing to memorialize it.

Danny and Ora showed Richard quite a bit of Israel. But more than anything else, Richard spent hours sitting patiently with Danny. He learned how Danny, who was less than 10 when his parents and only brother were taken away from Amsterdam, eventually made his way to Richard's grandparents' farm in the tiny hamlet of Abbega, in Holland's northern province of Friesland, living with them until the end of the war. Danny was in touch with the farmer till the latter passed away. He made certain he, too, was recognized as a Righteous Gentile and still keeps in touch with the farmer's family.

Yad Vashem rightfully memorializes many Righteous Gentiles. It was an honour for me to spend time with the progeny of two such tzadikkim, to understand just a bit about how their grandparents' heroic acts have affected their lives and how these acts should also impact ours.

May the memory of their deeds be eternal.

Jewish Toronto

Past UJA Campaign Chair Ed Sonshine named Canada's Outstanding CEO of the Year

By Daniel Horowitz

Early last month, Ed Sonshine, Chief Executive Officer of RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust and a renowned leader of Toronto's Jewish community, got an unexpected phone call.

On the other end of the line was the voice of Gord Nixon, President and CEO, Royal Bank of Canada, informing Mr. Sonshine that he had just been named Canada's Outstanding CEO of the Year.

"I knew that I had been nominated by somebody, but I quite frankly paid no further attention to it, because this award usually goes to some giant company," says Mr. Sonshine.

Some would argue that RioCan REIT, which, under Mr. Sonshine's consummate leadership owns and manages Canada's largest collection of shopping centres and has evolved into the country's largest real estate investment trust with an enterprise value of approximately $14 billion, qualifies as "giant".

"I didn't take it seriously that I had a chance; I just thought it was nice to have been nominated," he says. "And then, after I forgot about it, Gord called me with the news and there I was, sitting in my office, quickly going into shock."

Unlike Mr. Sonshine, Fred Waks, RioCan's President and Chief Operating Officer, was not surprised by the honour bestowed on his friend and partner.

"Ed is a great mentor who leads by example; and everything he does, I, and others at RioCan aspire to do," says Mr. Waks. "Being Eddie's wingman for 18 years, I can say that this honour is well deserved. Think about it; Ed's in the real estate business, he's Jewish, he's an immigrant, yet, in the entire country, he's the number one guy right now. Sometimes people don't get what they deserve, but in this case, nobody deserves it more than Ed."

For those counting, Mr. Sonshine is the second Jewish CEO to be awarded with this prestigious honour, following in the footsteps of The Four Seasons Founder, Isadore "Issy" Sharp, who was named in 1992.

Ed and Fran Sonshine

"Ed was chosen because he has done a remarkable job building, growing and leading one of Canada's largest and most successful real estate companies and because he is universally admired and respected as an individual and community builder," says Mr. Nixon. "The fact that he is so well liked by everyone is just icing on the cake."

And despite the acclaim, Sonshine is quick to point out that he is only as good as his employees.

"This is very much a team award," says Mr. Sonshine. "You can be the greatest leader you want, if I didn't have the right people getting the job done, it's not going to work. So, to me, the award is about recognition of our whole team. And, the fact that I'm being recognized as the outstanding CEO is a validation of something I started 20 years ago."

Despite his success, as a Jew born to Holocaust survivors in a Displaced Persons Camp in Bergen Belsen, Mr. Sonshine often felt like an outsider in the business world.

"I just felt like I didn't really belong," he says. "Part of it was being a Jew in Toronto; part of it was being a child of survivors. My background has affected me over the years in many, many ways, some good, some bad, but my experiences growing up have certainly had a strong impact."

And Mr. Sonshine has also had a strong impact, not only in business, but on Toronto's Jewish community. He, like wife Fran, is a Past Chair of UJA of Greater Toronto's Annual Campaign, and he continues to play a vital role with UJA and other important Jewish charities across the GTA as a generous philanthropist and volunteer.

"There are a lot of important Jewish organizations in this community, but there is only one that encompasses 100 partner agencies, and that is UJA," says Mr. Sonshine. "It is the only one that can galvanize the entire community in the case of extraordinary events. Whether it was the Yom Kippur War in 1973, when I made my first donation to UJA, or the Lebanon war in 2006, it's UJA Federation that the community gathers around. It's the only organization that can truly take on a leadership role. It's also UJA Federation that takes on the responsibility of maintaining, improving and operating the infrastructure of the Jewish community."

"Ed's leadership inside and outside the Boardroom has inspired a new generation of community builders to dream more and do more," says Ted Sokolsky, President & CEO, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

And, yes, as the old adage proclaims, behind every great man there is a great woman. "Fran has been the perfect mate in every way," says Sonshine. "People see us the way we are today, with me as the CEO of a $14 billion operation, but for the first 25 years of our marriage, I was just a hard working Jewish guy like everybody else, trying to provide for my family. Also, Fran is a much nicer person than me. I tend to be a little focused, aggressive, and blunt. She's made me a much better person, not just publically, but as a CEO. She's the best."

Siblings honours Father's memory with fund supporting Holocaust education

By Jody Kamen

It was a no-brainer. When Holocaust survivor Nathan Peck passed away in 2012 at the age of 87, his 3 children quickly decided to honour their late father in a manner he would have approved; by supporting Holocaust education.

After investigating the various philanthropic options available to them through the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto – UJA Federation's planned giving and endowment arm - siblings Isaac, Ron and Rachelle, and wife, Freda made their decision, and the Nathan Peck Memorial Fund for UJA Federation's Sarah & Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre was born.

"Being the children of Holocaust survivors was always a very important part of our lives," says Ron. "It was a different feeling, a different upbringing than some of our peers had. Although the Holocaust was an important part of his life, he wasn't consumed by it. He told us stories about what happened, but to us kids they seemed more like adventures."

Nathan Peck was born in Poland, moving to Russia before the war started where he survived in work camps. He fell in love with Freda and they had their first child, Isaac, in Austria, before immigrating to Canada. Nathan and Freda were married for 66 years when he passed away.

Here in Toronto, the hard-working family man who always had a smile on his face, a wink in his eye, and a joke at the ready, made a comfortable life for himself, Freda and their children. During the war, the multi-faceted man worked as an engineer, an ambulance driver, and a chauffeur.

Nathan z"l and Freda Peck

"Then, Dad started selling produce from a truck before he eventually bought the Quality Bakery on College Street, which supplied other bakeries and restaurants," says Rachelle. "It was open 24 hours, so it became a popular haunt for police and the staff of local hospitals. He wasn't a baker, but he ran the business. He was always so proud of the fact that he came to Canada and was very successful."

The family belonged to Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, and maintained a strong Jewish identity as active members of the Wierzbniker Society.

As the number of living Holocaust survivors sadly starts to dwindle, it remains the responsibility of their children and grandchildren to carry on their stories and their legacies.

"We know it is up to us to promote the idea of Never Again as a basic human rights issue," asserts Isaac. "My father would be very proud that we chose to honour his legacy this way. The Holocaust was a major part of all of our lives as a family, and he would not want us to forget it. He would want future generations to be aware of it too."

The Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto is dedicated to creating long term resources to meet the challenges and needs of Toronto's flourishing Jewish community by working in partnership with individuals, families and private foundations to enhance Jewish community life and connecting them to the programmes and projects they feel passionate about.

One million Canadians go hungry, executive director says

Mazon Canada prepares for annual fundraiser

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A recent report by Food Banks Canada showed that the number of Canadians visiting food banks is higher than it was before the recession, but that only tells part of the story of hunger in Canada, said Ida McLaughlin, national executive direction for Mazon Canada

"Food Banks Canada only interviews and surveys food banks themselves, and that is a really small picture of what hunger is Canada is like," she said. "Think of all the other organizations that feed the hungry that aren't food banks."

While the report said more than 800,000 Canadians visit food banks monthly, McLaughlin estimated the number of Canadians going hungry is more than one million.

On Nov. 19, Mazon, which gives grants to organizations that feed the hungry, will be holding its annual Kosherlicious fundraiser in Toronto, with the Montreal version, La Soiree, to take place on Nov. 25.

The events are focused on kosher food, and although there are some differences in the entertainment – Toronto will feature musicians, including local a cappella group Varsity Jews, while Montreal showcases two Cirque du Soleil-esque performers – both will be exciting and enjoyable evenings, McLaughlin said.

Kosherlicious and La Soiree are Mazon's most important events of the year. McLaughlin said they bring in a huge portion of the funds Mazon is able to allocate to organizations helping the hungry around the country.

Last year's fundraisers raised more than $325,000 combined, but it's not enough, McLaughlin said. Although Mazon was able to allocate grants to around 110 organizations last year, it had to turn down 42 applicants.

McLaughlin said she's proud of the fact that although Mazon fundraises mostly in the Jewish communities, it donates its money on a non-denominational basis.

"Everyone who comes to us is considered for a grant," she said. "We support small organizations that are trying to make a difference, like Out of the Cold programs or shelters that have women who are running from abuse."

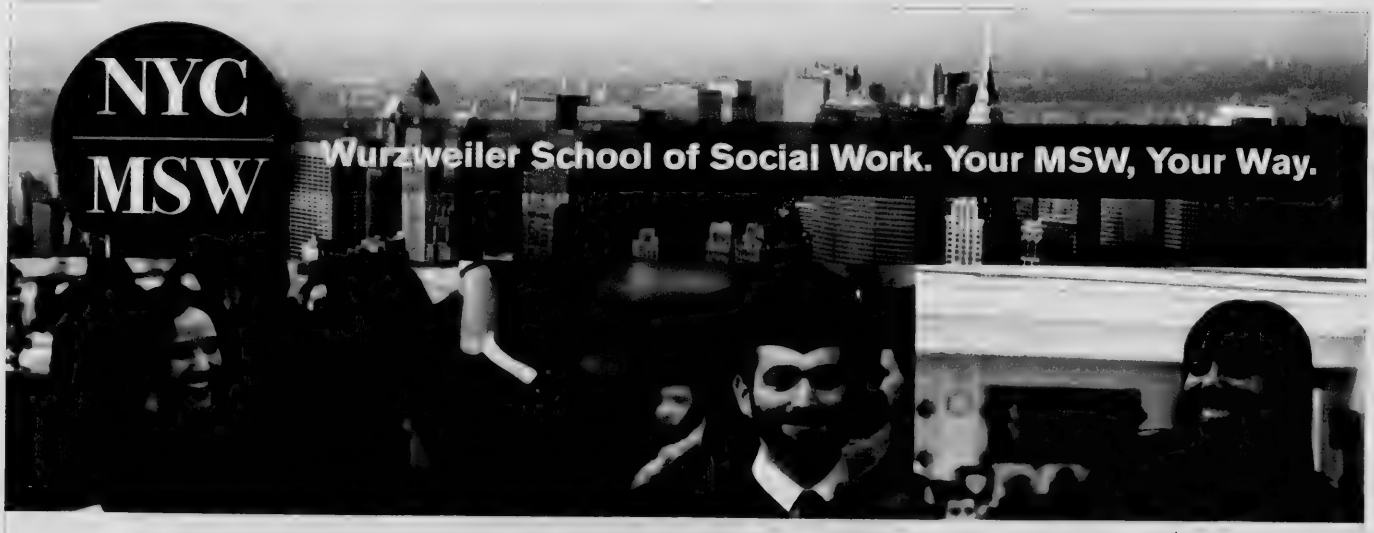
It's particularly important to help people access fresh foods, like produce. A carton of eggs, for example, is often considered a luxury many cannot afford.

"You think about how far an egg can go with a family versus a box of cereal or a bag of rice, so most people would choose the cereal or rice," McLaughlin said.

Guests enjoy food at the 2012 Kosherlicious fundraiser.
(Blueman Design & Photography photo)

This year, Mazon is hoping to raise $170,000 at each city's event, for a total of $340,000.

For tickets to either event, visit mazoncanada.ca.



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Started by son of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg

Fund for kids of social activists relaunched

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The United Jewish People's Order and the Winchevsky Centre relaunched the Mary Pitawanakwat Fund for Children at a recent fundraiser held at the centre.

The fund awards grants to children and youths whose families are negatively affected as a result of their parents' social and political activism.

Pitawanakwat, an Ojibwa, died in 1995, and had worked for seven years in Regina with the federal government. She was fired after lodging complaints of sexual harassment and racial discrimination in 1984.

She eventually won a 10-year legal battle, but died of breast cancer before the fund, originally part of the Rosenberg Fund for Children (RFC), was initiated.

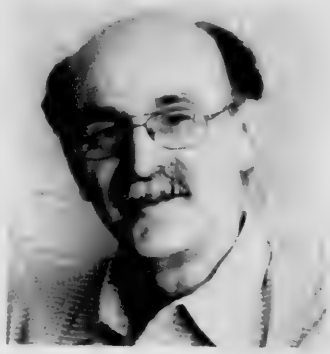
The RFC was founded by Robert Meeropol, the youngest son of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who were convicted of passing nuclear weapons secrets to the Soviet Union and, in 1953, were the first American civilians executed for espionage.

The Pitawanakwat fund became a separate entity co-ordinated by Pitawanakwat's daughter Robyn, and Naomi Binder Wall, until 2005, when they could no longer maintain it.

Speaking at the fundraiser, Meeropol, who has retired as executive director of the RFC – his daughter Jennifer has taken over, – but still works there, said he is "delighted that UJPO and the Winchevsky Centre has taken the fund under their wing. I see this match as a perfect one."

He said that Mary Pitawanakwat first contacted him in the early 1990s when she was looking for support for her teenage children.

'Rather than turn her down, we changed our guidelines'



Robert Meeropol

"We were limited to [funding people in] the United States, but rather than turn her down, we did something about our guidelines. One of our guiding principles is that if someone gets in trouble because they are pursuing social justice, we should support them."

He said that when Pitawanakwat won her suit, she came to his New York office and gave them $1,000. "That had never happened before."

Meeropol said that the RFC and the Mary Pitawanakwat Fund help "courageous people by helping their families. Those with children have a special stake in the future, and they do what they do to benefit their children, and so their children's future will be brighter."

Bob Hughes, president of the Saskatchewan Coalition Against Racism, and Pitawanakwat's partner, said that Meeropol came to Toronto in 1998 for a fundraiser for the RFC, with funds earmarked for the Pitawanakwat fund.

"We raised $4,000, and it was [Meeropol's] idea to keep the money in Canada and set up a separate fund in Mary's name," Hughes said.

"We couldn't maintain that fund, but we are relaunching with Winchevsky's support."

Binder Wall, who again will be co-ordinating the fund with Robyn Pitawanakwat, said that the Rosenberg case still has relevance today. "Their case still reverberates."

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'He was always a great leader'

Continued from page 3

She said that although he never spoke in detail about his war service, he often talked about a letter he received from his troops when he served as captain of the 36 Canadian Army Troops Composite Company in Holland in 1946.

The letter, written on a card in calligraphy, said, "A small token of appreciation to the 'old man,' an officer, a gentleman and a regular guy. From his boys, 36 Cdn. Army Troops Comp. Coy R.C.A.S.C."

"When we found this note, it was so emotional… I was crying and crying," Elaine said.

Along with the letter, Jimmy was given a Dutch guilder note, signed by each member of his company.

"He was always for the people. He was not snobbish. Anyone could come to him. He was a regular guy. It's unreal, unbelievable that there would be this kind of history in our possession," she said.

Although she didn't know many details about Jimmy's war experience, the RCASC website indicates that Jimmy's unit was an administrative and transport corps that provided support to Canadian soldiers throughout their training. They moved supplies, including rations and ammunition, to the frontlines for the northwest European and Italian campaigns.

His group was one of a number of RCASC units that supplied ammunition for Operation Totalize, the offensive launched by Allied troops of the First Canadian Army during the later stages of the invasion of German-occupied Western Europe.

Throughout the interview, during which she leafed through pages of documents, photo albums and other memorabilia, Elaine displayed an admiration for her husband that was palpable.

It could be noted in the way her voice would rise when emphasizing his many accomplishments as an entrepreneur, a philanthropist, a community leader and a war hero; and more subtly when she lovingly brushed his hair to make sure he looked his best for a photo.

"He was always a great leader, which translated into the companies he ran," Elaine said. "He was outstanding."

Following the war, Jimmy established himself in the plastics business before moving to Toronto, marrying Elaine in 1963, and raising four children.

In 1964, he moved into the world of retail by purchasing small businesses, starting with Fairweather, a women's fashion retailer.

But it was a meeting in 1966 with clothing manufacturer Wilfred Posluns that propelled Jimmy into a decades-long partnership that made billions in profits.

In his prime, Jimmy also served a number of Jewish community organizations in various roles, including the Jewish National Fund of Canada, Baycrest Centre, the Canadian Council for Christians and Jews, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel.

At its peak in the 1980s, Dylex, an acronym for Damn Your Lousy Excuses, was a company that operated 2,700 stores in North America, including Fairweather, Tip Top Tailors, Big Steel and Suzy Shier.

By the early 1990s, the number of Dylex stores in North America had dwindled to about 1,000.

It was then that Kay walked away from the once-untouchable clothing empire. In 1997, he purchased Hudson Bay Wholesale and remained a successful businessman, a feted Jewish community leader and a philanthropist.

"He was a wheeler dealer. He was unbelievable. He was very handsome. He was everything," Elaine gushed.

But it is this most recent discovery of the letter and the guilder note that has her seeing her accomplished husband in a new light.

"Suddenly to realize… the significance of what he did… And to think Jimmy Kay was just a youngster… he was just a kid."

GOOD BUDDIES: The Buddy Shabbat program takes the regular Kabbalat Shabbat service at Leo Baeck Day School to another level. Grade 7 student Michael N., left, and senior kindergartner Ari C. are buddies in a year-long program that fosters mentoring of younger students by their older counterparts.

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Child of survivors carries baton into the future

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Pearl Goodman has contributed to the growing corpus of books by children of Holocaust survivors with a hybrid effort. Her first published book, *Peril – From Jackboots to Jack Benny* (Bridgeross Communications), is part memoir because it is fact-based, and part novel because the characters' names are not real.

Released last year, *Peril* (a play on the Yiddish pronunciation of her name, with obvious war-era echoes) has won praise as an original, intensely personal work, but one leavened with humour, satire and plenty of the pop culture Goodman was exposed to as a youth growing up in Toronto.

The book examines three influences that shaped her life. Goodman, a high school English and drama teacher and a psychotherapist, told audiences during Holocaust Education Week.

The first was growing up in Toronto in the 1960s, which was "very white and Anglo-Saxon in its culture and mores. As a Jewish girl I felt different. Growing up, I was very aware of the unsettling message of feeling inadequate."

The second influence was the Holocaust, especially when her survivor parents' memories "broke through, which [they] did frequently and incisively, when present situations resembled the past."

And the third was television, which depicted a lifestyle "that seemed absolutely lovely to me, yet had no bearing or similarity whatsoever to the life I had."

Goodman, 59, said she wanted to express "in story form the complexity of the circumstances of my life growing up with two Holocaust survivors. The Holocaust lives on, but the sense of it changes as the information becomes assimilated by the children who are directly affected by the behaviours and views of the parents who originally suffered the trauma."

The author feels as though she has been passed a baton.

She doesn't pull her punches in her depiction of her Polish-born mother, for whom even her daughter's plans for a sleepover at a friend's house elicit "deep rumblings of anxiety and danger."

When Goodman wants to take in a stray cat, her mother recoils and wonders, "The Nazis killed six million Jews and you're worried about a cat?"

Goodman says it's a mistake to believe that when a traumatic incident ends, so does its residue.

"Nothing could be further from the truth. Traumatic events exert a huge pressure on the mind, and strain the heart and soul.

"That's where I come in. I see myself as a kind of conduit."

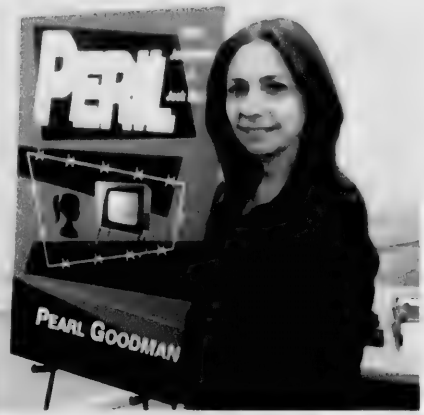
Through her book, which took four years to complete, Goodman tells her parents' stories intertwined with her own.

"I wanted, and perhaps even more than that, needed to make sense of how the two worked together," she explained. "It wasn't easy to talk about my troubles growing up because they paled in comparison to what my parents had endured."

She confesses to having harboured feelings of anger and guilt.

"I struggled with having the right to be angry and not have my voice stifled by their experience. As I wrote, I pushed myself to tell it like it was and leave it to the reader to apportion sympathy. In the end, I think I managed to give my own voice its due, my brother's and my parents'."

Ultimately, Goodman sought to impart a sense of hope "in a way that takes the intensity of the tragedy, tells it, accepts it as it is, works with it, and shapes it in order to make something sublime out of it."



Pearl Goodman [*Ron Csillag photo*]

She sees the post-Holocaust story as "a legacy passed down from generation to generation... as precious as any heirloom."

Asked in a brief *CJN* interview whether penning the book was cathartic, Goodman, normally a short story writer, said, "Writing is always cathartic for me. I wanted to tell a story. So if I succeeded, that would be really important for me."

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Sharing stories of forgotten gay victims

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Ken Setterington decided he needed to write a book about the pink triangle when he realized so many people had never heard of it, or knew what it stood for.

The pink triangle badge was used to identify gay men in concentration camps during the Holocaust. After the war, it was reclaimed as a symbol of gay pride, although the rainbow flag eventually overshadowed it, he said.

"I thought there was no need [to write a book about it] until I went to talk to the young people I worked with," said Setterington, a children's author as well as a librarian with the Toronto Public Library.

He asked one young gay man what he knew about the pink triangle. He said nothing. Most of the staff gave similar responses, which made him realize there was, indeed, a need.

"Most people know about the millions of Jews who were murdered, but what about the other victims, including the gay victims?" he asked. "I felt, as a gay person, our history needed to be told, too."

The author of *Branded by the Pink Triangle* shared what he uncovered in his research for the book during a Holocaust Education Week lecture at the University of Toronto. He explained his book tells the stories of numerous gay men who were persecuted during the Holocaust.

He talked about the history of the gay community in Berlin, and how it was quite vibrant in the 1920s, despite homosexuality being illegal. He discussed how, after the Nazis came into power, they began to more actively persecute gay Aryan men, who they saw as lowering the Aryan birthrate.

Thousands of men were arrested for being gay and they were taken to Nazi concentration camps.

"They were being sent to work," Setterington said, but "the work they were sent to do would most likely kill them."

Men who were hurt or lost limbs were sent to the infirmary, where they almost certainly would die.

He described how gay men were disproportionately used for torturous Nazi medical experiments.

"The Nazis wanted to discover reasons for homosexuality and did tests on those men," he said.

The gay men's experiences were particularly brutal because even when they were being liberated, they were not treated well. Homosexuality was still illegal in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and most other major nations after the war, which is why many survivors never talked about their experiences.

"We don't have the same number of witnesses, and the people are now dead, so the stories are just being forgotten," Setterington told *The CJN*.

In 1970, a group of activists were arrested for trying to place a lavender wreath at the National War Memorial in Amsterdam in memory of the gay men who died in the Holocaust. It wasn't until 1987 that a memorial was unveiled there.

Nowadays, there are several memorials around the world dedicated to gay Holocaust victims, but not enough to help the world learn this history, Setterington said.

As Setterington spoke, he became emotional, explaining that it happens no matter how many times he shares these men's stories.

"It's just hard, because each one of those men deserves to be remembered, and we need to make sure those stories are kept alive," he said.

If there's one message he hopes people will take away from the book, it's about respect.

"Respect others no matter what their religion, their sexual orientation, or the colour of their skin," he said. "We need to respect diversity."

New group's advocacy methods ruffle feathers

Arno Rosenfeld
The Times of Israel

VANCOUVER — An advertising campaign countering anti-Israel ads on the Vancouver transit system is testing an American advocacy group as it extends its reach into Canada.

StandWithUs, a 12-year-old group based in southern California with branches across the United States and in Israel, opened its first Canadian office last December. But it was only recently that its presence was felt here. In mid-October the organization put up a series of pro-Israel advertisements on Vancouver transit after ads critical of Israel began running in September.

The full-throttle campaign ran counter to the approach taken by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which initially called for a muted communal response, arguing acknowledgment would only draw more publicity.

"These kind of anti-Israel initiatives mostly don't gain a whole lot of traction with the public and what we're trying to avoid is giving it oxygen that it wouldn't otherwise benefit from," said CIJA's CEO, Shimon Fogel.

While the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center in Toronto (FSWC) and the local Jewish federation in Vancouver both ignored CIJA's plea and spoke out forcefully in the media against the ads, when it came to the counter-ads, StandWithUs found scant support among the organized community.

"I honestly don't think it's a sufficient method," said Avi Benlolo, CEO of FSWC. "It's kind of a knee-jerk reaction, to get their name out there and to say, 'Look what we're doing.'"

For StandWithUs, the decision to run a counter ad campaign was a no-brainer.

"We put up the ads because that is what we do," said StandWithUs CEO Roz Rothstein. "We respond to misinformation about Israel, whether it's on campus or in billboards or in newspapers or in film – that's what we do."

Roz Rothstein

Rothstein said that in the United States synagogues and Jewish federations there often enlist her group to help counter negative ads, something it's been doing since 2007. In contrast, Rothstein said only individuals in Vancouver asked StandWithUs for help, not any community institutions.

Furthermore, Rothstein said that if the groups behind the anti-Israel ads know StandWithUs will respond, they'll be less likely to run their negative ads in the future.

That assertion is challenged by Marty Roth, a member of the seven-member Palestine Awareness Coalition (PAC), which sponsored the "Palestinian Loss of Land" ads that have been running on Vancouver buses and in a light-rail station. Roth said the Jewish community's outrage at the advertisements and StandWithUs's counter ads surprised and delighted the coalition.

"As a matter of fact that was what guaranteed the success of the campaign," Roth said. "This gave us the kind of publicity we never could have dreamed of otherwise."

But Meryle Kates, the Toronto-based executive director of StandWithUs-Canada, said the organization isn't worried about giving more publicity to the anti-Israel ads.

"That's not part of our thinking," Kates said. "We responded because we know thousands of riders were learning maybe the only facts in history that they would know about Israel… and that it was all lies."

"We're not of the opinion that it's OK to just ignore it — that's a problem, to ignore it, actually."

Fogel said that another problem with running counter ads is that it leads the general population to disengage and view both sides of the conflict poorly.

The dueling ads from PAC and StandWithUs depict "Palestinian Loss of Land" and "Jewish Loss of Land" respectively. The PAC ads show an area marked "Palestine" being reduced in size from 1946 until 2012 and the text, "5 million Palestinians are classified as refugees by the UN."

The counter ads depict the ancient Jewish kingdom dated 1,000 BCE, the "Jewish homeland" under the Balfour Declaration in 1920 and the modern state of Israel with the West Bank and Golan Heights marked as "disputed territory." (StandWithUs also ran a second ad with children waving Canadian and Israeli flags.)

The worry that the negative ads will bias Vancouver residents against Israel is part of what motivated StandWithUs to respond in kind. But other Israel advocates, like Fogel, suggest the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is too far removed from transit riders' lives for them to take heed of either side's messaging.

"Canadians tune out," Fogel said. "When they see these two different groups just duking it about a place in the world most haven't visited, people don't really have an understanding of why we would think that anything would resonate with them."

Despite the friction between StandWithUs-Canada and more established Canadian organizations, the fledging advocacy group isn't slowing down.

When Kates was hired last fall, she converted a spare room of her home into a StandWithUs office. Now she said it's common to find a cluster of interns there working on laptops to plan campus activities such as speaker series or movie screenings.

Currently the sole employee of StandWithUs-Canada, Kates said the goal is to grow the organization, which is currently active mostly in Ontario, move into real offices and start opening chapters in other Canadians cities.

Kates said while other Canadian groups had been doing some campus activism, none were as focused on the cause as StandWithUs.

"There was a hole here," Kates said. "Everybody did try to do something on campus, but there wasn't the really professional, effective kind of advocacy that StandWithUs is doing anywhere here."

But while Kates and StandWithUs CEO Rothstein point toward anti-Israel transit campaigns like the one in Vancouver and an uptick in divestment activities on campus, not everyone agrees SWU-Canada is especially needed.

Wiesenthal's Benlolo said the Jewish community in Toronto, where a pro-Palestinian group attempted to run ads before being rejected by the TTC, was able to take a StandWithUs-style approach to activism, but chose not to.

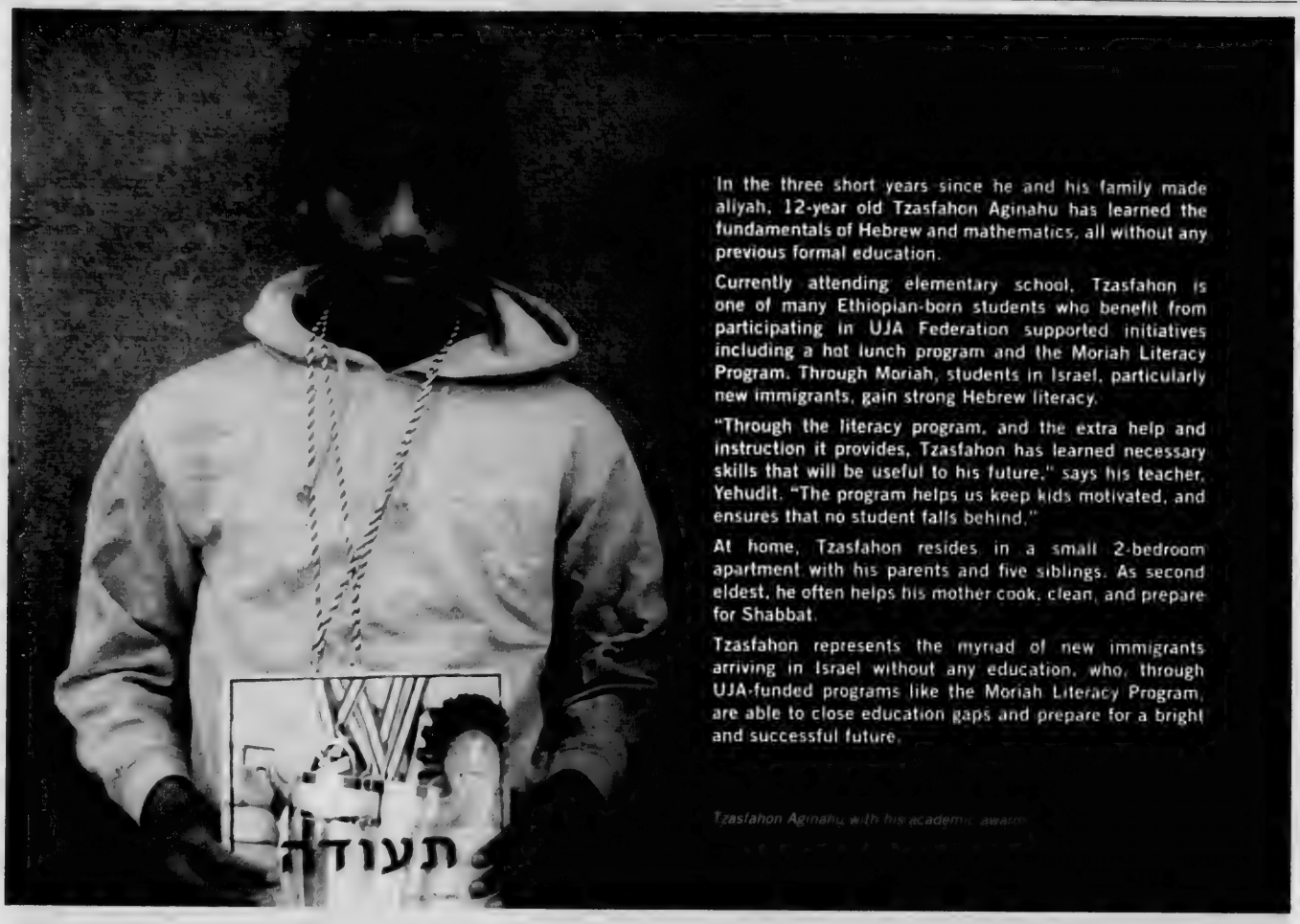
Likewise, while Fogel said he wholeheartedly believes in StandWithUs' sincerity, he said the current pro-Israel activism in Canada is achieving its goals. To continue that efficacy, Fogel said it's important to make sure passion doesn't throw that advocacy off course.

"The stakes are so high that we have a compelling obligation to undertake an approach focused entirely on achieving increased support for Israel, even if it doesn't provide the same emotional outlet for people to give expression to their frustrations about the activities of our adversaries."

Kates, rejected accusations StandWithUs might be overly brash and said she was proud of harnessing the passion Canadians have for Israel.

"I hope we're thought of as being front and centre. I really do," she said. "We're not the ones on campus talking about taking back land, or the history of Jerusalem 100 years ago – so if strident is the label people in other organizations want to give us, that's unfortunate. Nonetheless, we all do good work and we do it in different ways."

TimesofIsrael.com



In the three short years since he and his family made aliyah, 12-year old Tzasfahon Aginahu has learned the fundamentals of Hebrew and mathematics, all without any previous formal education.

Currently attending elementary school, Tzasfahon is one of many Ethiopian-born students who benefit from participating in UJA Federation supported initiatives including a hot lunch program and the Moriah Literacy Program. Through Moriah, students in Israel, particularly new immigrants, gain strong Hebrew literacy.

"Through the literacy program, and the extra help and instruction it provides, Tzasfahon has learned necessary skills that will be useful to his future," says his teacher, Yehudit. "The program helps us keep kids motivated, and ensures that no student falls behind."

At home, Tzasfahon resides in a small 2-bedroom apartment with his parents and five siblings. As second eldest, he often helps his mother cook, clean, and prepare for Shabbat.

Tzasfahon represents the myriad of new immigrants arriving in Israel without any education, who, through UJA-funded programs like the Moriah Literacy Program, are able to close education gaps and prepare for a bright and successful future.

Tzasfahon Aginahu with his academic award

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Beloved Winnipeg chazzan retires after 53 years

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — After 53 years as a chazzan, Gerry Daien has decided it's time to retire.

He makes it quite clear that it wasn't impending surgery – which he has since undergone and from which he says he is recovering nicely – or the Chevra Mishnayes Synagogue's decision just before Yom Tov to introduce a fully egalitarian service that factored into his decision.

"Over the summer, I finally made my decision. At 85, I felt that it was time to walk away from the weekly responsibility and take it easier," he says.

""My family had been urging me for some time to step down."

He thinks that he went out on a high note.

"I promised the congregation that I would stay through Yom Tov and the Rosh Chodesh Shabbat soon after," he says. "I think I did a great Yom Tov service this year – my best in years."

Daien has been davening and singing since he was nine years old. "I have always loved being involved in synagogue," he says. "The synagogue is my second home."

His father, he notes, was a major influence in his decision to become a chazzan.

"My father would have been a terrific chazzan," Daien says. "But as the oldest of seven brothers and sisters, he had to go to work early in life to help support the family. Still, he was steeped in the Nusach Hatfillah. We often shared cantorial recordings."

In his youth, Daien was always singing in choirs and at Jewish functions. Winnipeg's Cantor Benjamin Brownstone was another early influence in his cantorial career.

"He was my teacher and mentor," Daien says.

"I had offers to go elsewhere in North America," Daien recalls. "I once asked Cantor Brownstone if I should accept a job offer in the United States. His advice was that it is better to stay in one place, build your reputation and use your ability in the community. It may not pay the best, but a good name is more important."

Gerry Daien *[Myron Love photo]*

He adds that his wife, Peril, and their family also encouraged and supported his cantorial career through the years.

Originally an electrician by profession, Daien began his professional cantorial career at the Orthodox Herzlia Adas Yeshurun synagogue in south Winnipeg. After 18 years there, he moved to the Talmud Torah shul in north Winnipeg for a year, then farther north to Chevra Mishnayes, which was also an Orthodox shul at the time.

In 1975, the principal at the Talmud Torah School approached him to teach the students synagogue skills.

"I particularly loved organizing the Shabbatons," he says. "We would have 13 Shabbatons a year, with the high school students leading Shabbat services at different synagogues. We even used to have three women-led Shabbat services a year with the men on the other side of the mechitzah."

Daien retired from teaching at the school five years ago but continued teaching bar and bat mitzvah students.

"I have taught Maftirs to over 1,000 kids," he says.

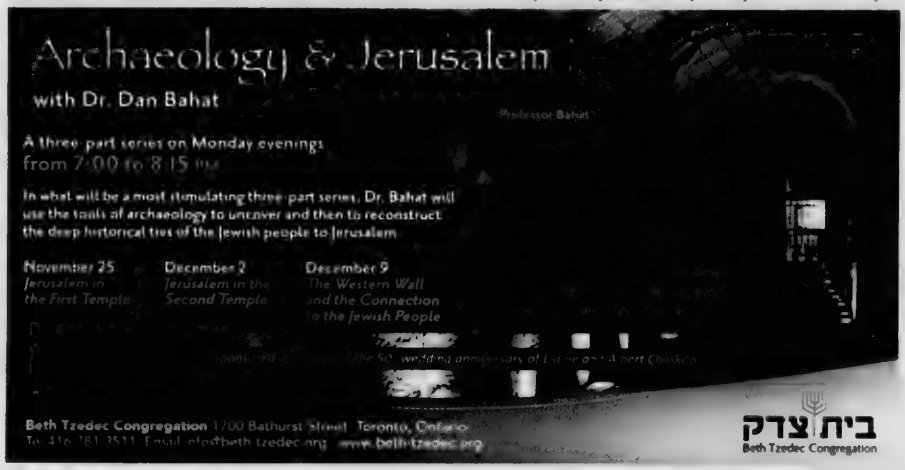
He says that once he fully recovers from surgery, he may still attend and lead services at the Chevra Mishnayes – as well as other Winnipeg synagogues – from time to time.

"I will still be available for life cycle events, if requested," he says.

He adds that he and his wife are looking forward to the bat mitzvah of their granddaughter, Maya, in Toronto in a few months.

"Our son [David Daien] is teaching her the Torah and Haftorah readings," Daien says. "I hope to be able to daven with them on the bimah. All of the family will be participating.

"I thank God that I have enjoyed a wonderful career as a chazzan."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Firebombed school library rededicated

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — There is once again an Azrieli Library at Talmud Torah, replacing the one destroyed in 2004 by a hate-motivated arson. The original library was located at the school's St. Laurent campus, which was closed in 2011. The new Bibliothèque Azrieli Library is at Talmud Torah and Herzliah High School's sole remaining campus in Snowdon. Both libraries were named for philanthropist David Azrieli's wife, Stephanie Azrieli, a former Talmud Torah librarian.

Chassidic woman wins vote despite obstacles

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Mindy Pollak may have earned international acclaim for becoming the first chassidic woman elected to be a Montreal city councillor – or to any political office in Quebec – but not without arousing virulent resentment from some members of her own community.

Mindy Pollak

Pollak, 24, who has been active in trying to heal the rift between the Chassidim and their non-Jewish neighbours for the past two years, won the borough council seat in Outremont's Claude Ryan district in the Nov. 3 municipal election.

But her candidacy was not welcome by the anonymous author or authors of a Yiddish open letter circulated before the election admonishing that a woman's place is in the home.

The screed, signed by "Montreal Jewry," was reproduced with an English translation on the website FailedMessiah.com on Nov. 5.

"Are we already so close to the goy, that all concepts that the lowly goy has determined to be part of his worldview, we have to make peace with and accept?" it asks, referring to women participating in politics.

The writer also said the very sight of a woman's picture on campaign posters is immodest.

Pollak will sit on the borough council only, not at Montreal city hall. She is a member of the second-place Projet Montréal party, which is expected to form the opposition.

Pollak told *The CJN*, "I would rather not comment on the dirty side of the campaign. I won. Let's focus on the positive."

Pollak's victory was significant for other reasons.

Her nearest rival in the Claude Ryan district was independent Pierre Lacerte, who has been a harsh critic of the chassidic communities for years.

There was also another Jewish candidate, Sheldon (Shloime) Goldberg, who is strictly Orthodox, but not chassidic, who ran on the team of Denis Coderre, who was elected mayor.

Pollak, a member of the Vishnitzer community, took 35 per cent of the vote compared to Lacerte's 28 per cent, or 860 versus 692 votes.

Pollak, who is unmarried, appeared to be an early favourite from the time she declared her candidacy in July. She said she chose Projet Montréal because it was "the only clean party at the time – no corruption, no scandals" and had always been supportive of her bridge-building efforts.

The Claude Ryan race grew even more interesting with the entry in September of Goldberg, a volunteer with the Orthodox community's Hatzolah emergency service. He came in third.

At more than 61 per cent, the borough had one of the highest voter turnouts in the city. Right up until election day, the sizeable chassidic communities remained mum on which way they would vote, or even if they would act as a bloc.

Longtime chassidic community leader Alex Werzberger said several letters were distributed to homes and synagogues during the campaign objecting to electing a woman, but the one cited above was especially "vicious."

"There was a bit of a split in the community, because some rabbis and other people felt they would rather have a man, that it would be a breach in the wall, so to speak, or that they would just be uncomfortable going to a woman," Werzberger said.

"They were entitled to their opinion as much as anyone else. But that one was vicious, and represents only a small group. Naturally, there were other letters in favour of her" he added.

"But nobody wanted to see Lacerte elected, so, as can be seen, 70 to 75 per cent of the community voted for Pollak."

Pollak is one of five Outremont councillors, including re-elected borough mayor Marie Cinq-Mars, the only one who will sit on Montreal city council.

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Waterloo Mitzvah Day to help feed kids

CJN Staff

WATERLOO — The Waterloo Region Jewish Community Council (WRJCC) is participating in Mitzvah Day International by donating breakfast cereals to Nutrition for Learning, an organization that provides breakfast for more than 13,000 students a day, or 171,000 students a year.

Fully 20 per cent of the children living in the Waterloo area live in poverty, and many go to school each day without having a good breakfast. When children don't eat breakfast, this negatively affects their ability to learn.

WRJCC is asking for packages of specific breakfast cereals (see below) that fulfil the nutritional requirements for a good breakfast. Cereals can be dropped off in bins marked Nutrition for Learning at the following locations: Beth Jacob Synagogue, Temple Shalom, the Rohr Chabad Centre; THEMUSEUM, as well as inside the department of business at Wilfred Laurier University and the chaplain's offices at both Waterloo universities.

The bins will be collected on Nov. 17. All donations at any location will receive a two-for-one pass to THEMUSEUM in downtown Kitchener.

"Mitzvah Day International is an ideal way for the WRJCC and the Jewish community to help with a great cause," said WRJCC co-chair Michael Bierstock.

"We are thrilled to have the WRJCC joining forces to help with cereal donations," said Saul Ross of Nutrition for Learning. "We encourage organizations to get involved as sponsors and participants."

Mitzvah Day International is a Jewish-led day of social action dedicated to tikkun olam (repairing the world), tzedek (righteousness) and gemilut chasadim (acts of kindness). Young children and adults in more than 18 countries participate in hands-on projects that better the community.

Acceptable cereals include the following: General Mills – Cheerios and Multigrain Cheerios; PC Blue Menu – Multigrain O's; and Post – Shreddies and Shredded Wheat.

For more details, contact: Michael Bierstock at 519-572-3797 or WRJCC program director Zina Lavut at zina@wrjcc.com.

Chanukah Gifts

Club Beersheba of Na'amat Toronto collected Chanukah gifts for children and teens helped by Jewish Family and Child. Pictured, from left, are Dora Erlich, Dena Gruber, Laura Greenberg and Helen Bienstock.

(Mollie Rothman photo)

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Quebec must remain French, Trudeau says

But that doesn't mean trampling others' rights, Liberal Leader says

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau said Quebec must be French "first and foremost" and this can be achieved without diminishing anglophone rights.

Speaking at an appearance at Le Mood, The Festival of Unexpected Jewish Learning, Arts and Culture, held Nov. 3, Trudeau said his point of view differs from that of his late father, who envisioned a bilingual Canada from coast to coast.

"Like my father, I believe in a bilingual Canada, but over the years, after living in Quebec and being an MP... I've come to understand... that in order for Canada to be bilingual, Quebec has to be French first and foremost, and that doesn't mean taking away from many or any of the rights of English speakers," he said.

Trudeau said there is a "mainstream culture" in Quebec that has to be protected and can't be compared to the culture of English Canada, which he feels is too much under the sway of the United States.

Trudeau drew a standing-room-only audience at the day-long event, and he received repeated applause and shouts of approval from the mainly young crowd. Afterward, he was besieged for photographs.

Standup comic Joey Elias, who interviewed Trudeau onstage, asked what he thought of the growing number of anglophones thinking of leaving the province, fed up with the political situation. "People are asking me all the time, 'What are you still doing here?'" Elias said.

Trudeau slammed the Parti Québécois government's proposed charter of Quebec values as "dangerous politics... with a tinge of Islamophobia."

Elias said he calls it apartheid.

Much of the session was left for questions from the floor. Not one question about the Middle East was posed.

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau, left, leaves the stage with comedian Joey Elias. The cross was given to him by a priest in the audience. *[Janice Arnold photo]*

Trudeau said Premier Pauline Marois doesn't represent the views of most Quebecers, or even all sovereigntists.

"It's very clear the charter was brought forward for one reason, and one reason only: to bring the conversation onto identity grounds, rather than the economy, which Marois is failing in."

With the separatist movement faltering, the Parti Québécois is "desperate" and using Islamophobia to create "an us-and-them dynamic."

He accused the government of exploiting "a lack of knowledge among far too many Quebecers, especially in small towns," about minorities.

"It's a call back to that old fear of the other... A crass attempt to bring out the worst in people."

The real target is Islam, he believes, and the ban on kippot, turbans and crosses in the public service are "the chaff in that fight."

The PQ is appealing to "the meaner, baser instincts all human beings have. It's natural – as cavemen, our instinct was to close in and protect our tribe," said Trudeau.

He predicted that the charter will fail and that Marois will lose the next election.

"The best way to protect [Quebec culture] is to celebrate and share it, not build up walls... If you build walls, you close yourself off and condemn yourself to disappearance."

An elderly priest in the audience beckoned Trudeau over, placed a cross around his neck and said he prays that Trudeau will become prime minister.

Trudeau also accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of practising divisive, wedge politics, which has made Canadians more cynical about public life than ever before.

On the Senate crisis, Trudeau boasted that he "beat the crap out of" one of the Harper-appointed disgraced senators, referring to Patrick Brazeau.

While the Senate needs reform, Trudeau said Canadians have no appetite to go through 10 years or more of constitutional wrangling between the federal and provincial governments.

He blamed the situation on Harper's choice of appointees (59 to date) and for allowing "a ruthless environment to flourish."

The Senate does serve as a check and balance on the prime minister, especially the head of a majority government, who has "more power than any other leader in the world," Trudeau believes.

Trudeau suggested that appointments be made on a less partisan basis. He has called on all Liberal senators to disclose their expenses on a quarterly basis.

Asked why he chose politics over show business like another famous prime ministerial son, Ben Mulroney, Trudeau replied: "I'm pretty, but I'm not that pretty."

Being the son of Pierre Trudeau, "who cast a giant shadow," has been tough all his life, he admitted. "I've been condemned just because I'm 'the son of.' It has given me a thick skin. I'm able to dismiss groundless attacks. But there's the flip side: am I being told I'm the greatest thing since sliced bread because of who my father was?" he asked.

"Am I getting compliments because I worked my ass off to win the riding [Papineau in 2008], or because my father let them into the country 30 years ago?"

Elias concluded, "If you don't vote for this party, you need to get your head examined. It's so refreshing to hear a politician who does not speak like a politician."

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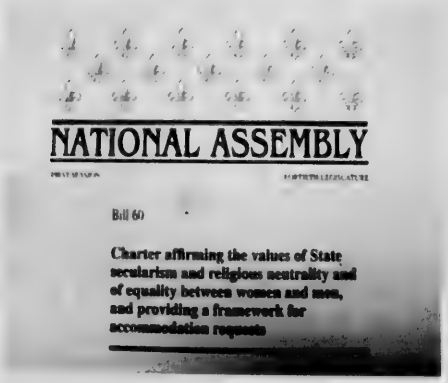
Jewish groups denounce secularism bill

Continued from page 1

That section allows the legislature to establish rules "to govern the wearing of religious symbols by members," as well as to decide on the presence of other religious symbols, such as the crucifix over the Speaker's chair.

On the basis of "an alleged threat to state neutrality and the equality between men and women," the bill is marginalizing people and threatening social cohesion, CIJA charged.


NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
Bill 60
Charter affirming the values of State secularism and religious neutrality and of equality between women and men, and providing a framework for accommodation requests

The government is using this issue as a "political manoeuvre to the detriment of fundamental rights and freedoms..."

Noting that Jews have played a significant role in Quebec's public life since 1832, when they achieved full political rights, CIJA stated that "outward expressions of faith by the Jewish community... does not threaten the social cohesion of Quebec society, nor the religious neutrality of the state..."

B'nai Brith said the bill discriminates against persons of faith and makes them "second-class and, indeed, unwanted citizens.

"The government, by setting itself up as the arbiter of religious expression, is doing the exact opposite of its supposed goal of achieving a secular state," said Allan Adel, national chair of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights.

"This contradiction and notion that state secularism forbids the acceptance of religious expression in the public realm is itself an example of the misguided nature of the bill."

Federal Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney said that if the bill passes, the government will challenge the law, if it is found to violate the Canadian constitution's guarantee of freedom of religion.

The bill amends the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms to give primacy to the secularism charter.

As expected, the 19-page bill, introduced by Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville, prohibits all provincial and municipal public and para-public employees from wearing "religious objects that overtly indicate a religious affiliation" or otherwise express their beliefs.

The bill now extends that to government-appointed labour arbitrators and members of public inquiry commissions, and possibly anyone who enters into a service contract or subsidy agreement with a public body.

Physicians and pharmacists will be allowed to refrain from providing professional services contrary to their personal convictions.

The bill provides a framework for handling requests for accommodation on religious grounds. For example, if the request is for absence from work, public bodies must take into consideration the consequences to other personnel.

Instead of the five-year, renewable exemption that had been discussed for health and social services institutions, CEGEPs and universities and municipalities, the bill requires all public bodies to immediately undertake an implementation plan.

The only break these institutions and cities may receive is that their transition period toward compliance is five years maximum. An exception may be made to extend the transition period for institutions that have a historic "confessional dimension."

All other public bodies have one year to comply, although new employees will have to abide by the charter immediately.

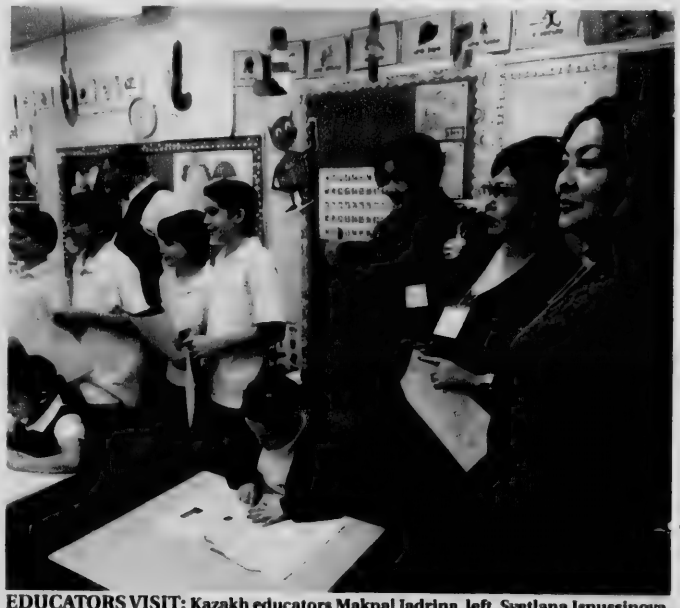
The bill also sets out rules for subsidized daycare, including in-home services, that seek to "facilitate the integration of children without regard to social or ethnic origin or religious affiliation."

The teaching of religious dogma or practice is forbidden. Observing a diet stemming from a religious belief "must not be authorized if its aim, through words or actions, is to teach children that precept."

Premier Pauline Marois said: "This charter marks an important milestone in our history. It affirms what we are and defines a Quebec in which we want to live together, no matter our origin or our religion.

"Forty years ago, we consecrated the primacy of French as a common value of Quebecers. Today, we affirm the common values of secularism, the religious neutrality of the state, and the equality between women and men.

"These values are our cement; it's what brings us together, beyond our individual differences. The charter will be a source of harmony and cohesion for Quebec."



EDUCATORS VISIT: Kazakh educators Makpal Jadrina, left, Svetlana Ispussinova, and Aigul Kazzhanova observe a classroom at Montreal's Hebrew Foundation School to learn about implementing a trilingual curriculum. Full story at cjnews.com.

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Inaugurating the Koffler Gallery's new downtown venue at Artscape Youngplace, seven Toronto artists reflect on the context and history of the space, formerly the library of the Shaw Street Public School, exploring the notion of the school library as a place of learning, social interaction and enchantment.

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Renewal helps save lives...one kidney at a time

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The idea of elective surgery often conjures images of people with nose jobs, facelifts and implants.

But kidney donor John Anhang is hoping to recruit people to consider elective surgery for a totally different – and more rewarding – reason: to save a life.

Anhang, founder of the Toronto chapter of Renewal – a New York-based organization that works within the Jewish community to find kidney donors and facilitate transplants – spoke at the Village Shul last week to promote the organization, share his personal donation story, and to inspire others to follow in his footsteps.

"I've been blessed in life with excellent health… I wanted to thank the Almighty for good health… in a tangible way," he said.

If a person is wealthy, he donates money to charity, he explained.

"It occurred to me that if God has blessed me with good health, there is a physical way to share that health with someone else."

He explained that once someone is diagnosed with kidney disease, kidney failure is inevitable. While a patient is waiting for a possible match, a patient must go on dialysis, which can result in other complications, and is only a temporary solution to a terminal disease.

After deciding that he wanted to donate a kidney, Anhang came across a newspaper ad about a man in need of a transplant, and immediately contacted Renewal, which was handling the logistics of the case.

Anhang later learned that the man in need was Eitan Yefenof, a Hebrew University professor and cancer researcher, who was suffering from polycystic kidney disease.

After flying in and out of New York to complete a series of tests at the Mount Sinai Medical Center to ensure that he was in the peak of health, and after doctors were confident Yefenof did not have antibodies in his blood that would reject Anhang's kidney, the date was set for the transplant.

During one of Anhang's New York visits, he was asked by the Renewal liaison if he wanted to meet Yefenof.

Anhang agreed, but recalled that the meeting "was awkward, because what could he say to me? Thank you? You say thank you to someone who holds open the door for you or lends you $5."

Following months of flying back and forth from Toronto to New York, the day of the operation finally arrived.

Anhang and Yefenof, each accompanied by their wives, found themselves in yet another awkward meeting early that morning when they were shuttled from their hotel to the hospital.

"We were all nervous, I guess, and it was very tense. What do you say? I wanted to say something to break the ice, so I said, half to myself and half to Eitan, 'You know, I'm really glad I'm doing this, and I'm really glad I'm donating it to you.' At the time, he didn't say much, but evidently it made a big impact on him because he's quoted that sentence in a number of talks he's given since then," Anhang said.

When Anhang was brought to the pre-op room, which is essentially a waiting area for people in line for surgery, he "was probably the only healthy person sitting there. I had an amazing sense that I was there to do something," he said.

Addressing the common misconception that organ donation is forbidden by Jewish law, Anhang, an Orthodox Jew, said, "One of the 613 mitzvot is to save a life. Although Eitan wasn't dying right then and there… ultimately he would die from kidney disease. There is no cure for it."

Anhang's surgery, which was done laparoscopically – through small incisions in the abdomen – was a complete success.

When Anhang was discharged a mere 27 hours later, he popped in to Yefenof's room to check how he was recovering.

"It was incredible. He was sitting in his bed on his laptop, working, and he said he hadn't felt that good in years. The kidney was working at 100 per cent… That made me feel good," he said.

John Anhang [*Sheri Shefa photo*]

After about a month of soreness and fatigue, Anhang said he felt completely back to normal.

"If I have one regret, it's that I can only do this once. Every kidney donor I know is thrilled they did it, and they'll tell you that it was one of the most special events in their lives."

Although they live thousands of kilometres apart, the Yefenofs have stayed in touch with the Anhangs, sending them flowers every yom tov and exchanging emails.

In the months that followed the transplant, when Anhang weighed the positive experience of donating a kidney against the inconvenience of having to fly back and forth from Toronto to New York, it occurred to him that Renewal needed a presence in Toronto.

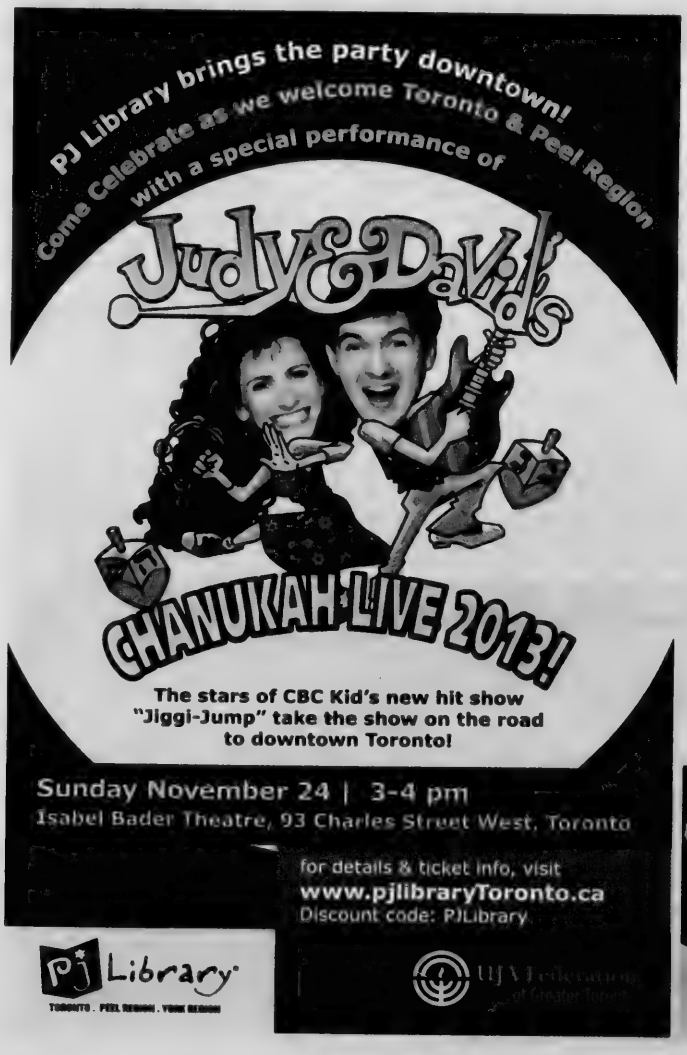
There are almost 200,000 Jews in the GTA, and of them, there are Jews who need a kidney and others who'd be willing to donate, he thought.

In the four years since Renewal Toronto was founded, there have been five successful donations, and there are three more cases that are underway.

"We're here to serve the recipients, but what we really want to do is support donors so that it is as easy and positive experience as possible. Our motto is the donor is king."

There are currently 20 people in Toronto's Jewish community who are desperately seeking a match.

For more information, visit www.life-renewal.org/toronto/index.htm, or call 416-628-7633.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ROPE JUMPERS

Bialik Hebrew Day School students took part earlier this month in a program to kick off the annual Jump Rope for Heart campaign in support of the Heart and Stoke Foundation. In the 10 years that Bialik has participated, students have raised a total of $85,000. Pictured are Grade 5 students Shelly W. and Riley G.

Exhibition recreates prewar Polish Jewish life

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Toronto-native Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett was back in her hometown last week to talk about her latest accomplishment as the program director of the core exhibition for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews – the only museum of its kind in the world.

"Until now, it was only possible to honour those who died by remembering how they died… But now there is another way to honour those who died… by how they lived," said Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, who addressed hundreds of people, some spilling into Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue's balcony, for Holocaust Education Week's closing ceremony.

The museum, which stands on the site of the Warsaw Ghetto, opened in April on the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The museum presents temporary exhibitions, films, debates, workshops, performances, concerts, lectures and more. The opening of the core exhibition, developed by an international team of more than 120 scholars under Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's direction, is scheduled for early 2014.

Born in Canada in 1942 to Polish immigrants, the New York University professor said the interviews she conducted with her father since 1967 about his childhood in Poland contributed to her work on the exhibit.

"He had an extraordinary memory, and it is thanks to him that I really got a sense of not only what life was like before the Holocaust, but I also heard it from someone who had experienced the loss of his family but had not himself directly experienced the trauma [of the Holocaust]… That was a great gift that he gave me, and together we were able to give the world."

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett complemented her lecture, which coincided with the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht, with a slideshow and a video that she narrated. It took viewers on a virtual tour of the 43,000-square-foot museum, highlighting its unique architecture and the core exhibition.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

She explained how they reconstructed the painted ceiling of a 17th-century wooden synagogue that once stood in Gwozdziec, before the Germans destroyed it.

"We took historical documentation from before World War I, photographs, renderings… and we proceeded to use traditional tools, materials and techniques… and through a series of painting workshops, [an international team of students, historians, architects and artists] painted all the panels of the wooden ceiling."

The result is a ceiling where every square inch is painted and is reminiscent of the Sistine Chapel.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, who urged her audience to come to Poland to experience the museum first hand, said, "Only in Poland could this museum have the power and impact that we hope it will have. We believe the void created by the Holocaust will be felt even more deeply [in Poland], the sense of the magnitude of what was lost, the lives that were lost, the world that was lost."

In spite of the tremendous loss of three million Polish Jews during the Holocaust, she insisted that Jews are still an integral part of Poland.

"They are not only in Poland, but of Poland. The history of Poland is not complete without a history of Polish Jews, and Polish Jews are not a footnote in Polish history."

Before Kirshenblatt-Gimblett took to the podium, five Holocaust survivors – Yael Spier Cohen, Martin Maxwell, Alexander Eisen, Miriam Rosenthal and Joseph Gottdenker – took part in a candlelighting ceremony. Peter Jassem, who only learned of his father's Jewish roots later in life and has since assumed a position as the Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation chair, also lit a candle in honour of the victims of the Holocaust.

Germany's consul general, Walter Stechel, addressed the gathering about the events leading up to Adolf Hitler's rise to power and the subsequent systematic persecution of Europe's Jewish population.

He said the anniversary of Kristallnacht is a reminder that Germany's history "carries the burden of guilt, but since [the fall of the Berlin Wall in] 1989, we can perhaps hope that this date might one day stand not only for guilt and atonement, but also for redemption, because how can we live without hope for redemption, and what would be the value of redemption without the weight of memory?"

Since the fall of communism, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett said, there has been a revival of Jewish life in Poland, and she hopes the museum will contribute to that renewal.

"Generally, Holocaust memorials begin with hate and end with genocide. But the Museum of the History of Polish Jews… begins with a revival of Jews coming from the West, settling in Poland, taking the history all the way to the present. There is a Jewish community in Poland. It is small, but there is a renewal of Jewish life on a small scale. I believe that the museum is going to play an important role in the renewal of Jewish life."

Movies provide a treat for all at Baycrest

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Baycrest and the Toronto Jewish Film Festival (TJFF) have partnered to bring films to residents, staff, caregivers and guests at Baycrest.

The films are being screened in a new in-house theatre donated by Ellis Jacob, CEO and president of Cineplex.

Jacob built the theatre at Baycrest as a tribute to his late mother, who was a Baycrest resident and loved going to movies.

Bianca Stern

The 130-seat theatre, located in the Posluns Building, is also being used for video conferencing and educational purposes.

Helen Zukerman, TJFF artistic director, said that the festival screened movies at Baycrest about 10 years ago "with a screen and projector, and hard metal seats, and it just wasn't comfortable enough for the guests."

The first TJFF film, *When Comedians Went to School*, a documentary that chronicles the history of Jewish comedians from the Catskills era, was screened Oct. 28.

Bedridden residents were also able to enjoy the film when it was shown through their in-room televisions later in the week.

"I am just so happy that everyone at Baycrest can enjoy movies free of charge, and the picture is magnificent. It is wonderful to see people coming in and enjoying themselves. Not only are they going to the theatre, they're getting some Jewish content," Zukerman said.

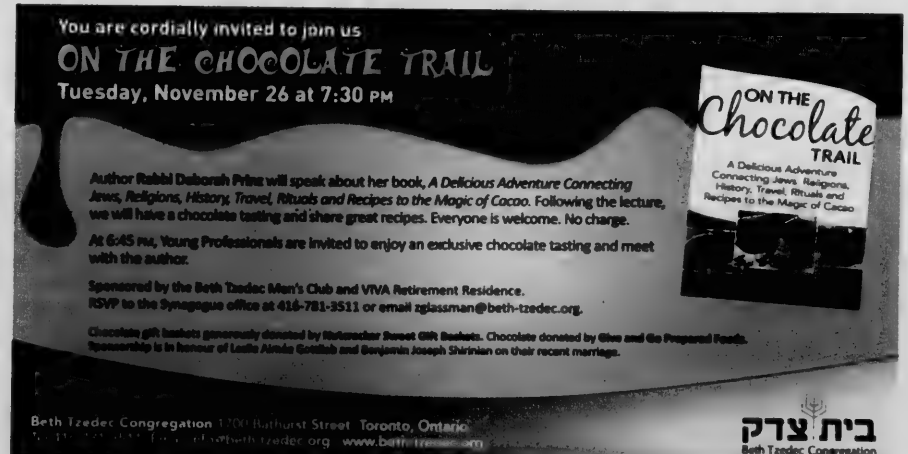
She is exploring more uses for the venue and is looking at the possibility of bringing in a TJFF film every month, she said.

Bianca Stern, executive director of the department of culture, arts and innovation at Baycrest, said the new theatre "is like any other theatre, except it can accommodate wheelchairs and walkers. Residents really feel that they have had an outing when they come to a movie."

She said Baycrest would like to screen family matinees, but it would have to ensure that enough staff are available to help residents who have cognitive issues.

Baycrest residents respond to TJFF movies, Stern said. "They can identify with a lot of the content. It is familiar to them."

She said Baycrest has a large catalogue of movies donated by Jacob, "and some are fairly recent. The screen is large, the seats are comfortable, and the sound is good. The whole experience is luxurious."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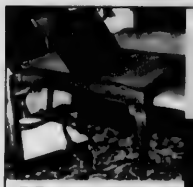

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Is your iPhone sacred?

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

The questions range from technical to ethical to nonsensical. When it comes to the intersection of Halachah and mobile technology, some queries are quite serious. Others are posed with tongue planted firmly in one's cheek.

Q. Can I bring my iPhone into the bathroom?

A. This question was fielded by Rabbi Adam Schwartz, rabbinical counsel for Rustybrick.com, one of the leading creators of Jewish apps. Holy scriptures, such as a Torah scroll, have implicit holiness. Although text displayed on a LED screen is not considered a halachic text, it's not appropriate for one to have the text displayed in a restroom, for it may cause people to think about or say what they're reading, which is also prohibited in an unclean place. However, since the text on the iPhone is stored internally on flash memory drive, it's not considered halachic writing, just electronically charged ones and zeros, which has no sacred status whatsoever. So, you can bring your iPhone into a restroom. Just be careful not to read any of the content while there. **[http://bit.ly/jdigital5]**

Q. Similarly, are you allowed to erase God's name on a cellphone?

A. Relax. Most religious authorities rule that God's "name written on a screen can be erased and they have no sanctity as the pixels which make up the letters on a computer screen are being refreshed many times a second and are considered to be more virtual than real." **[http://bit.ly/jdigital6]**

And the questions keep on coming. These, however, come from the site frumsatire.net:

- If your iPhone drops while you are using the siddur app, do you have to kiss it?
- Can one lain from their iPad Torah?
- Can you use a smartphone application to check lettuce for bugs? **[http://bit.ly/jdigital7]**

One modern phenomenon tied to mobile platforms that's no laughing matter is a trend called "Half Shabbat (or Shabbos)," where teens who generally observe the day continue to send text messages on Shabbat. For a very good overview of the halachic and social implications, I recommend two articles from the Orthodox Union's Jewish Action. Jonathan Rosenblum, has written "Half Shabbos is No Shabbos." **[http://bit.ly/jdigital8]** And in "Is Half-Shabbos Really No Shabbos?" Rabbi Shalom Baum responded that "We do not tell one who has tragically violated even several prohibited activities to throw in the towel with regard to observing the rest of Shabbat." **[http://bit.ly/jdigital9]**

In his essay, "The Use of Electrical and Electronic Devices on Shabbat," Rabbi Daniel S. Nevins of the Jewish Theological Seminary takes a break from examining the halachic intricacies to address the impact technology has on the spirit of the day. "Contemporary families spend much of their time together focused on individual electronic devices. Faces lit by glowing screens large and small, ears attached to headphones, they busily interact with friends and strangers across the world while making minimal contact with the people around them. Shabbat can and should be different." **[http://bit.ly/jdigital10]**

Rabbi Nevins adds, "Shabbat can be a day to reclaim interactive entertainments occurring in real time without the mediation of technology. Focusing on the people around us rather than on communication with those far away creates a powerful sense of community which is not virtual."

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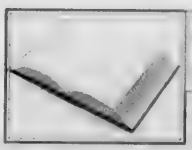
For Judaism to thrive, it must matter

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow



Rabbinic Reflections

Angels in America, the magnificent play by Tony Kushner, features many angels. We find one of them in this week's parashah.

In Vayishlach, Jacob is preparing to meet his estranged brother, Esau. The night before their encounter, he sends his wives and children ahead and stays in his camp alone. There, he wrestles with an unknown opponent, often understood as an angel. He is wounded, but he prevails, and wins a blessing.

In *Angels in America*, Joe Pitt is a Mormon who is gay and struggling with his sexuality. Speaking to his wife, he recounts: "I had a book of Bible stories when I was a kid. There was a picture I'd look at 20 times every day: Jacob wrestles with the angel. I don't really remember the story, or why the wrestling – just the picture. Jacob is young and very strong. The angel is… a beautiful man, with golden hair and wings, of course. I still dream about it. Many nights. I'm… It's me. In that struggle. Fierce, and unfair. The angel is not human, and it holds nothing back, so how could anyone human win? What kind of a fight is that? It's not just. Losing means your soul thrown down in the dust, your heart torn out from God's. But you can't not lose."

It's a radical rewriting of the story. After all, in the biblical account, Jacob emerges wounded, but victorious. It is from this struggle that he wins the name "Yisrael" – "for you have striven with beings divine and human, and prevailed."

Joe Pitt tells the story differently, because he experiences it differently. But one thing is clear: the story matters profoundly to how he understands his life. He doesn't just read about Jacob wrestling with the angel: he experiences it.

There has been a lot of buzz in Jewish circles about the Pew survey of U.S. Jewry, and a lot of anxiety about Jewish identity and continuity. This anxiety is not new. Decades ago, historian Simon Rawidowicz called Israel "the ever-dying people." We could talk strategy and statistics for years. But this I know: for Judaism to survive and thrive, it needs to matter. How many of us feel the encounter with our religion, or with our God, as profoundly as Jacob does when he is wrestling with the angel, or Joe Pitt when he uses that story to try to understand himself? Judaism is not a spectator sport.

Recently, I taught at both Montreal's Le Mood festival and at Hillel about contemporary Jewish approaches to sexuality, based on *The Sacred Encounter*, a book I edited on the topic (coming out soon). The most important takeaway was the idea that Judaism can speak to our lives in the here and now, even in the most intimate ways. Our texts and traditions can help us be true to who we are. They can guide us in difficult moments. They can inspire us to see the potential for holiness in every facet of our lives.

For a teenager coming out or a university student navigating sexual boundaries, for a senior whose spouse has dementia but who yearns for companionship, in the area of sexuality but in all other ways, Torah has something to teach. We learn and we live. We struggle, and we emerge as Yisrael, the ever-living people.

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow is senior rabbi of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Montreal.

Israel needs bold leadership

From the Reut Institute

Omri Zegen

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." Charles Dickens

Israel is at a crossroads. The decisions and actions of the coming months and years will affect the country's prosperity, security and its very character as a Jewish and democratic state. Yet so many Israeli politicians try to preserve the "elegance of the status quo," immobilized by the fear of making the decisions needed to secure Israel's future.

Looking forward to the next decade, to our 75th year, Israel will constantly be faced with crises and opportunities. For the most part, these will be new, emergent and, therefore, unpredictable.

In contrast, the Israeli security and economic establishments operate on the basis of mapping and developing responses to known, quantitative threats – for example, maintaining past levels of defence spending or manoeuvring between the known alternatives of raising taxes and cutting expenses.

We live in an ever-changing world, in which the unknown and unexpected are the order of the day. So what will happen when these new threats, and new opportunities, emerge?

The regional upheaval following the so-called "Arab Spring" coupled with tectonic geopolitical shifts fundamentally affecting the world have shifted the security challenges that Israel faces. We need to rethink Israel's place in an evolving Middle East and beyond.

Israel needs a new national security vision based on marrying hard and soft power to ensure Israel's survival, security and legitimacy. We have to open the national security discourse to non-military spheres, as these are increasingly vital to Israeli defence interests. The defence establishment must connect with groups and organizations within Israeli society (for example, academic institutions, private firms and NGOs) that can assist in promoting Israeli interests in the region and around the world.

On Israel's domestic scene, deep societal and economic challenges threaten social upheaval. The OECD recently ranked Israel as suffering from the highest levels of poverty among OECD countries. One would be hard-pressed to find a statistic that more starkly contradicts the Zionist values the country was founded upon. Add to this the likelihood of a renewal of 2011's social protests in light of recent austerity measures, and the result is the mounting risk of Israeli citizens fundamentally losing faith in their political system and government.

As in the field of national security, the socio-economic front is in need of a new vision. The core of this vision should be inclusive growth: providing a fair opportunity for all residents to take part in rapid and sustained growth and to enjoy its fruits. This of course, is also a remedy to reduce the alarming rise in poverty.

Israel needs leadership with the audacity to grab the bull by the horns and shape a vision relevant to our future, fundamentally answering the question, "What kind of society do we want to live in?" Budget cuts may be a necessary part of economic policy, but they do not replace a vision. The reverse is also true: a guiding vision is integral for providing hope and long-term solutions for those negatively affected by economic policy in the short-term.

The 21st century demands a new form of democracy – we cannot leave our future and our children's futures to the "professional politicians." The Israeli public has to make its voice heard and demand that our leaders have the vision and the ability needed to grasp the opportunities of the times we are living in.

Omri Zegen is acting CEO of the Reut Institute.

Learning to tell time

From the Bimah

Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

Although possessed of fairly strong will power, I find that my resistance withers when I get within a block of a second-hand bookstore. Since stumbling upon the bookshops of Brookline and Cambridge, Mass., as an undergraduate, I have become an inveterate scrounger at any second-hand bookseller, hunting for the out-of-print, the rare, the fascinating.

Many years ago, while perusing the "foreign" table at one of those university-auxiliary book sales, I came upon a gold-stamped title *Die Heilige Schrift* on a stout black tome. As I leafed through this good-condition Leopold Zunz German translation of the Hebrew scriptures, I deemed it to be a worthwhile find. Flipping to the inside cover, even before I noticed the penciled-in price of $2 (!), I was drawn to the flawless gothic fountain-penmanship on the flyleaf.

This copy of the Bible was presented to a bar mitzvah boy in the Berlin suburb of Spandau, stamped and signed on behalf of the board of the "Gemliat Hessed" humanitarian organization, with the presentation date of Oct. 22, 1938.

Like most American Jews of my time and place, I grew up more familiar with the names and dates of the Holocaust than with 1,000 years of German or European Jewish history, to say nothing of 3,000 years of Jewish history. So not only was I struck by the place name "Spandau," most renowned as Hess' prison, I was also struck by the date – the date! Oct. 22, 1938, just three weeks before Kristallnacht! I had stumbled upon a real historical relic!

Yet the most important bit of information was the last: under the German inscriptions of the secular and Jewish date was written the only piece of information on the page in Hebrew: "Shabbat Bereshit."

For me, that changed everything.

By this time in my life, I had already celebrated "Shabbat Bereshit" numerous times. Just saying the phrase evokes the feeling: the last Shabbat in Tishrei, the culmination of all the High Holidays, from Slichot and Rosh Hashanah through Sukkot and Simchat Torah; the end of the holiday season and the return to the normal pace of life; a new beginning of another year of Torah reading and study.

Like the discovery that the town of Auschwitz or Oswiecim actually has green trees and a blue sky rather than the black-and-white I always pictured in my mind's eye, the discovery of this Chumash from a long-ago bar mitzvah changed my frame of reference and understanding completely and forever.

I had always thought of the date of Nov. 9, 1938, Kristallnacht, as a watershed date, which indeed it was. However, I came to appreciate it in terms of an adjacent and ultimately more enduring and significant watershed date: Shabbat Bereshit. I do believe that centuries hence, when Nov. 9 becomes a historical footnote even in Jewish history (this process has already begun, as that was the date of the Berlin Wall's collapse), Shabbat Bereshit will endure as a moment of transcendence, renewal and hope for the Jewish People.

Perhaps as I grew older and learned more, I became more attached to beginnings than to endings.

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General Assembly held in Jerusalem

Peres, U.S. envoy back Obama on Iran

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli President Shimon Peres and United States Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro told North American Jewish leaders that they have confidence in U.S. determination to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Addressing a plenary session at the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly in Jerusalem on Monday, Shapiro stressed the United States' and President Barack Obama's commitment to Israel's security, calling the alliance between the two countries "as close as it has ever been."

He said that both countries share the goal of stopping Iran's nuclear program.

"There is no greater priority for the United States and Israel than preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon," Shapiro said. "On this issue, the United States and Israel share an identical objective. [Obama] will not permit Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon, period."

Peres downplayed reports of divisions between the United States and Israel regarding recent negotiations over the Iranian nuclear program, and expressed confidence in the United States' handling of the issue.

"The United States is our best friend, and the friendship of the United States to us is deep and meaningful," Peres said. "[Obama] committed himself not to permit the Iranians to become a nuclear power, not just for the sake of Israel but for the sake of humanity."

Peres' and Shapiro's comments contrast with recent speeches by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in which he called a recent deal proposed by the United States regarding Iran's nuclear program "a bad deal."

"What is being proposed now is a deal in which Iran retains all of that capacity" to build a nuclear weapon, Netanyahu told the GA Sunday. "Not one centrifuge is dismantled; not one. Iran gets to keep tons of low-enriched uranium."

Israeli President Shimon Peres at the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly Nov. 11 [*Flash90 photo*]

PM praises strong ties with Canada and the U.S.

Continued from page 1

Regarding ongoing Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, Netanyahu repeated his long-held conviction that the root of the conflict is Palestinian refusal to recognize a Jewish state.

He also said that Israel must have "robust security arrangements" in order to be confident that a peace with the Palestinians will last, and he referred to Jerusalem as Israel's "undivided capital." The Palestinians claim the eastern half of the city as their capital and have slammed recent Israel announcements of building in the West Bank and eastern Jerusalem, as have the United States and others.

"The minimum thing we can demand is that the official position of the Palestinian leadership recognizes the Jewish state," Netanyahu said. "This will be a long process, but it must begin with that."

At the end of the speech, Netanyahu praised the strong relationship between Israel and the U.S. and Canadian Jewish communities. He noted his government's efforts to reach a compromise between feuding factions at the Western Wall, long a high priority of American Jewish leaders.

"The Kotel is in Israel, but the Kotel belongs to all the Jewish People," Netanyahu said. "We have to consult together and reach a solution together."

Netanyahu appeared relaxed during the speech, cracking jokes, leaning on the podium and referring to audience members by name.

Conference delegates speaking before Netanyahu made many of the same points as he did, especially on Iran.

Speaking at a reception for the Ruderman Family Foundation before Netanyahu's speech, former Netanyahu adviser Dore Gold called for the Jewish People "to unite on this issue of Iran."

And introducing the prime minister, Jewish Federations Chair Michael Siegal said the international community must oppose the Iranian nuclear program.

"A nuclear Iran is an unacceptable position," he said. "It is unacceptable to Israel. It is unacceptable to the U.S. It is unacceptable to the world."

On Sunday morning, at the start of his cabinet meeting, Netanyahu called the deal on the table between the world powers and Iran "bad and dangerous."

"It is dangerous not just for us, it is also dangerous for them [the world powers]," he said.

For more coverage of the GA, go to cjnews.com

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Israeli team heads to typhoon-ravaged Philippines

JTA

JERUSALEM — The Israeli disaster relief organization IsraAid is sending an emergency response team to the Philippines, to the areas hardest hit by Typhoon Haiyan.

The non-profit group's team of medical professionals and trauma and relief specialists was scheduled to arrive in the Philippines on Monday, working primarily in Tacloban City in Leyte. A larger team was expected to land by the end of the week, according to IsraAid.

The death toll from the typhoon, which made landfall in the central Philippines on Nov. 8, could be at least 10,000, according to reports that emerged Sunday citing local officials. At least half a million people have also been left homeless by the devastating typhoon.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has begun collecting funds for relief efforts. JDC representatives are consulting with local authorities, the Filipino Jewish community and global partners to assess the immediate needs of the survivors and said it will send a team to the area to assess the situation on the ground.

"Our heartfelt prayers go out to the Filipino people in the wake of yesterday's deadly storm," Alan Gill, JDC's chief executive officer, said over the weekend. "We immediately activated our network of global partners and will leverage our previous experience in the region to provide immediate, strategic relief to survivors in their time of need."

An Israeli diving instructor who was visiting the small Philippines Island of Malapscua and was believed to be missing in the storm was located early Sunday morning.

Hagar Klein, 23, had not been in touch with her family since late last week, Ynet reported. Most Israelis living in the Philippines are centred near the capital, Manila, which was not affected in any meaningful way by the typhoon.

The Israeli relief organization IsraAID is helping in the Phillipines as it did in Haiti in 2010. *[File photo]*

Canadian Jews respond

In response to the disaster in the Phillipines, United Jewish Appeal of Greater Toronto has established the UJA Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund. Funds raised will support the efforts of IsraAID, which is a UJA partner agency.

Steven Shulman, UJA's campaign director, said that since an e-blast about the fund went out Saturday night, more than $20,000 has been raised, and the amount is increasing at a steady pace.

To contribute to UJA's Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund, please visit ujadonations.com/Philippines or call 416-631-5705.

Montreal's Federation CJA has also opened a fund to support victims of the typhoon. It will be live on their website at federationcja.org/Philippines.

'DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS – IF YOU HAVE FAITH, EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE'

In 1979, Adi Deutsch was critically wounded while serving in the Special Reconnaissance Unit of the Golani Infantry Brigade.

"We were on a mission **deep inside Lebanon**. It was supposed to be **a quiet intelligence investigation**. After completing our operation, **I stepped on an anti-personnel mine. The explosion destroyed my body and shattered my right leg**. I was evacuated by helicopter back to Israel.

"On my first leave from the hospital, I was at my parents' house sitting on a bar stool. When I wanted to get off my seat, I did what I would normally have done until that day – I put my right foot down. Except, there was no right foot. I fell directly on my stub and all the stitches opened up. I recall this event as a frustrating crisis, coupled with a lot of anger, depression and a definite regression in my progress".

This was until **Adi visited Beit Halochem and began his rehabilitation. Along with hydro and physiotherapy, he started swimming in the Olympic size pool and later was introduced to cycling and running.**

"I had always dreamed of participating in an **Ironman competition** and I was determined not to let my injury stop me. In January 2013, I stood at the starting line with 139 other athletes in Eilat, for one of the toughest races in the world: 3.8 km swimming in the sea, 180 km of cycling and a full 42 km marathon. I came in 50th, 4th in my age category and was **the first Israeli amputee to ever complete this race**.

"I was able to accomplish my goal thanks to the coaching, assistance and programs that Beit Halochem offered me. Sport is crucial in rehabilitating the body and mind. Being a disabled athlete, I know that I can achieve anything given the right environment. Beit Halochem provided this for me."

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75th anniversary

Israel's chief rabbi remembers Kristallnacht

JTA

BERLIN — Israel's chief Ashkenazi rabbi marked the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht with a visit to a Jewish kindergarten in Berlin.

"Connecting Jews in Germany to their roots is the worthiest retort to the darkness that prevailed here 75 years ago," Rabbi David Lau said during his first official visit to Berlin, where he went to the Chabad-run Judische Traditionsschule Talmud-Thora kindergarten.

Riots on Nov. 9-10, 1938, organized by German authorities, killed 91 Jews, destroyed 267 synagogues and were followed by the deportation of 30,000 Jews to concentration camps.

The systematized attacks, which came to be known as Kristallnacht, the "Night of Broken Glass," anticipated the mass slaughter of European Jewry launched three years later.

During his visit, Rabbi Lau was scheduled to attend the General Assembly of the Conference of European Rabbis, which brought 200 members from across Europe to the German capital for the first time.

The conference, held 75 years to the day since Kristallnacht, also marked the 10th anniversary of Germany's Orthodox Rabbinical Council. Conference members attended a Kristallnacht memorial ceremony at the Beth Zion Synagogue in former East Berlin, which survived the 1938 pogrom and is now part of the Rabbinerseminar zu Berlin.

• • •

Speaking in Washington to mark the 75th anniversary of this pogrom that presaged the Holocaust, U.S. President Barack Obama said the lesson of Kristallnacht is to speak out "against anti-Semitism and intolerance."

"Kristallnacht foreshadowed the systematic slaughter of six million Jews and millions of other innocent victims," Obama said in a statement.

"Seventy-five years later, Kristallnacht now signifies the tragic consequences of silence in the face of unmitigated hatred," he said. "As we mark this anniversary, let us act in keeping with the lessons of that dark night by speaking out against anti-Semitism and intolerance, standing up to indifference and re-committing ourselves to combating prejudice and persecution wherever it exists."

A memorial service Nov. 10 in the Hall of Remembrance at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum in Jerusalem takes place 75 years after Kristallnacht.
[Isaac Harari/Flash90 photo]

Arafat poison tests paid for by widow PA: report

JTA

The widow of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority paid for the Swiss medical tests on the late Palestinian leader's body that showed he did not die of natural causes.

The *Washington Free Beacon* reported Nov. 8 that a spokesperson for the University Centre of Legal Medicine in Lausanne told the newspaper that Suha Arafat and the PA paid for the tests.

The tests "moderately" supported the notion that Arafat had been poisoned with polonium, a radioactive substance.

Al Jazeera America reported last week that it believed the Swiss lab conducted the tests for free as a public service, according to the *Free Beacon*.

Polonium is a highly toxic substance that is rarely found outside military and scientific circles. The substance was found in Arafat's ribs and pelvis, and in the soil beneath where his body was buried, according to *Al Jazeera America*.

A report issued Nov. 8 by a team of Russian scientists found insufficient evidence that Arafat was poisoned with polonium.

Arafat led the Palestine Liberation Organization for 35 years and became the first president of the Palestinian Authority in 1996. He fell violently ill in October 2004 and died two weeks later, at age 75, in a Paris military hospital. His remains were exhumed last year

Suha Arafat had filed legal action in July 2012 asking French authorities to look into claims her husband was poisoned. The following month, French prosecutors opened a murder inquiry into the death of Arafat.

Last week, Palestinian investigators said Israel was the "only suspect" in the death of Arafat, after laboratory tests suggested the Palestinian leader died from poisoning.

Yasser Arafat

"We say that Israel is the prime and only suspect in the case of Yasser Arafat's assassination, and we will continue to carry out a thorough investigation to find out and confirm all the details and all elements of the case," Palestinian inquiry chief Tawfiq Tirawi told a news conference in Ramallah Nov. 8.

Tirawi said the Palestinian inquiry had studied the findings of Swiss scientists, released Nov. 6, which "moderately" supported the notion that Arafat had been poisoned with polonium, a radioactive substance.

The next day, Palestinian officials demanded an international inquiry into Arafat's "killing."

Abbas speech says Israel is 'occupied Palestinian land'

CJN Staff

As U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry visited Israel and the Palestinian territories last week to move along peace talks, a report emerged that Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas claimed all of Israel is occupied Palestinian land.

Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) reported that at a memorial event last month a speech delivered in Abbas' name asserted that all of Israel was called "occupied Palestinian land."

The event, which memorialized a Fatah and PLO leader from the 1970s, included the performance of a song that glorifies death and included the lyric, "My Weapon has Emerged."

The memorial was broadcast live on Palestinian TV on Oct. 9. Fatah Central Committee member Jamal Muhaisen delivered "the speech of Mahmoud Abbas, president of the state of Palestine."

According to PMW, Muhaisen stated, "not an inch of the land of Palestine" has been "liberated," including the "1948 lands," which is a term the PA and Fatah use to refer to Israel within the Green Line.

"All our holy places are still under occupation, and so far we have not liberated one inch of Palestinian land. All Palestinian land is occupied – Gaza is occupied, the West Bank is occupied, the 1948 lands [Israel] are occupied and Jerusalem is occupied."

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas speaks at an opening ceremony of a medical centre in the West Bank city of Ramallah in 2010. *[Flash90 file photo]*

PMW reported that a poster announcing the event stated it was held "under the auspices" of Abbas.

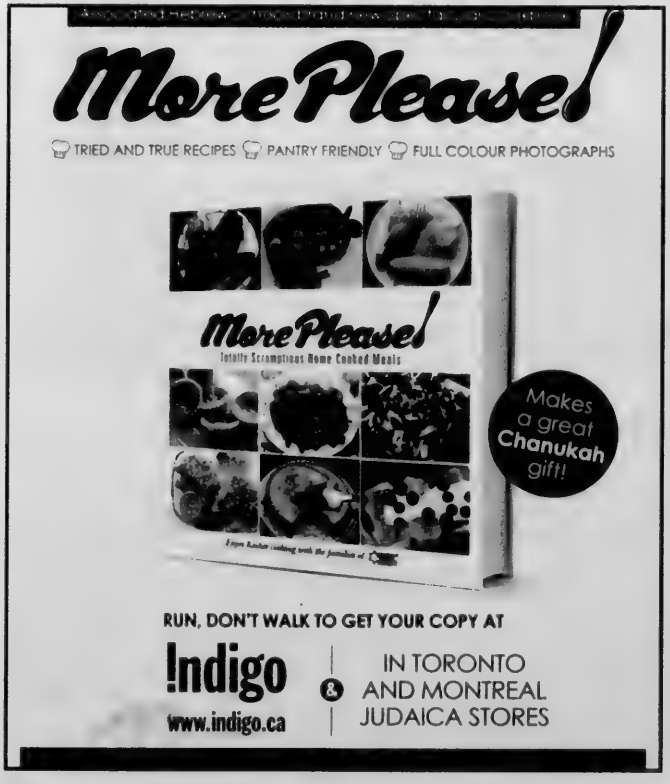
Earlier, PMW reported that Abbas' Fatah movement called released murderer Issa Abd Rabbo "one of our nation's symbols and one of our greatest leader."

The remarks appeared on Fatah's Facebook page in late October.

Abd Rabbo had been jailed for murdering two Israeli university students, Ron Levi and Revital Seri, who were hiking south of Jerusalem on Oct. 22, 1984. Abd Rabbo attacked them, tied them up at gun point, put bags over their heads and then shot them to death.

He was released from two life sentences in October as part of a larger prisoner release – he was one of 104 prisoners who were freed as a Palestinian precondition for renewing negotiations.

The Fatah Facebook page stated, "On this great day, Oct. 21, 1984, we stand respectfully, proudly, and with admiration for one of our nation's symbols and one of our greatest leaders, who spent his best years in the Zionist occupation's fortresses [prisons]... On this great day we express feelings of utmost loyalty and devotion to our brother Issa. We will continue to walk in his path, the way of resolve and defiance, the way of loyalty to our great Martyrs, foremost among them our symbol and great leader, Yasser Arafat 'Abu Amar.'"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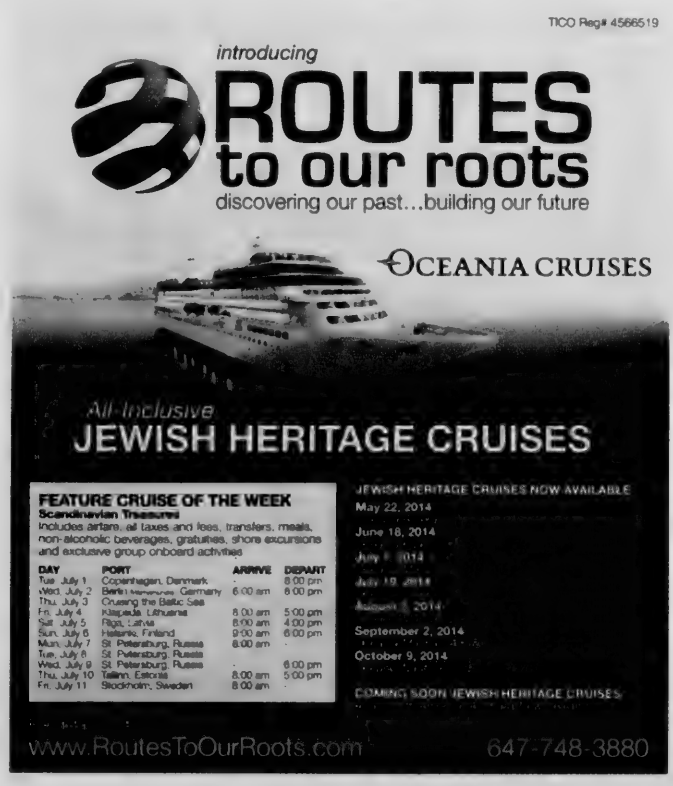
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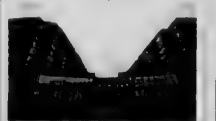

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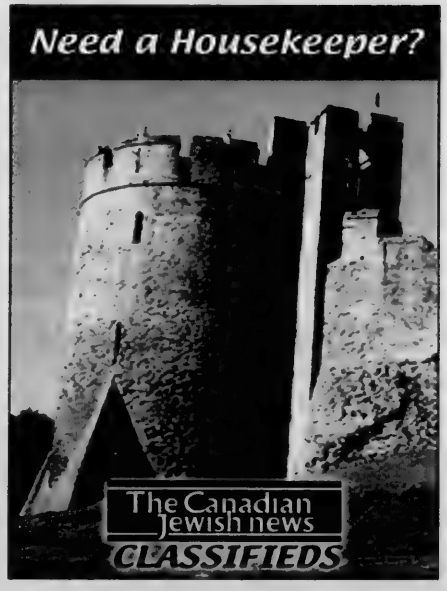


Film producer takes close look at Jews and baseball

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There are a lot of words you could use when describing someone's appreciation of sport: enjoys, follows, is entertained by, likes, or perhaps even, roots for.

Then there are those who take it further: the fanatics, revellers, zealots, devotees and those whose adulation of a sport can be called, love.

That's the word at the centre of a documentary film that aptly describes Jews' longtime infatuation with the great American game, baseball. *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story* will screen on Nov. 13 at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue, to be followed by a discussion with the film's producer, Will Hechter. It's part of the synagogue's five-part series, "Jews in sports," which runs on Wednesdays, off and on, until Dec. 11.

Jews really do have a long-standing love affair with baseball, he said. They've excelled at the sport on the diamond and have followed it religiously in the stands. Even Jewish owners of teams have a soft spot in their hearts for opposing batters – when they too are members of the faith, he said.

The documentary was inspired by the release of a baseball card series that featured Jewish Major Leaguers, as well as a desire to debunk a stereotype of the Jew as bookish and un-athletic, Hechter said.

Jews south of the border, and in Canada as well, have long felt proud of the accomplishments of Jewish players in the Major Leagues, said Hechter, a producer with Clear Lake Historical Productions.

"There's no question of a love story," he said. "First of all, baseball is America's national pastime. There's no question baseball has been at the forefront of their culture.

"When Jews came to America, they took to baseball. They wanted to identify with America."

"That still holds true today."

Jews have had heroes in the sport going back to its earliest days in the 19th century.

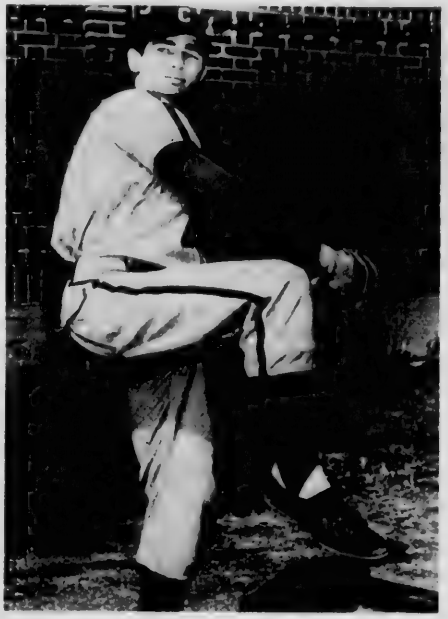
Lipman Pike was a pioneer of the game, known not only as the first Jew in baseball but also the first professional and one of its first stars.

Since then, Jews have played all positions, but perhaps the two best were Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax.

Greenberg was a slugger with the Detroit Tigers back in the 1930s and '40s. He was so good, in 1938 he threatened to break Babe Ruth's home run record of 60, but he came up short, finishing with 58. In 1934, in the midst of a pennant race, he sat out a game that fell on Yom Kippur.

Koufax, of course, was a star pitcher with the Los Angeles Dodgers. Not only was he the team's ace, he garnered international attention when he announced he would not pitch the opening game of the 1965 World Series because it fell on Yom Kippur. He did, however, pitch the deciding seventh game, a three-hit shutout that helped the Dodgers win the Series over Minnesota.

"There have been Jews who excelled in the game and they did a great deal for other Jews. It made them feel proud," Hechter said.



The great Sandy Koufax

DADS HONOURED

Torah Tots preschool held a morning program recently called Doughnuts for Dads, featuring circle time, science activities, building train sets, sensory activities and doughnuts and coffee for the kids' dads. It was part of the preschoolers' learning about honouring their parents.

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and Related Notices

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Jackie Senton	Oct 17/13	
Sidney Dick	Oct 23/13	2500 Bathurst Street
Brenda Biller	Oct 21/13	45 Kingsbridge Garden Circle
Kathy Zalvin	Oct 22/13	37 Stillwater Crescent
Gustava Maultash	Oct 23/13	1925 Steeles Avenue, East
Mitzi Jacob	Oct 24/13	27 Leacroft Crescent
Sarah (Sue) Turk	Oct 24/13	63 Wenderly Drive
Michael Mandel	Oct 27/13	122 Albany Avenue
Gordon Steinberg	Oct 26/13	175 Hilda Avenue
Morrie Zucker	Oct 27/13	30 Wellington St. East
Annette Nesker	Oct 27/13	55 Ameer Avenue
Saul Lazar	Oct 28/13	111 Avenue Road
Calvin Uretsky	Oct 31/13	7420 Bathurst Street
Stefan Vas	Nov 1/13	525 Lawrences Ave. West
Sydney Sokoloff	Nov 1/13	6 Pining Road

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Polina Dontzis	Oct 26/13	9 Loudon Crescent
Ella Smolarz	Oct 30/13	1035 Eglinton Ave. West

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www.youtube.com/CanadianJewishNews

Micro-distillery offers hand-crafted, authentic liquors

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Barry Bernstein, left, and Barry Stein, show off the sampling station for Still Waters' adult beverages. *(Paul Lungen photo)*

Faced with a tempting array of hand-crafted, locally produced spirits, the intrepid reporter was faced with a conundrum that would tax the wisdom of Solomon: should he start with the single malt whiskey or go directly to the Canadian rye?

Solomon would no doubt still be tugging on his beard, weighing his options carefully in the time it took this reporter to go all-in for a wee dram of single malt, known colloquially as Scotch.

It was followed with an equally tasty sampling of the rye, a Canadian-style whiskey that was as smooth as the prairie grasslands, with flavours infused from the oak barrel, bourbon cask that had been its home for three years.

My late morning sampling at the headquarters of Still Waters Distillery – it was a cocktail hour somewhere, wasn't it? – proved that there really is something to this micro-distillery business.

The products on hand at the distillery, located in a commercial plaza in Concord, showed that the two middle-aged Jewish guys behind the enterprise really know what they're doing.

Barry Stein and Barry Bernstein – they share the middle name Michael, can you believe it? – are the proprietors behind Still Waters Distillery, a micro-distillery that has carved out a niche market among connosieurs of fine spirits.

As micro-distillers, they produce whiskeys and vodka, but at a fraction of the output of the big outfits, like Seagram and Wiser's. "They spill in one day what we can produce in one year," said Stein.

"They're 10,000 times bigger," added Bernstein.

But, after all, "Micro" does translate as "extremely small," and that may in fact be part of the reason for their success. There's a movement afoot among a segment of the population away from mass-produced anything to something smaller, local, hand-made, genuine and authentic. Perhaps run by a couple of guys named Barry.

In the alcohol business, it started with micro-breweries and small-scale wineries. With the advent of Still Waters, the Barrys have blazed a path for those who enjoy hard liquor.

In their Concord warehouse/distillery, 150 casks sit, with the heavenly nectars aging within. Each batch is produced by hand, with an attention to detail that only people who run their own business can provide.

The results are spirits that have garnered favourable reviews from experts and laymen alike. The final products are in demand in several U.S. states and they are shipped through brokers to a number of Canadian provinces. Just recently, the LCBO in their home province agreed to stock a Canadian rye whiskey under the company's Stalk & Barrel label.

The LCBO already carries the company's vodka. A 750-ml bottle of Still Waters Single Malt Vodka retails for $36.95. The company's single malt whiskeys sell for $69.95 for batches with 46 per cent alcohol, and $99.95 for "cask strength," undiluted spirits with greater than 60 per cent alcohol content.

Each cask produces between 175 to 300 bottles; it varies because the warehouse in which the casks reside is subject to changes in weather. There's expansion and contraction of the barrels as well as substantial evaporation – "the angel's share" it's called. But it's the expansion and contraction that brings more and more whiskey into contact with the wooden staves, where the flavours are enhanced with the characteristics left behind by the casks' original contents, American bourbon whiskey.

The Barrys re-fill two casks a week, or about 100 per year. And they're looking to expand by adding more casks and finding a bigger premises to house them.

The Barrys have long been devotees of fermented grains. They met some 20 years ago at their synagogue, Temple Kol Ami, where both served as president.

They became friends, as did their wives and children. The families took holidays together.

"Because we did a lot of pleasure travel together, we noticed there was a huge amount of single malt Scotches that never made it to the market in Canada," said Stein.

The two began to inquire into importing the product to Canada.

Eventually, they founded "Premium Bottlers," which bottled single malt whiskeys sent in casks from Scotland.

As one author recently wrote, "A beverage of leisure is a serious business, so, finding success they gave up their day jobs, Stein as the executive in charge of distribution for a large paint company; Bernstein from his own software business.

At the time, "we saw what was happening with craft distillers in the United States." It was just taking off and there was no equivalent in Canada. "It intrigued us and we looked into it," Stein said.

At first, "we had zero first-hand knowledge," said Stein. But they liked what they saw and to learn more they completed courses offered at Cornell University in Ithica, N.Y.

They ordered $300,000 worth of hand-made equipment from Germany, which arrived in boxes requiring assembly, much like a giant Lego figure, or a furniture item from IKEA, but without the Allen key. Stein and Bernstein assembled the 450-liter solid copper still – the same "still" as in "Still Waters" – that forms the heart of the enterprise.

It took three weeks, but "we know it inside and out," said Bernstein.

From there it was a matter of finding the right formula for the spirits. It took another six months to get that right

All the grains, the malted barley, rye, wheat and corn, is delivered to the distillery where the Barrys mix and create their alcoholic concoctions.

Vodka came first, as unlike other spirits, it does not require time to age. They found a market for it, but as craft distillers, their production is limited and as a result, so is the income it generates. The rest of their capital was tied up in whiskeys aging in casks. In this venture, you have to have patience.

The Barrys acknowledge the business is still in the red, but they knew going in it would take some time to make a go of it.

"It's a passion. It's definitely a long-term plan," said Bernstein.

"We're seeing the light at the end of the tunnel," said Stein. "Those casks are our RRSPs."

And while they're waiting for the business to take off, the inventory makes for a lovely liquor libation good at any time of the day.

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Pop culture's rise in the White House

Jacob Kamaras
JNS.org

What Jefferson Read, Ike Watched, and Obama Tweeted: 200 Years of Popular Culture in the White House.
By Tevi Troy
Regnery History

Yehuda Avner's 2010 book *The Prime Ministers* reveals a tradition of voracious readers among Israel's leaders, whose homes were lined with books in multiple languages. While those homes remind Tevi Troy of the residences of America's founding fathers, Troy's new book begins with President Barack Obama's reference to the cast of the *Jersey Shore* reality TV show during the congressional battle over health care.

Troy, who served as White House liaison to the Jewish community in the administration of George W. Bush, believes current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's reading habits fall in line with the scholarly group of early Israeli leaders depicted by Avner. But in *What Jefferson Read, Ike Watched, and Obama Tweeted: 200 Years of Popular Culture in the White House*, Troy chronicles the opposite trend developing in the United States.

Israel's youth as a nation when compared to the United States likely accounts for this discrepancy, Troy said in an interview.

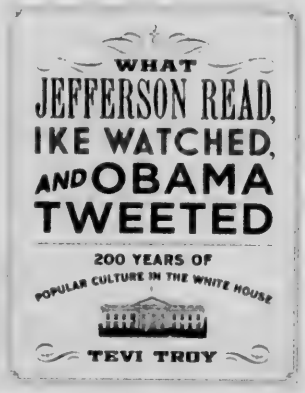
"Maybe there's something about the original founding generation, that in order to establish a state or know what makes a good government, you need to be a reader to be steeped in these great questions that man has debated for centuries," Troy told *JNS.org*. "Whereas when you're a caretaker leader, perhaps you don't need to read as carefully."

Troy's book lays out a historical trajectory in which the increasing prevalence of pop culture in American society has meant that U.S. presidents must be in tune with that culture in order to both get elected and then be "men of the people" while in office. What presidents may sacrifice in the process of immersing themselves in pop culture, however, is their ability to be scholars and "men of higher understanding," Troy writes.

What does that trend mean for American Jews? Troy said that pop culture is disproportionately shaped by Jewish voices; so if a president needs to be aware of the culture, the president is "clearly aware" of Jewish influences on culture as well.

Troy also chronicles a long history of American presidents welcoming Jewish artists to the White House. But he believes the Obama era might mark a shift.

"I think in some of these periods, Jews had a special status, because it was easier and safer politically to bring a Jewish artist than an African American artist [to the White House], for example, in some earlier and less enlightened times," Troy said.



"So I think that Obama signals kind of the end of this special relationship between presidents and Jewish artists for two reasons. One is that just his existence signals that we are sufficiently post-racial, that the kind of barrier that existed before doesn't matter. And two, that Jews have made so much progress that nobody really thinks of every Jewish artist as the Jewish artist, so much as the American artist."

Troy's book brings to light various unique factoids about how U.S. presidents related to Jews, such as the fact that, after his presidency, John Quincy Adams began working on, but never completed, a written history of the Jewish People. Theodore Roosevelt, in a 1903 speech for B'nai Brith, recalled that one of the colonels who fought with him at San Juan Hill was Jewish. Asked whether such a personal anecdote could appear in a modern presidential speech, Troy notes that while Roosevelt probably wrote his own speeches, presidential speechwriters have taken over that role today.

"Having been in the White House and having seen the speechwriting process, I know that the speechwriters do sit down with the president, and if he's meeting with a group [with which] he does have a personal experience, he will often relay it to the speechwriter, who will try and fold it into the speech," Troy said. "But even then, there's a filter between the actual giver of the speech, the president, and the writer of the speech, which kind of limits the personal nature of the story coming out to some degree."

Troy, who, besides being George W. Bush's Jewish community liaison, was also deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, writes in his book that Bush "was a reader and very few people knew it, until it was too late to change the public perception of him." After losing a 1978 race for the U.S. House of Representatives, during which he was decried as a Harvard and Yale graduate who couldn't connect with the people of Texas, Bush said he would not be "out-countried" again, and reinvented himself with a cowboy-like persona. That image would get Bush elected as governor of Texas and eventually as president, but also made it difficult for the public to believe that he was a serious reader, according to Troy.

How can modern presidents more effectively mould their images? Troy offers his formula in "Rules For Presidents Engaging Pop Culture" in his book's appendix. He said the book is recommended reading for future presidents and their campaign staffs, who "need to look at [pop culture] seriously, and have a plan and a strategy for approaching it." The same goes for Jewish organizations and leaders, Troy said.

"Someone like William Daroff (vice-president for public policy of the Jewish Federations of North America), he's the tweet master general of the Jewish community… and people are in some ways more aware of his organization than some of the others because of his activity on Twitter," Troy said. "A generation ago, it was [Anti-Defamation League national director] Abe Foxman's ability to get quoted in the *New York Times* that made his organization better known. So I think the new generation of Jewish leaders needs to adapt to new technologies, just like political leaders need to take these technologies into account."

The Orthodox Jewish community, meanwhile, must balance Shabbat observance with society's increasing expectation of its members to be wired 24/7. Troy, who has observed Shabbat for most of his life, said, "There is definitely a need in these days of PDAs [personal digital assistants] for people to feel connected at all times, and I myself put down that PDA at the last minute [before Shabbat] and I pick it up after Havdallah. And these things are great tools for knowing more than you could have known in the past. Not necessarily having more wisdom, but having more information."

That being said, Troy believes Judaism has benefited from having Shabbat "as a period when you step out and when you don't have your eyes fixed on a screen, and you can connect with family and friends." He says Orthodox Jewish parents should emphasize to their children the value "of breaking away from pop culture for brief periods, and then re-engaging later."

What lesson can the Jewish community as a whole glean from Troy's book?

"I think Jews should be appreciative of the home we found in America and the welcoming nature of the American community, and also of the role the presidents have played in this process," he said. "But I also think that they need to, when they are in the entertainment world, take their role seriously and think about what messages they are conveying about the Jewish community when they're creating and playing their product."

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UJA Federation

Brooklyn native brings humour to reboot of *Beauty and the Beast*

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Beauty and the Beast's second season is in full swing, continuing the modern revamping of the '80s TV series of the same name, and actor Austin Basis said there's still lots of action and excitement to come.

This season revolves around the theme of "Who am I?" – also the name of the season premiere. Each of the characters is going through changes and learning more and more about themselves.

Basis said his character, biochemistry professor J.T. Forbes, is learning how to open up to relationships outside the university and with his friend, Vincent Keller, the titular beast in the show who became beastly after a failed military experiment in post-9/11 Afghanistan.

At the start of this season, Vincent has a form of amnesia and can't remember anyone, including J.T., who had been his roommate and best friend for 11 years.

"[J.T.] is trying to figure out who he is without Vincent in this world," Basis said. "It's like an onion, peeling the layers to who J.T. is."

Basis said he brings lots of his own personality to the character. Identifying as a cultural Jew, he said that this trickles through in bringing humour to the character.

Austin Basis

"[It's] that kind of love of life, but in the deepest darkest moments, you are always able to make light or relieve the tensions with a little humour," he said.

The Brooklyn, N.Y. native said it's exciting shooting the show in Toronto, especially since it reminds him of his hometown. He has filmed in Canada before, but in Vancouver, which he likened to Los Angeles, where he now lives.

"It's that laid-back lifestyle that's very different from the urban lifestyle I knew in New York," he said. "Coming to Toronto, I was reintroduced to [it]."

The 37-year-old actor began his dreams of stardom with a goal of becoming a professional baseball player – specifically for the New York Mets.

"I was dead set on it and saw it in my future," he said. "I'd be that kind of player on the team that's the fun-loving jokester and the good player."

But once all his high school teammates grew, he realized that unless he was especially fast – he wasn't – being small wouldn't help.

He then enrolled in New York's Binghampton University, where he majored in theatre but also took pre-med courses, though he gave that up after taking a few university-level science classes and realizing they weren't for him.

So with some encouragement from his professors and lots of training, he began trying to make it in the acting industry.

He said his first big break was in 2004, when he was cast in an episode of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*.

"You're not really an actor in New York until you've been on *Law & Order*," Basis said, explaining that the role almost legitimized him in the industry.

But you have to treat every role like your big break, he added. Every role could potentially help you break into the next level, and apart from a few A-listers, every actor is working toward finding their next big break, he said.

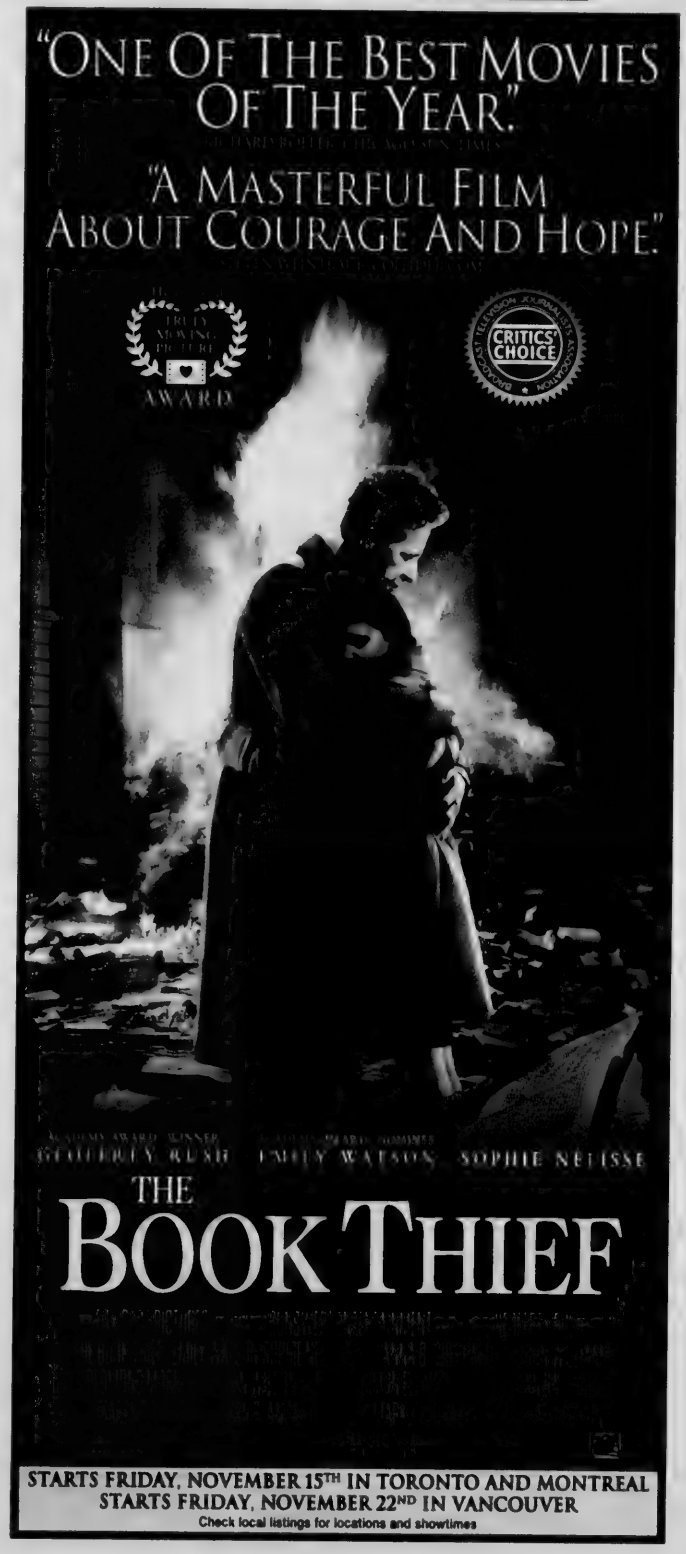
He's thrilled at the success *Beauty and the Beast* has found. It has a big following, especially among women.

"I think partly because of the romance aspect of the show and partly also because Jay Ryan, who plays Vincent, is a good-looking dude," he said.

But it's not just about the romance. There's action, supernatural mythology and even comedy.

"You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll stress out and scream at the screen," he said, "and every episode will leave you wanting more."

Beauty and the Beast airs Sunday nights at 8 p.m. on Showcase.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Meet the married couple behind Dora-nominated theatre company

Cara Edell
Special to The CJN

dirty butterfly, currently running at Aki Studio in Toronto, is the most recent production from Bound to Create Theatre, the double Dora-nominated company established in 2004 by married couple and co-artistic directors Jack Grinhaus and Lauren Brotman.

Grinhaus, who spent his youth at Associated Hebrew Day School and Camp Ramah, began his theatre training at the age of eight at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. He went on to perform in community and touring productions, including the Holocaust drama *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, which, he says, shaped his interest in serious drama for the stage.

"I do a lot of work with Jewish theatre companies that send artists into schools to use art as a way of teaching about tolerance," he said. "I also worked for a while at the Al Green Theatre and have done some work for the Harold Green Theatre. I am currently translating an Israeli play called *Nutcase* by Yael Ronin that I hope will be our next project for Bound to Create."

Brotman was also exposed to theatre at a young age. Her father has always been deeply involved in the arts community and she spent much of her childhood at his play rehearsals. In university, she realized she wanted to pursue a similar career and decided to study drama at the University of Toronto. She later trained classically with Soulpepper and at the Globe Theatre in London, England as one of 10 international artists through the Christopher Plummer Fellowship Award.

Brotman, who is half-Jewish, said she recently took a trip with her husband's family to Israel, where she "felt a deep connection" to the country. "Part of that was seeing phenomenal art and theatre and dance and it certainly inspired the kind of work we've been creating."

When first establishing their company, Grinhaus said he and his wife had a vision for a type of theatre they really wanted to see more of. "Our interests lie in fringe social and political issues that directly relate to the current world climate and also in finding unique and innovative ways of presenting them. We tend to create fast-paced, edgy, intense and dark-themed work that pushes boundaries and challenges the artists we work with as well as the audiences that come to see them."

Their mesmerizing and startling production of *dirty butterfly* explores voyeurism, power and guilt by confronting the collateral damage of domestic abuse and racial economic divide through a modern storytelling style that is equally blunt and poetic, he said.

"We chose this play to highlight an unfortunate truth that both domestic abuse and racism are actually on the rise. [Bound to Create] has partnered up with the White Ribbon Campaign for this show, with proceeds going to help raise awareness about violence against women."

The play is about three people, two black and one white, who live in adjacent tenement houses in a poor London neighbourhood.

Grinhaus said the play's subject matter is heavy, but the show itself is "highly theatrical and entertaining, challenging both artists and audiences to work their way through an almost postmodern style of writing for the theatre."

Bound to Create Theatre co-artistic directors Jack Grinhaus and Lauren Brotman.

Brotman said the play has "a musicality and poetry to its form" and challenges the audience to listen in a new way. "The text is fast-paced, the language broken up and overlapping. But the exciting rhythm is what we believe will compel audiences to keep up with it."

Aside from focusing on *dirty butterfly*, Brotman and Grinhaus have been devoting their attention to their new baby boy.

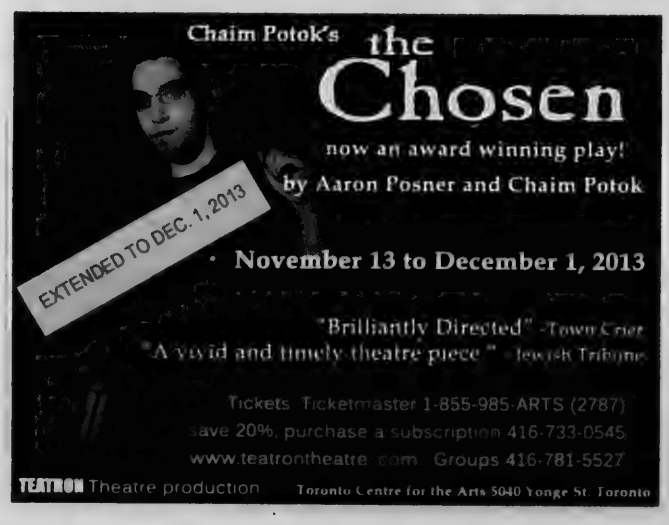
"He's a dream," said Grinhaus. "Little Ethan Jude came at this amazing time in our lives where we are birthing a great piece of art and a real life work of art. And he's such a good kid, rarely crying, and with us every day in rehearsal – a true theatre baby. Every time we get stressed out, there he is to calm us and let us escape the mayhem with his beautiful eyes and infectious smile."

While his son and wife inspire him to excel both personally and professionally, Grinhaus said his Jewish background is also a big influence.

"My grandparents were in Auschwitz and the horror stories we all share from that past makes many of us less tolerant to the injustices of the world. My talents happened to fall into the arts so much of my work comes from my own voracious appetite to speak human truths and out injustices. Almost every piece of theatre I create attempts to spark a public debate on an issue that isn't spoken of publicly."

The North American professional premiere of Debbie Tucker Green's *dirty butterfly* play is part of Obsidian Theatre's 2013/14 Season Presentation Series. It runs until Nov. 17 at Aki Studio, 585 Dundas St.. E., Toronto. To purchase tickets call 416-531-1402.

For more information on Bound to Create Theatre, visit www.boundtocreate.com.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Cabaret artist returns to the stage in Toronto

Kathryn Kates
Special to The CJN

A Canadian "grande dame of cabaret" will light up the stage at Toronto's Jazz Bistro on Dec. 1 at 7 p.m.

Judith Lander is a consummate interpreter of cabaret's finest offerings. Her repertoire ranges from pop to Broadway, with the likes of Stephen Sondheim, to classical cabaret including Kurt Weil and Jacques Brel, with a sprinkling of jazz.

"My music is very emotionally driven, as well as musically driven, because I have been a singer for 50 years," says the singer, composer and actor. She has performed on Broadway and in other major North American cities in the original hit production of *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, culminating with a memorable performance with Brel himself at New York City's famed Carnegie Hall.

"I have quite a background of music, so it is about connecting and reaching the hearts of the audience. It's very important to me to do that. There are a lot of singers these days who are imitations of imitations. They are not really connected as much to the musical lyrics as they should be, and I feel audiences today really hunger for that," says the Winnipeg native who now lives in Oakville, Ont.

"Cabaret is an eclectic combination of music that is either political, emotional or humorous, and it is coming back because people are tired of the sterility that's out there. Usually songs that have a personal bent have more emotional nutrition and people need that right now."

Lander, who is respected as a composer, most notably for compositions for ballet, including *Diary*, which has been performed by the National Ballet of Canada, the Hubbard Street Company of Chicago and the American Ballet Theater, is currently in the studio working on her first CD, due out in 2014. Jazz Bistro audiences will get a sneak peek of what's to come on this album, such as *Anyone Can Whistle* by Sondheim and *September Song* by Weil.

The 65-year-old has made a remarkable comeback, having retired from cabaret performance in her 50s. "What is amazing to me is that I'm in my 60s and I still sing really well, and that, to me, is an amazing gift," Lander says. "If you are trained properly, there's no reason why you can't maintain a lot of your voice, but you will lose a certain amount of your range, or it will shift. For me, I go a little lower with my range, but there were songs that I couldn't have done before, like *September Song* – but I was too young to do it – or *Carousel* by Brel that goes faster and faster and is quite mad at the end, and when I was young, it was extremely difficult to maintain the song. Now that I'm older, I can handle it much better because of experience, the [richer] interpretations and the power that I have at this age."

Lander says her first music roots came from singing at Winnipeg's Rosh Pina Synagogue's Saturday morning choir at 13. "The choir mistress, her name was Sara Udow, was a phenomenal singer herself. She heard something in my voice and asked me if I would like study with her. You couldn't be a Jew in Winnipeg in the '50s and '60s and not be really Jewish culturally."

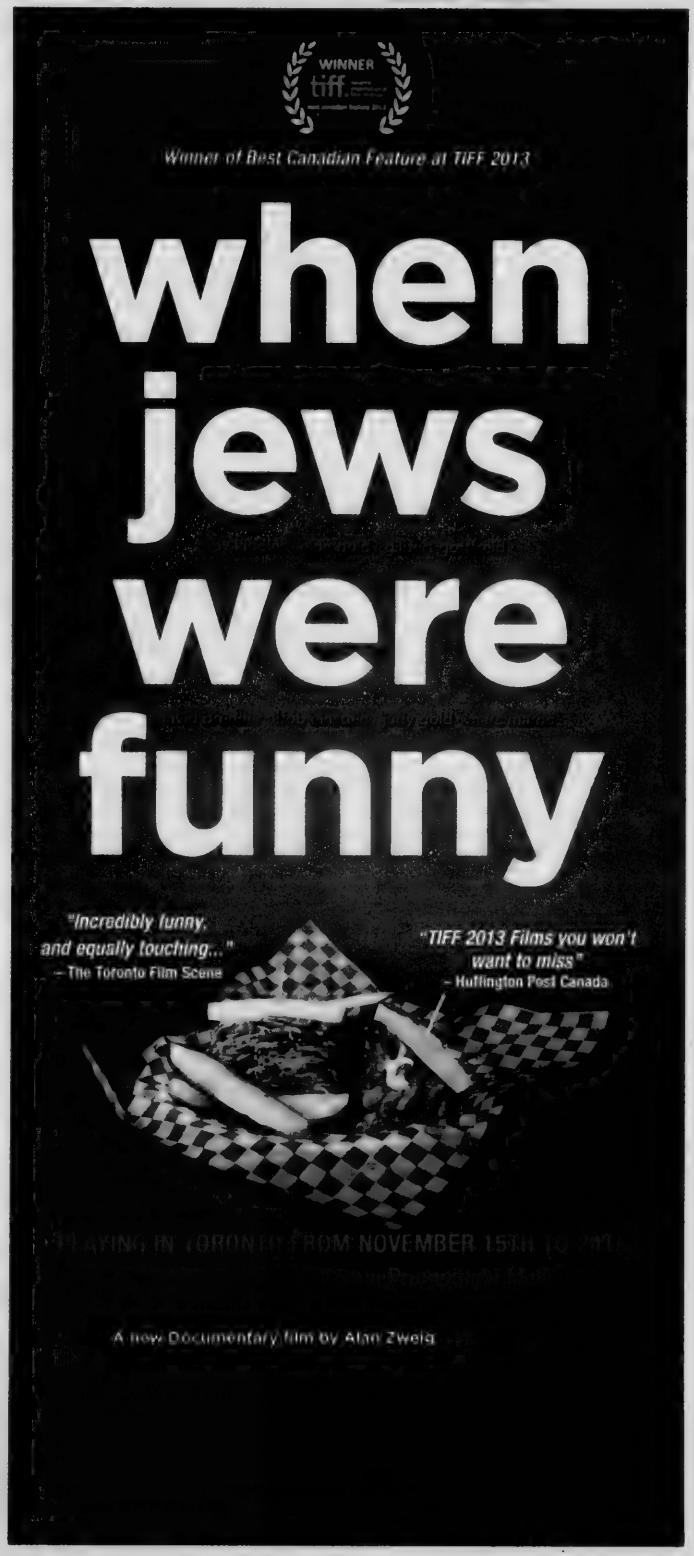
The singer is also a respected voice teacher with students including beginners and seasoned stage performers. Lander is recognized by speech pathologists as a specialist working with people afflicted with nodes, and her techniques have been proven to revitalize their vocal chords.

Lander is a supporter of exceptional up-and-coming artists, and is thrilled that her show at the Jazz Bistro will also include special guests, The Watch, a new a cappella quartet consisting of singers Dylan Bell, Art Mullin, Daniel Galessiere and Aaron Jensen. The quartet's high-energy performance includes R&B, bebop and swing tunes.

Lander will be accompanied by pianist/vocalist Ghislain Aucoin and Tom Hazlitt on bass.

For reservations to Judith Lander's cabaret evening, call the Jazz Bistro at 416-363-5299 (JAZZ). For more information, go to http://jazzbistro.ca/event/judith-lander-with-opening-act-the-watch. Her website is www.judithlander.com.

Judith Lander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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

SOLEL CONCERT TO FEATURE JOSH NELSON, NESHAMA CARLEBACH & AVIVA CHERNICK

Solel Congregation, a Mississauga Reform synagogue, hosts an interfaith concert "celebrating our similarities and bridging the gap between our differences," in honour of Rabbi Lawrence Englander, who has been a pillar of the Mississauga Jewish community for 40 years.

U.S.-based spiritual rocker **Josh Nelson** headlines the concert, which also features Canadian artists **Neshama Carlebach** – daughter of internationally renowned **Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach** – and **Aviva Chernick**, of the Juno-nominated **Jaffa Road**. Several Peel Region choirs and bands of various religions will also perform. International Centre, Orion Ballroom, 6900 Airport Rd. at Derry Road. Saturday, Nov. 23, 7 p.m. $36, $25 youth, $18 children under 13. www.solel.ca/tribute.

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New Koffler Gallery Opens: The Koffler Centre of the Arts hosts a fundraising sneak preview of the new Koffler Gallery at Artscape Youngplace with a party in the library, Monday, Nov. 18. A VIP Reception begins at 6:30 p.m. and costs $250. Tickets to the party – including food, a beer and wine bar and a DJ – begins at 8 p.m. and costs $125, with special price of $35 for guests under 35; partial tax receipts available. The opening exhibit, *We're In The Library*, features the works of seven Toronto artists. On view Nov. 19 to Jan. 19, 2014. Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw St., just north of Queen. 647-961-3209, www.kofflerarts.org

• • •

Oliver Twist: The Civic Light-Opera Company presents the classic **Dickens** favourite *Oliver!*, a stage musical directed by **Joe Cascone** featuring **David Haines**, **Elizabeth Rose Morriss**, **Julie Lennick**, **Bob Deutsch**, **Judy Gans** and **Brian Hooper**. $28. Fairview Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr. Dec. 11 to 22. 416-755-1717, musictheatretoronto.com

• • •

Aftermath: Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents the film *Aftermath (Poklosie)* by **Wladyslaw Pasikowski** with producer **Dariusz Jablonski** in attendance. The Polish-made "haunting thriller" deals with the reality of Polish-Jewish relations since World War II. It has been accused of being anti-Polish and banned by some theatres in Poland. Chai Tea & A Movie, $15. City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr. Sunday, Nov. 24, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. www.tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• • •

Canadian Woman Composers: Jacques Israelievitch, the **Koffler Chamber Orchestra** and pianist **Christina Petrowska Quilico** perform *Music She Wrote – A Tribute to Canadian Woman Composers*, featuring the works of four composers. The Music Gallery, 197 John St. Sunday, Nov. 24, 7 p.m. $25, $20, $15. www.kofflerarts.org

• • •

Names in the News: Toronto author **Susan Glickman** based her award-winning novel *The Tale-Teller* on the legend of **Esther Brandeau**, a Jewish girl born in France who came to Quebec disguised as a boy in the 1730s. Vaughan Public Library is promoting the book this month as part of its first annual Vaughan Reads program. Glickman speaks about her book at the Bathurst Clark Library, 900 Clark Ave. W., on Dec. 8, 1 to 2 p.m.

• • •

Dave Brenner is one of several comedians in *When Jews Were Funny*, Alan Zweig's award-winning documentary about Jewish comics opening Nov. 15.

Arts in Brief

• Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents *The Chosen*, an award-winning stage adaptation of the bestselling novel by **Chaim Potok**. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St. Nov. 13 to 24. $30 to $48. www.teatrontheatre.com

• *When Jews Were Funny*, Toronto filmmaker **Alan Zweig's** award-winning documentary about Jewish comics, opens at Bloor Hot Docs Cinema on Nov. 15.

• Pride of Israel Synagogue presents a concert of music inspired by Jewish composers featuring the **Robin Langdon Quartet**. $25, $20, $15. 59 Lissom Cres., Saturday, Nov. 16, 7 p.m. 416-226-0111.

• **Kevin Courrier** continues his series on the films of **Robert Altman** with *The Grand Epic – Nashville*. Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina at Bloor. Monday, Nov. 18, 7 to 9 p.m. $11.25 drop-in; students $6.

• A book launch for *Remembering Camp Kvutza, 1944-1965* by **Tobi "Pidgy" Gordon**, takes place at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, 100 Elder St., Sunday, Nov. 24, 2 to 4:30 p.m. Please RSVP to rememberingcampkvutza@gmail.com

• Active Seniors/Boomers presents a Chanukah Musical Celebration with **Aviva Chernick** and musician **Josh Engel** with latkes and songs in Judeo-Spanish, Hebrew and Yiddish. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Nov. 28, 1:30 p.m. $5.

• Mixed Company Theatre presents *Old Age Ain't for Sissies* by **Rex Deverell**, about the perils and pleasures of post-retirement life. Tarragon Theatre Extra Space, 30 Bridgman Ave., Nov. 27 to Dec. 1. $20, $25. Previews Nov. 26, $10. 416-531-1827.

• • •

At the Galleries: *The Great Upheaval: Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Collection 1910-1918* features works by **Brancusi**, **Cezanne**, **Chagall**, **Duchamp**, **Kandinsky**, **Leger**, **Matisse**, **Modigliani**, **Mondrian** and **Picasso**. Art Gallery of Ontario, Nov. 30 to March 2, 2014.

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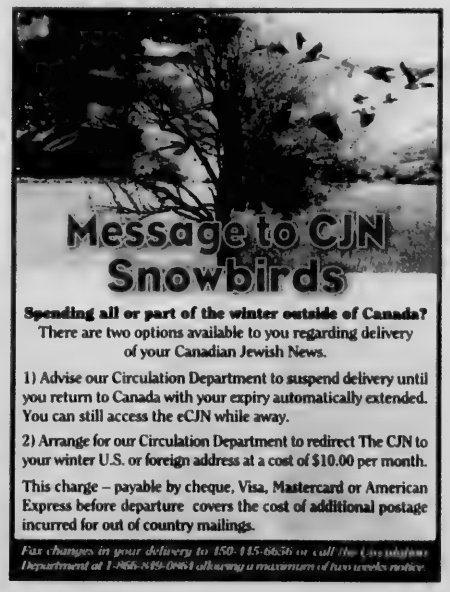
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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca
HEEBONICS

Stratford newbie already feels at home on the big stage

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Sara Farb may have just made her Stratford Festival debut this year, but she's already a seasoned stage performer.

The 26-year-old actress made her professional debut when she was just nine years old in the role of young Jane Eyre at the Royal Alexandra Theatre.

"It was huge," she said. "Looking back it's astounding I was given that opportunity so young."

She remembers her first time performing in that production in front of an audience. The seats were totally black, darkened by the stage lights. She felt very little in the big room, but she hadn't yet developed the nerves that might worry an adult actor performing on that stage for the first time.

"People work their whole lives to achieve something like that, but I didn't really understand how lucky I was back then, because obviously I didn't know any better."

Now, the Toronto native is making her name known among the Stratford crowd, an experience she described as magical and overwhelming.

She was first seen this year as a young boy in *Romeo and Juliet*, a production that took the show back to its Elizabethan roots, with all of the cast speaking in the proper iambic pentameter – something that Farb said is quite rare, even in the town named for William Shakespeare's birthplace.

Although she prepared her lines as the understudy for Juliet, she never had the chance to actually perform it for an audience. Instead, she played the role of the Page to Paris, a little boy with a big musket. But she's not heartbroken about it.

"[As an understudy,] you hope to God you never have to go on, and if you do, you hope to God that you're ready. I was definitely ready... but it's great to know I have the role of Juliet in my wheelhouse," she said. "That's a huge amount of text that I now know."

Most recently, she performed the role of Jessica, Shylock's daughter who runs away from her father to marry a Christian, taking with her some of his wealth.

As is typical with all productions of the *Merchant of Venice*, this one drew some criticism from Jews, many of whom view it as an anti-Semitic story with Shylock as the villain.

However, Farb said she doesn't buy that argument.

"I know there's a preconceived notion that it's an anti-Semitic play, and depending on how you read it and depending on the production and how it's interpreted, it certainly could be," she acknowledged.

But that's not what this production was about, she said.

"What [Stratford artistic director] Antoni Cimolino so beautifully showed in this production was that what it comes down to is a question of humanity," she said.

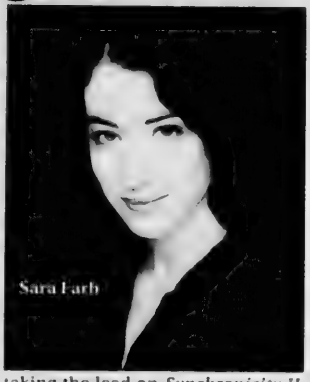
"We have, at the crux, this religious disagreement, but when that's stripped away – and it is quite quickly – what you see is Shylock, who is just a complicated man who struggles to maintain his integrity."

In particular, the famous "Hath a Jew not eyes" speech, in which Shylock tries to point out that both Jews and Christians are human, is hugely valuable to that interpretation, Farb added.

"If a person saw the play and walked away thinking it was anti-Semitic, it was because they were insistent to begin with and reluctant to have their minds swayed."

Her next performance will be in Toronto for a night of music by Sting and The Police. Run by Acting Up Stage Company, the night will feature songs that have strong narratives, with a number of musical actors performing the songs. Farb said she's really looking forward to the concert.

"So many of the songs, I didn't realize I knew, and I love when that happens," she said, adding that she'll be performing a number of songs, but


Sara Farb

taking the lead on *Synchronicity II*, *Don't Stand So Close to Me* (in a duet with performer Jeff Madden), and *Desert Rose* as part of a trio.

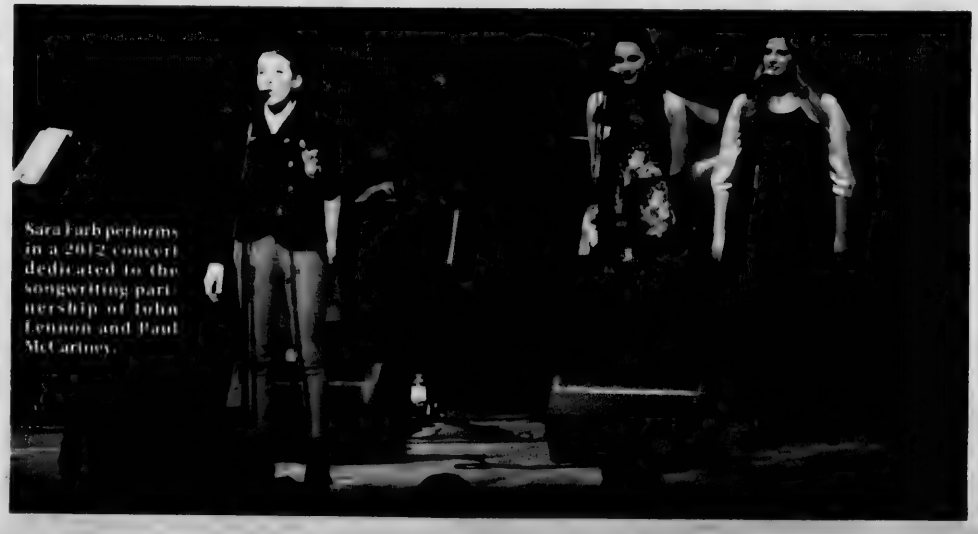
Farb said she was never going to spend her life chasing any career other than performing. When she's standing on a stage in front of an audience, she's comfortable and feels like she's doing what she's best at. The industry can be scary at times – especially the lack of stability – but she knows it's the right decision.

She knows employment won't be a concern for her for at least another year. The Stratford Festival recently announced that she's been cast as Cordelia in *King Lear* for next year's season.

And she hopes she can stay there for at least a while longer.

"It's every Canadian actor's dream to one day perform on a Stratford stage – especially on the Festival stage, which is where I got to do all of my shows this year," she said. "I can only hope that I'll be able to stay working in a place that I love and do work that excites me."

UnCovered:Sting & The Police will take place at Toronto's Telus Centre in Koerner Hall on Nov. 18.


Sara Farb performs in a 2012 concert dedicated to the songwriting partnership of John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Nov. 18 is the deadline for the issue of Nov. 28. Nov. 25 is the deadline for the issue of Dec. 5. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 289; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 14

A NIGHT OF WONDER

Small Wonders, an organization that supports Jewish couples experiencing infertility, is holding a "Night of Wonder," 7:15 p.m. For tickets, see smallwonders.ca, or call 416-742-0090.

MY HERZL

Beth Sholom Synagogue screens the film *My Herzl*, 7:30 p.m. 416-783-6103.

Friday, Nov. 15

SONGS FROM THE HOLOCAUST

Temple Sinai Ensemble Choir, Toronto Jewish Folk Choir and Upper Canada Choristers perform songs related to the Holocaust, Temple Sinai, 9 p.m. (following 8 p.m. services).

Saturday, Nov. 16

ROBIN LANGDON QUARTET

The Robin Langdon Quartet performs at Pride of Israel Synagogue, 7 p.m. Tickets $15-$25. Call 416-226-0111.

EXOTIC KASHRUT

Ari Zivotofsky discusses "Why your butcher does not sell giraffe: The kashrut of exotic birds and animals," 7:30 p.m., Or Chaim Yeshiva. www.torahinmotion.org

SISTINE SECRETS

Roy Doliner discusses "Sistine Secrets and the Hidden Jewish Symbolims of Michelangelo," Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto Congregation, 8 p.m.

SHABBAT AT SUNNYBROOK

Beth David Brotherhood sponsors Shabbat services at Sunnybrook Jewish Chapel, Room EG 06 at 10 a.m.

Sunday, Nov. 17

THE CONSERVATIVE FUTURE

Jonathan Sarna of Brandeis University, discusses "The Future of the Conservative Synagogue in the 21st Century," 7:30 p.m., Beth Torah Synagogue. Tickets $10/$15. Sponsored by the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues.

GERALD TULCHINSKY

A symposium on Canadian Jewish Studies, in honour of **Gerald Tulchinsky** will be held at University of Toronto, Jackman Humanities Building, Room 101, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. No charge.

UNDYING LOVE

The movie *Undying Love*, stories of people who survived the Holocaust, will be shown at the Lodzer Centre Congregation, 2 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 18

THE GREAT CARUSO

Iain Scott discusses "The Great Caruso," 2 p.m. $12. Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880.

THE REFORM FUTURE

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein discusses "Can Reform Judaism Survive Modernity and Still be Jewish?" Temple Har Zion, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 19

LUNCH AND LEARN

Osnat Lippa discusses "Influential Jewish Artists," at Beth Tikvah Synagogue's lunch and learn. Call 416-221-3433 to register.

CHUG HATANACH

Rabbi Benjamin Friedberg leads a Chug Hatanach at Beth David Synagogue, 8 p.m.

AFRICA AND ISRAEL

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Meshoe, founder of Africans for Israel, speaks at Beth Sholom Synagogue, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 20

FAMILY LAW

"How to Make the Most of Your Time with your Family Lawyer," is the topic at a free community workshop by Act to End Violence Against Women, 7 p.m. To register, call 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org.

JEWS IN SPORTS

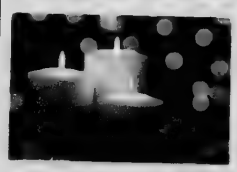
Peter Scwartz discusses "Baseball as a Road to God: Seeing Beyond the Game," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation, Free, but RSVP, 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles holds an evening of exploring techniques for putting the 'text' into textiles, Temple Sinai, 7:30 p.m. www.pomegranateguild.ca

Continued on page 45

Send Chanukah greetings to family & friends



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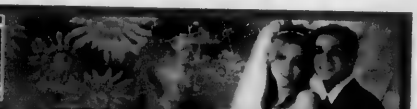

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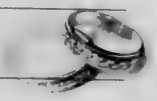

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Continued from page 44

Thursday, Nov. 21

BROTHERHOOD SOCIAL

Adas Israel Congregation of Hamilton holds its 55th anniversary Brotherhood Social, 6 p.m. For tickets, call 905-528-0039.

Other News

CHANUKAH FUN

Nov. 23. Come play Jewish bingo and eat latkes at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, 6:30 p.m. For tickets, see www.bayt.ca.

Nov. 24 Judy and David hold a Chanukah concert at Isabel Bader Theatre, 3 p.m., celebrating PJ Library. For tickets, see www.pjlibraryToronto.ca. $18 with discount code PJLibrary.

Chanukah Craft and Playtime sponsored by City Shul, Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School and Seasons Family Centre, 2:30-4:30 p.m., 655 Davenport Rd. RSVP, **Sheri** at 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca

Shaar Shalom Synagogue Chanukah Party, 1-4 p.m. Games, crafts, prizes. $10/$20

Temple Sinai Chanukah party. Musical entertainment at 11 a.m.; lunch at noon; "Great Treasure Hunt" for older children at 12:45 p.m. Register by Nov. 21 at 416-487-3281 or programs@templesinai.net

Nov. 29 Bring your menorah to Temple Kol Ami. Services at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner. RSVP jaykowal@gmail.com

Nov. 30 Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Chanukah on ice celebration, 7:30 p.m. at Canlan Ice Sports. RSVP by Nov. 26. 416-221-3433.

Family Musical Chanukah Show with **Lenny Graf,** Pride of Israel Synagogue, 6 p.m. Pre-registration required. 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Dec. 1 Chabad of Markham presents Eighth Day in concert at a Chanukah festival, 3 p.m., Thornhill Community Centre. For tickets, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or www.chabad-markham.org.

Dec. 5 Musical Chanukah Nash and Drash, with **Cantor David Edwards** and **Klara Bagley** Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon. $12/$15. 416-633-3838.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Teenage volunteers are needed for a teen-senior Chanukah party, Dec. 1. Email hannah-safferspiro@gmail.com, or call **Rachel** 647-708-8201.

UPCOMING CONCERTS

Temple Har Zion presents **Evan Malach, Courtney Simmons** and the **Varsity Jews** in a concert honouring two founders of Out of the Cold, Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. For tickets email franmalach@hotmail.com.

Solel Congregation presents **Josh Nelson** and **Neshama Carlebach** in concert Nov. 23 at the International Centre. For tickets, go to www.Solel.ca/tribute.

NCSY annual concert presents **Shlomo** and **Eitan Katz** and the **Eitz Chaim Boys Choir** at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, Nov. 24, 7 p.m. For tickets, call 905-761-6279, ext. 232.

VISIONS FOR CANADA

Justin Trudeau, leader of the Liberal Party of Canada speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Nov. 28, 7 p.m.

MP **Chris Alexander,** minister of citizenship and immigration, speaks Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Advance registration required. Email RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Healthy Dating & Relationships for Teens: A 2-part workshop for teens ages 15 and older, starts Nov. 21, 5 p.m., Schwartz Reisman Centre.

Stop the Roller-coaster: A workshop for parents or professionals who want to learn more about the change in teenagers' behaviour and attitudes. Nov. 27, 7 p.m.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women who have lost a spouse and want to move forward. Nov. 28, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Circle of Care sponsors a 6-week workshop about community services, safety, financial and legal planning for seniors, Fridays, 1:30 p.m. to Dec. 13, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call **Anne Siciliano** 416-635-2900, ext. 462.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Nov. 20. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays Mah-Jong 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m. Line-dancing to be announced.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Email lisar@mnjcc.org. Nov. 14, **Dr. Michael Gordon** discusses "The Challenges of Aging and Families." Refreshments at 1:30 p.m., program at 2 p.m. Nov. 28, **Aviva Chernick** and **Josh Engel** perform Chanukah music in Hebrew, Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish, 1:30 p.m. Register by Nov. 18. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons at Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267.

Prosserman JCC Daycare and Preschool hold an open house, Nov. 17, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Call **Kailah Rubin**, ext. 4250.

Yossi Elran of the Weizmann Institute presents fun math with magic, Nov. 18, 5:30 p.m.

The movie *Tzvey Shvester* will be screened Nov. 18, 12:45 p.m.

Be part of the Prosserman JCC Shalom Singers. This performing group entertains throughout the GTA. No auditions needed. Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 a.m.

Try Nia, which combines martial arts, dance and healing arts. Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Melt and stretch exercise method, Fridays. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Beyond Bubbie: An evening of food, family and stories, hosted by **David Sax,** author of *Save The Deli*, Nov. 14, 8 p.m. Al Green Theatre. $10. 416-635-5391, ext. 5187.

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Nov. 18, The Grand Epic: *Nashville.*

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574.

MELT Method: Self-treatment techniques to help prevent pain and heal injury, Wednesdays 11 a.m. to Nov. 20; MELT Method one-day intensive, Nov. 17, 11 a.m. $40/$50; Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m.to Dec. 18.

Rhythm Distributed, works by **Bernice Eisenstein,** are on display in the gallery until Nov. 18.

Chanukah at the JCC: Poolside Chanukah Party, Nov. 30, 6:30 p.m.; Community Chanukah Celebration, Dec. 1, 10 a.m.; 44 in 44: 44 Jewish titles reviewed in 44 minutes by **Belinda Keshen** and **Sharoni Sibony,** Dec. 1, 10:30 a.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**. 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN JCC

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St., 905-303-1821.

Chanukah Book Festival until Nov. 17.

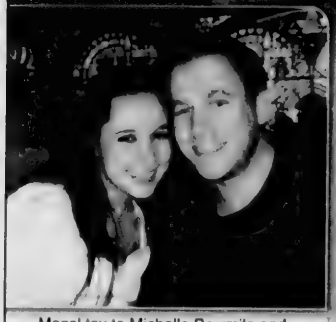
Tova Raz reads from her book *Spots of Imagination,* Nov. 14, 7 p.m.; **Pam Jenoff** discusses her experiences in Poland and her book, *Faith and Fiction: A Jewish Woman's Journey to Becoming a Novelist* Nov. 17 at 1:30 p.m.; **Judi Oron** discusses her book *Cry of the Giraffe,* Nov. 17 at 3 p.m.

All events are free, but pre-registration is required at srcentre.ca.

FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב



Mazel tov to Michelle Bowmile and Aryel Marmurek on your engagement! Love, your family and friends

Mazel tov on the recent marriage of Aaron Goldwasser to Michelle Ruby. Till 120.

Mazal tov to Helen & Sam Yermus on their 60th wedding anniversary! Love Audrey, Alanna, and Danny.

Bert Raphael is 80. Happy birthday to the best Dad and Zaide! Love, Lisa, Ed, Daniel, Sam, Jordyn and Mark, Debbie, Alexis, Corey and Sheree.

Aedden Rothman celebrated his 4th birthday on Oct. 27. His parents Noa and Shayle Rothman and brother Orrie joined in the party along with family and friends.

Rhona & Joey Sobol, Naomi & Richard Blumer are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Amanda and Daniel. An August wedding is planned.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Music often important in dementia care

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

I had seen the short YouTube video-clip of *Alive Inside*, which started as a short video clip of *Henry Wakes Up – the Power of Music* and has now been released for more general viewing in its entirety. I recently saw it at a special showing at the Alzheimer Society of Toronto, which is undertaking a major iPod project by which music will be delivered via the almost magical electronic wizardry of a small iPod loaded with personalized music that reflects the individual's musical history and preferences.

The movie was very powerful and brought back to me associations of the place of music in my own life and in illness in my family. It has also resulted in a number of research projects looking at the therapeutic use of music in other serious medical conditions.

In a recent report in the renowned *Journal of the American Medical Association*, an article on the use of personalized music delivered through earphones concluded: "Patient-directed music therapy in the intensive care unit (ICU) reduces anxiety in awake, ventilated patients while also decreasing the intensity and frequency of sedative use."

I recall vividly the devastating stroke and subsequent cascade of complications that ultimately resulted in my mother's death. During her hospitalization, my family and I utilized music during two seminal periods of her illness and dying process. The first was soon after her admission when she began to "come to" after the profound effects of the stroke and could understand what was being said to her: I applied earphones and played ballet music through the portable device I had (in those days, a Walkman was the advanced technology).

I also recall her reaction to the music of *Swan Lake*, which I had seen a number of times with her when I was a child. She not only moved her non-paralyzed hand to the music but pointed her non-paralyzed foot in typical ballet position as the music played on. She clearly responded to the music in a very positive way, and during the earlier period of her illness when there seemed to be some hope for partial recovery and maybe even rehabilitation, she wore the headphones often, and heard different pieces of classical musical, especially ballet music –always with a positive response on her part.

Toward the end of her illness, with great anguish, my father, my sister and I decided to stop further medical intervention other than palliative symptom management. I sat with her for hours with headphones on her, as she gradually slipped away. The Walkman played classical piano concertos that she loved. I, too, had developed a love for those pieces, especially Rachmaninoff's second piano concerto, which was one of the first 45-rpm recordings we ever owned, and we had shared performances of it when she took me to live musical concerts.

Although she did not actually die with the earphones on, they were with her almost until the very end, and I listened as well, through a coupler, to the same music, which at least transported me to another time.

With this in mind, I was very moved by the Alzheimer project in which personalized music was provided to individuals in long-term care facilities who could no longer apparently interact with the external world. The apparent awakening was so dramatic that many of us in the audience cried and laughed simultaneously because of the apparent joy we saw in response to the music.

The Toronto project is described very well on the website www.alzheimertoronto.org by clicking the button that describes current projects – this one being the iPod project

As part of long-term care planning for ourselves, it might be worthwhile to leave our loved ones a list, or even recorded selections, of music that we would like to hear when we can no longer make individual choices – a sort of musical personal legacy.

SHARE YOUR HAPPY MOMENTS
UPLOAD YOUR PHOTO TO
www.cjnews.com/mazeltov

Change up your salads

Daphna Rabinovitch
Special to The CJN

When I was growing up, dinner at our house always included a green salad of some sort. My mother simply felt that no dinner was complete without salad, both for nutritional and aesthetic reasons. I have to admit that now that I'm a mother myself, dinner does indeed seem incomplete without a salad. However, my feelings about salad have changed quite a bit. Yes, I still love green salads of every variety but my repertoire has expanded to include those that take their inspiration from grains, fruits, both fresh and dried, as well as staples from a host of different cultures. I also know that it's important to include grains as much as I can in my diet. Grains contain a myriad of disease fighting compounds as well as fibre. They can lower your cholesterol, contain powerful anti-oxidants and can radically improve your insulin sensitivity. Because whole grains pass slowly through your body and help maintain blood glucose levels for longer periods of time, they are also considered a natural appetite suppressant, in effect sending the message to your brain, 'I'm still full, there's no need for more food.'

TWO GRAIN SALAD WITH DRIED FRUIT AND AVOCADO

1 cup quinoa
2/3 cup small green lentils
2/3 cup chopped dried apricots
½ cup golden raisins
2 ripe avocados, peeled and cubed
4 green onions, sliced
½ cup
toasted slivered almonds

Dressing:
1 cup chopped roasted red pepper
3 cloves garlic
2 tbsp. honey
2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ tsp. each salt and pepper

Bring 1 3/4 cups of water to a boil in a medium-sized saucepan. Stir in the quinoa. Cover and cook over low heat for 15 to 17 minutes or until the quinoa has absorbed all the water and is light and fluffy. Transfer to a bowl, fluff with a fork and let cool.

Simultaneously, place the lentils in a separate small pot. Cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 15 to 20 minutes or until the lentils are tender. Drain well. Add to the bowl with the quinoa.

Meanwhile, place the red peppers, garlic, honey, vinegar, and mustard in the bowl of food processor. Pulse until thoroughly pureed. With the machine running, gradually add the olive oil in a thin stream, until thoroughly emulsified. Stir in the salt and pepper. (Dressing can be made ahead and refrigerated for up to 48 hours. Bring to room temperature before using.)

Gently stir the apricots, raisins, avocado and green onions into the quinoa and lentil mixture. Pour the dressing over and toss gently until well coated. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with the sliced almonds just before serving. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

APPLE LATKES

1 lg egg • 1/3 c plain Greek yogurt + 2/3 c natural plain yogurt • 1 c flour • 1/2 tsp baking powder • 1/4 tsp baking soda • 1/2 tsp cinnamon • 2 tblsp sugar • 2 apples grated • Vegetable oil, for frying • Maple syrup for serving

Beat egg with yogurts; set aside. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, sugar in a bowl. Peel, quarter, core and grate apples. Pour yogurt mixture into bowl with flour; fold in grated apples.

Pour enough oil to ¼" up in skillet; heat on stove. Dollop spoonfuls of apple batter into sizzling oil; press down on latkes in pan to flatten. Fry for a minute or two, until latkes are golden brown on underside; flip them with 2 metal spatulas; fry for another minute on uncooked side. Remove to a tray lined with paper towels to blot excess oil; continue cooking until you've used up all batter. Recipe doubles and triples easily.

Recipe courtesy Nigella Lawson for Food Network

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BULGUR AND GRAPE SALAD

This dressing is simplicity itself. The sherry vinegar helps to highlight the nuttiness of the bulgur and adds wonderful acidic notes that contrasts wonderfully well with the sweetness of the grapes.

1 cup bulgur
1 1/2 cups halved red seedless grapes
1 cup sliced celery
4 green onions, sliced
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

Dressing:
2 tbsp. sherry vinegar
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ tsp. salt and pepper

Bring 1 cup of water to a boil in a saucepan. Add the bulgur. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 15 to 20 minutes or until the bulgur has absorbed all of the water and is tender. Transfer to a bowl; let cool.

Meanwhile, pour the vinegar into a small bowl. Whisk in the oil gradually until well emulsified. Stir in the salt and pepper.

Once the bulgur is cooled, gently stir in the grapes, celery, onions and parsley. Pour the dressing over, and toss gently until well coated. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes 4 servings.

CJN writer honoured at foodfest

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

CJN food columnist Norene Gilletz, was the only Canadian on a list of people named as "pioneers in the kosher food industry" at the annual Kosherfest conference last month in Secaucus, N.J.

Chefs and cookbook authors Susie Fishbein, Laura Frankel, David Herzog, Gil Marks, Joan Nathan and Levana Kirschenbaum were also honoured at the pre-Kosherfest media dinner, dubbed Kosherfeast.

In addition, Menachem Lubinsky, president and CEO of LUBICOM Marketing Consulting, a full-service marketing and business development firm was also recognized.

Lubinsky, a well-known authority on the kosher food market, founded Kosherfest 25 years ago.

Gilletz, a cookbook author and food writer, said she was overwhelmed to be the only Canadian "on such a list of luminaries. I was blown away.

"As a Canadian, it is hard to make a mark in the culinary world, so I feel very proud."

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The Canadian Jewish news

Party Planner

Florist can make your party elegant

'We capture the essence of your imagination and ingenuity for that magical day'

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

The right décor can transform a party into a magical place – just ask Craig Gruzd, creative director of Dt Floral and Décor. The South African décor specialist boasts a large warehouse with a massive inventory of products reflecting the latest trends of glamour and elegance.

"We have the right materials to fit every vision, personality and budget, including rentals of furniture, prop, linens and more," he says.

With an in-house floral department Gruzd does custom consultations and has an amazing eye for detail, creating cutting edge designs. His specialties range from intimate gatherings to bar and bat mitzvahs, weddings and corporate events, each one customized according to his clients' personal taste, budget and details. For each one, Gruzd is the mastermind behind the staging, watching over every event large and small.

What distinguishes the company is its ability to reinvent a space according to the vision of the client. "Whether it's simple, classic elegance or something dramatic, innovative and different you're after, we capture the essence of your imagination and ingenuity for that magical day," he says. "We love it when clients bring us their dreams and challenges."

For a winter wonderland ski chalet-themed event, Gruzd created a ski chalet at the entrance to the venue, using a wooden wall façade and props that included skis and an animal head.

"We illuminated the dinner tables with alternating blue and white colours, used illuminated giant icicles as centrepieces, custom-made snowboards and a white vinyl dance floor decorated with vinyl snowflakes," he recalls.

In a wedding with a glitz-and-glamour theme, Gruzd incorporated as much purple, the couple's favourite colour, as he could. He draped the room floor to ceiling in white sheers, then lit the space in purple. White linens textured with white ribbon roses accentuated the purple drinking glasses while mirror troughs reflected imported white hydrangeas and gorgeous purple roses.

For the ceremony, the circumference of the chupah was encrusted in white and purple flowers with a crystal chandelier suspended in the centre.

"We received lots of compliments from the guests and the couple for that event," he says.

Gruzd buys fresh flowers from around the world and creates breathtaking floral arrangements, including extravagant hanging floral displays. Starting with a simple idea, he loves creating spectacular themes. Over the years, they have included fantasy, winter wonderland, an enchanted whimsical evening and glitz and glamour. He starts with a colour palette, moving to textures and using both to help create an event's mood and elegance.

Dt Floral and Décor uses colour palette and texture to create a party's mood.

Gruzd and his firm have received numerous awards from the Canadian events, weddings and meetings industries. High-profile clients who have benefited from his services include Brad Pitt, Russell Crowe, Innes Di Santo, Grace Ormonde and Queen Elizabeth II during her 2010 Toronto visit.

For a free consultation, call Gruzd at 905-669-9993 ext. 227. With his innovative ideas and creativity, he can execute a unique event on short notice, in as little as two weeks.

For more information, visit, dtfloralanddecor.com.

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Let Karen G Events plan your simchah right

'I often call myself a party therapist'

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

Weddings can be quite a task to put together.

That's why you need an expert.

Karen Garscadden, who runs Karen G Events, has been planning weddings and other events for more than 25 years and knows what it takes to make the perfect function.

"Planning a simchah isn't just about the food and the flowers," Garscadden said. "It's about making everyone feel like it's their important family day."

That can be difficult to do, since when people from different backgrounds come together, there's plenty of mediation and understanding required.

"A lot of listening," Garscadden said. "I often call myself a party therapist, because many times, people come to the table, each with their own agenda or with 'that's the way we've always done it.'

"When they come to the table, and there's different opinions and ideas, it's my job to turn it into a positive experience," Garscadden added.

"You try and take a little bit from each [side] and blend it together, so that everyone is comfortable and everyone is represented."

Garscadden embraces the challenges of planning an important event.

"I love meeting with the people, and getting their vision. When I come up with the solutions, they'll say, 'oh my gosh, I can see this working' whereas before, they were [wondering] how they were going to do this," Garscadden said. "That's what I'm here for, to make this work."

A party planner can be extremely useful for a wedding.

"We're resourceful, have lots of new ideas, and we have a breath of what the trends are," Garscadden said. "We work with the facilities and know the benefits or limitations of certain facilities.

"I've worked with so many families, so many venues and so many suppliers that I have those resources right at my fingertips."

Garscadden's experience allows her to truly set the scene for people trying to get an idea of how a large, empty ballroom will look on the day of the event.

"When a family walks in, they see a blank room," Garscadden added. "I take that blank canvas and try to draw a picture on it so that they can really see how their simchah is going to come together."

One of the reasons Karen G Events remains a very in-demand planning company is because of the work they put in to stay ahead.

"I like to think of myself as cutting edge," said Garscadden, who has won awards for events that Karen G Events has produced in the past. "I like to be one step ahead of whatever is new and out there."

Part of the success stems from being able to deliver something that every party wants, even if the budget doesn't allow for perfection.

"Even when I'm challenged, 99.9 per cent of the time I come up with a good alternative," Garscadden said. "It might not be perfect, but it's a good alternative."

Garscadden has been around party planning long enough that she's now onto the third cycle of events for some families – the parent's wedding, the child's bar or bat mitzvah, and now that child's wedding.

"I love working with people and exploring new ideas and finding what [works] for them," Garscadden said. "I also like the creative element of what I do, always creating that new environment and new look [each time.]"

A planner turns your vision into reality.

Karen G Events can be reached by phone at 905-731-1648 or by email at karengevents@rogers.com. You can also find more information on the web at www.karengevents.com.

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The Israeli Source is simchah central

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

You could call The Israeli Source (905-482-2025) simchah central. The 3,000-square-foot warehouse, known for its huge selection of Judaica, carries all kinds of items that people might need for their simchahs and holiday parties.

For those having bar or bat mitzvahs in Israel, Israeli Source (60 Doncaster Ave.) can even arrange mobile telephone service. The store is also the place to go to for chupah rentals.

Not only does The Israeli Source (www.israelisource.com) offer customers a wide range of choices in Judaica items, but much of the merchandise, such as holiday-themed toys and gifts, is sold at discounted prices.

As well, ceremonial items such as shofars, menorahs, customized kippot and benschers are competitively priced, said president Chuck Elnekave.

If you're shopping for Chanukah, the store has gifts and novelty items for all ages: serving dishes, plush Chanukah toys, musical dreidels and gingerbread-house kits with blue and white icing.

You can also find unusual Judaica items such as kippot and tallit in the Scottish Jewish tartan.

For simchahs, few places can match the selection of kippot available from The Israeli Source. Between the variety of materials and the numerous styles, Elnekave said he and store manager Yehuda Aboudi figured out that if they mix and match all the various options, they can provide three million different kippot. "We can make something really unique. No two kippot need to be the same.

Some of the three million kippah options that are available.

"People are looking to be different. Our many options allow people to express themselves individually."

Aboudi said that there are about six or seven items to consider when deciding on a kippah for a simchah. Aside from colour and fabric, clients can also choose from a variety of styles that may include stitching, a button, a rim, lining, as well as different coloured panels.

People can also opt for hand-crocheted or suede kippot, he said, noting that linen is generally the most common choice, especially for weddings. "There are more than 39 different types of linens to choose from."

The Israeli Source can also match the kippot to any colour swatch from a tablecloth or a bride's colour scheme, says Elnekave.

A popular kippah choice for bar mitzvahs is a sports mesh, he says. "The bar mitzvah sport kippot are taking off like crazy.

"For one bar mitzvah, the kid was really into basketball. We put the number of his basketball shirt on the kippot. They were embroidered in the same way you would see on the back of a basketball jersey."

For bat mitzvahs, he says silk and satin kippot are the current trend.

Elnekave stressed that his prices for kippot and other ceremonial items are very competitive. "We give people many options, so they're not breaking the bank. We offer the best value."

He said his prices are good, because he sources out products from a variety of places. "We work with different vendors based locally and in Montreal, New York and Israel."

He stressed that in addition to kippot, he can customize benschers with a printed message.

Other ceremonial items available include tallit, tefillin and ketubot. "The ketubot are created by artists from around the world."

As for simchah favours, The Israeli Source is starting to work with chocolate makers and other confectioners for edible items that can be personalized, Elnekave said.

"There's a type of chocolate in which the bride and groom's names can be molded into the chocolate. It's a great give-away."

He says The Israeli Source also offers a wide selection of Judaica gifts for every price range. "We have great gifts for all occasions. We offer something for every budget."

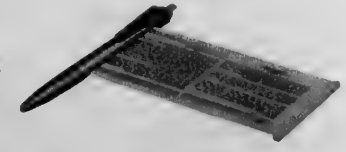
For instance, he says, challah covers that can be personalized with printed or embroidered messages are thoughtful and practical wedding or engagement gifts.

Popular gift items for bar and bat mitzvahs include kiddish cups, shofars, menorahs and books, he says.

The Israeli Source also has special gifts to commemorate bar and bat mitzvot. One of the most popular is a replica of a Torah scroll encased in lucite, said Elnekave. "The Torah is open at the right parshah and the name is engraved in the lucite to make it personalized."

The Israeli Source also has a registry for weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs.

"People buy online from us from all over the country.



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Personalized artwork lets couples add something unique to their special day

Ketubah captures the meaning of marriage

Danielle Kubes
Special to The CJN

A marriage isn't really about the wedding. As much fun as it is getting caught up in choosing the perfect dress, food and venue, a marriage is about two individuals promising each other a lifetime of love, care and provision.

That's why a hand-painted and personalized ketubah is such a wonderful way to represent a married couple's adoration and commitment – it literally outlines the obligations and responsibilities of married life.

Michelle Cohen, owner of Ketubah Gardens, designs hand-painted, nature-themed marriage contracts that that come in both standard and personalized text.

"I enjoy incorporating these special symbols to ensure that a couple's ketubah is as meaningful as possible," she says.

Cohen offers couples across Canada the opportunity to turn a standard marriage contract into something that reflects both the individuals' personalities and also a couple's particular relationship.

"One couple sent me a picture of two small turtles that held sentimental value and asked if I could incorporate it into their garden-themed ketubah. I painted the turtles on their ketubah print and embedded them at the base of the tree," she says.

"Another customer asked if I could somehow incorporate her husband's favourite guitar into her chosen design for their anniversary ketubah."

It's this sort of attention to detail that has earned her praise from clients.

"The people who find me always say they have gone through the big ketubah sites and either get overwhelmed or just can't find what they are looking for," she says.

"Because I'm a small business, I can still offer that personalized feel, whether by email, phone or in-person."

The creative process starts with an in-depth discussion with a couple about their relationship, favourite memories, colours and symbols.

Then Cohen hand-paints it, photographs it in high-resolution and prints it through a special technique called giclee printing. After it's printed, Cohen might add gold or silver accents by hand.

"Most of my customers are surprised when they see that they can have ketubah print that looks and feels like a true hand painting at an affordable price point," she says.

Cohen, a visual arts teacher for Jewish day schools, stumbled across this business when she made a vibrant and colourful ketubah as a wedding gift for her brother and sister-in-law. Guests noticed and started asking her for them.

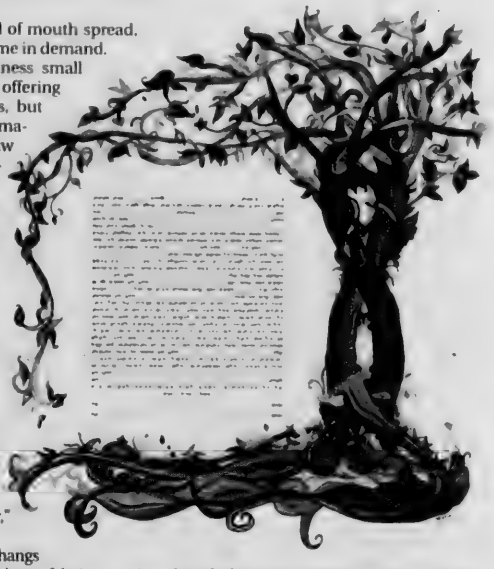
Sure enough, word of mouth spread, and her ketubot became in demand. Cohen kept the business small in the beginning, just offering the service to friends, but when she went on maternity leave, she saw an opportunity to expand.

"I researched the different wedding texts and options for different wedding ceremonies, and started to build a repertoire of text options for clients to choose from," she says.

Now she has a website and ships worldwide.

"The ketubah is something special that represents a couple's journey together," she says.

"It's something that hangs in their home to remind them of their commitment to each other and of their special day."



Ketubah Garden designs hand-painted, nature-themed marriage contracts.

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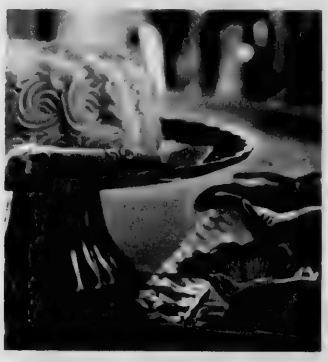
William Ashley: your perfect registry partner

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

A gift registry offers engaged couples an opportunity to create the perfect wish list for their home.

At William Ashley's 55 Bloor St. W. flagship store (416-964-9111), couples can select from North America's largest selection of tableware, kitchenware and home décor from all the leading, world-renowned brands at Canada's best prices.

"Professional registry consultants work with couples one on one in selecting their dinnerware, crystal, flatware and kitchenware, as well as home accessories that will best reflect their combined lifestyle, whether it's modern or traditional," says registry consultant Fatima Pacheco.



If a piece breaks within the first three years of use, William Ashley will replace it for 50 per cent off the current price.

"We make the process simple and unique to each couple. Our best kept secret is our Gourmet Shoppe that carries everything for your entertaining needs including small kitchen appliances, trendy gadgets, pots and pans and chef's knives."

Couples can register online or by telephone, where friendly and knowledgeable registry consultants are pleased to assist.

William Ashley's gift notification service informs couples of the gifts that have been purchased and who purchased them, allowing couples to ensure they receive the items that are most important to them.

William Ashley offers delivery across North America and provides couples in the Greater Toronto Area with a complimentary delivery service at their convenience.

Often, not everything a couple wants is purchased from the gift registry. The company provides a registry completion program offering the couple a 10 per cent discount (five per cent in the Gourmet Shoppe) on any outstanding items on their registry for up to one year after their wedding date.

As William Ashley wants to ensure that couples use and enjoy their china and stemware on a daily basis, it provides its unique, complimentary "Everyday Entertaining Insurance." If a piece breaks within the first three years of use, William Ashley will replace it at 50 per cent off the current national suggested retail price or comparable regular value.

William Ashley also provides a full-service stationery boutique.

"In the boutique, we carry Canada's best selection of custom invitations which allows us to provide couples with an exceptional variety of styles and printing techniques for any special occasion," Pacheco says.

Professional consultants work with couples one on one.

"A William Ashley invitation is not just an invitation, it's an expression of your special day."

William Ashley is proud to be Canada's exclusive destination for world-renowned Teuschér Chocolates of Switzerland. Teuscher's handmade chocolates do not contain any preservatives or additives. They are prepared in Zurich, Switzerland, and flown in weekly to arrive fresh for your shower, engagement party, or wedding. Made with the finest ingredients, their signature Dom Perignon Champagne Truffle is world famous.

"Your selection of truffles can be packaged in individual gift boxes with a co-ordinating colour box and ribbon to match your wedding colours. Each ribbon is hand tied as an extra special touch," she says.

Additionally, William Ashley offers complimentary parking in the Manulife Centre with purchase for the couple and their guests. Gifts purchased in store are packaged in William Ashley's signature gold boxes, free of charge.

Since 1947, William Ashley has been bringing "magic to every day and every occasion" by assisting couples to create a gift registry that reflects their unique taste and lifestyle. From unique kitchen essentials to stunning table settings, William Ashley offers all you need to entertain your friends and family in style and create special memories. William Ashley is your best choice for the perfect registry experience.

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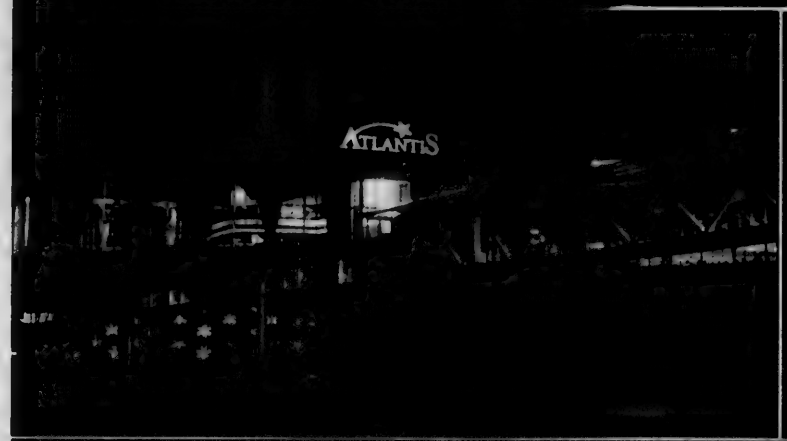

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Pure Entertainment brings the energy

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

After reading from the Torah, it's time to get the party started.

And no one knows how better to do that than Pure Entertainment (905-326-4822.)

Although it's a new company, there is plenty of experience backing this high-energy entertainment package.

"I've been doing bar and bat mitzvahs for 15 years now, so I have a good reputation in the industry," said Pure Entertainment's Lucas Margulis, who had previously worked for companies such as the Magen Boys and Mandel Entertainment before deciding to head out on his own.

"We're a full-service entertainment company and we provide everything from high-energy interactive dancers to MCs to DJs to production."

Margulis began working with Mandel Entertainment at the age of 14 and within a year, he was on a microphone.

"I thrive on hosting events, and I still do it," said Margulis, who goes by the name MC Pitbull when he's hosting events.

"What I bring to the table is a lot of creativity, a unique perspective on an event. I've been doing it for so long, it's almost like second nature."

Lucas Margulis is youthful, but he's been in the party business for 15 years.

That isn't to say that a lot of effort isn't put into each and every event.

"I only care whether or not the party goes well for my client," Margulis said. "Whether you have a huge budget or a [small] budget, I try to give everyone the best party possible.

"I want to make sure that what our clients envision for the event is what we can provide, but most importantly, I know what's going to work and what's not going to work, so I can give the best recommendations for my clients."

Margulis' connection with popular dance music station Z103.5 also means that a Pure Entertainment party has some exclusive tunes.

"Because we're affiliated with them, we have mash-ups and other remixes that no one else has," Margulis said. "We do a lot of events with Z103.5, a lot of charity events, because we want to give back to the community."

And no matter the party or which staff member is working it, they're ready to go at a frenetic pace.

"We have a huge roster of people trained in my style, which is very high-energy and non-stop," Margulis said.

"I'm proud to have been training my staff and they've really delivered shows that are catered to the style I put out there."

Pure Entertainment is backed by Peter and Paul's and is a division of S4 entertainment, so with more than 30 years of experience behind them, they know how to do everything properly.

"Right off the bat, we get back to clients within 24 hours, always," Margulis said. "We have divisions for every little aspect of our company.

"We do provide a full service, so that when you come to us, it's a one-stop shop," added Margulis, who also mentioned that people can get a great deal if they're interested in Pure Entertainment at one of Peter and Paul's venues.

Although they are able to provide anything from decor to caterers to photographers, that doesn't mean Pure Entertainment will be insulted if you choose to go a different route.

"If someone comes to me looking for a party planner, I'll list 10 of them, all at different prices, just so that they have their options of choosing who they feel works for them," Margulis said.

"We're not just pushing our venues and products. We're there to help our clients and direct them in the right way, even if it means we might not be [getting the business.]"

Having done parties for more than 15 years, Margulis knows that each event is unique.

"Every party is customized," Margulis said. "We sit down with our clients and ask what they want and what they don't want, which is just as important, because if you play the wrong song, you can lose a crowd.

"We have over 50 DJs that can cater to any genre and MCs that can talk in different languages," Margulis added. "It doesn't matter your nationality, we've got someone that can cover it."

To book Pure Entertainment, call them at 905-326-4822, or e-mail Lucas at lucas.m@bypeterandpauls.com.

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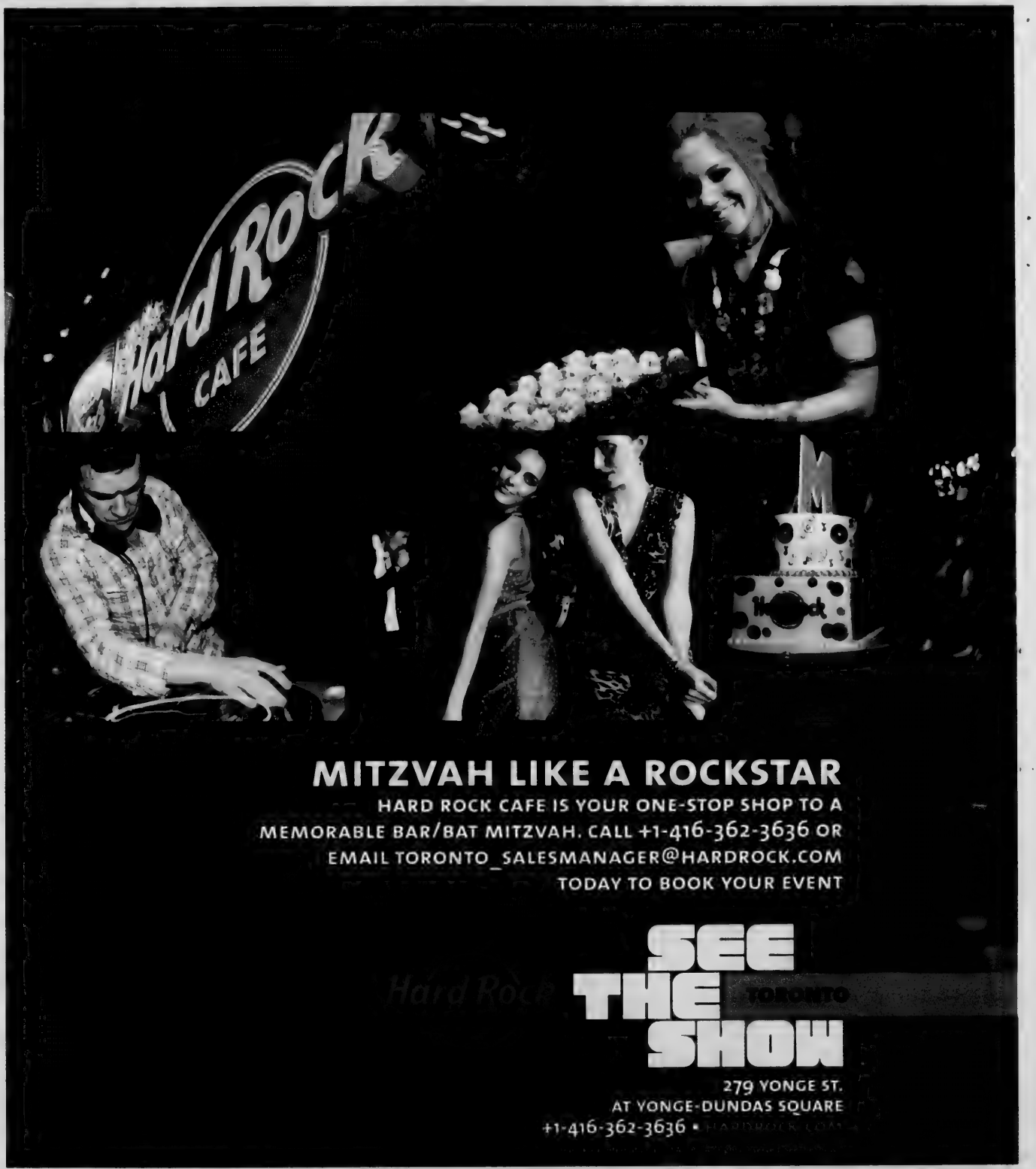
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Artz Axentz can meet every shopper's needs

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

Whether you're looking for a special birthday gift for your mother, a memorable present for your friend's bridal shower, or even if you just want to treat yourself, you can count on Artz Axentz to have it.

Artz Axentz (905-763-8384,) founded in 1999, is a unique lifestyle boutique in Thornhill. Due to increasing popularity, the store moved to a new, larger location last February at 1118 Centre St., unit 12. Loyal customers say they love the store, its brands, and the eclectic array of beautifully displayed merchandise that is sourced from all over the world, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Israel and Europe.

"We focus on offering our clients unique collections for any occasion. We accommodate every shopper's needs, such as birthday, hostess, bridal, wedding, holiday, men's or baby gifts. We have it all," said Maya Gold, owner of Artz Axentz.

"We travel the world and hand pick new artisan pieces and exciting collections to feature," said Gold.

The boutique carries one of the largest collections of Sympli, a Canadian-made line of fashionable clothing for day and evening, and travel. The brand, which carries sizes 2-18, was featured on CityLine's *Fashion Friday*.

Flirty & Femme is Artz Axentz's own brand of seamless body wear, which is wholesaled and distributed to retailers across Canada. The stylish products offer support while providing a comfortable stretch created from an ultra-soft blend of nylon and spandex. Flirty & Femme provides great basic, practical and key pieces that women reach for everyday.

Artx Axentz is the first and only store in the Greater Toronto Area to carry the Brighton brand, a line of beautiful jewelry, wallets, handbags and other accessories.

Other trendy and quality brands that the store carries include LeSportsac, Beatriz Ball, Comfy USA, Pleats Collection, Tricotto, Spanx, Yoga Jeans, Lisette and Blee Inara.

"The moment you enter the store, you become immersed in the gorgeous clothing, the stunning costume jewelry, accessories, and giftware for all occasions, Judaica for special holidays, home accents from around the world and hand-selected one-of-a-kind artisan pieces," Gold said.

The unique lifestyle boutique now has a new, larger location on Centre Street in Thornhill.

In addition to quality products, Artz Axentz also has experienced sales staff to ensure customers have a positive shopping experience. "Our staff has the ability, warmth and skills to put our customers at ease," said Gold. "They understand our customers needs and budgets and are focused on building happy and long-lasting customer relationships." To complete the shopping experience, Artz Axentz offers complimentary gift wrapping.

"With so many categories to cover there is something new and exciting arriving in the store daily," said Gold.

"Come and see for yourself what we're about. And then don't forget to tell your girlfriends!"

Memories and photos last long after party ends

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

A special celebration can take months, even years, to plan but it's over in a flash, and all that's left are memories and photographs, assuming you've taken the time to secure the latter.

Elliot Sylman, owner of Toronto's Sylman Photography (416-876-5904 or sylmanphoto.com,) has been shooting parties and people for the past 28 years.

"I've had a love of photography since I was a boy," he says.

Sylman's clients build their own package, and each package is individually customized, ranging in price from $1,800 to $5,000.

One thing he wishes, is that clients were more aware of the time factor required to shoot really great images.

Sylman Photography lets you build your own package.

"If people want brilliant results they have to be prepared to put the time in," he explains.

"I don't charge more because I spend more time. If my client is willing to put the time in, so am I, and it does pay."

Often, clients don't give themselves enough time before a party. Sylman recommends at least two to three hours devoted exclusively to capturing images in various locations.

"I recently photographed a family of four at the Canadian National Exhibition," he reflects.

"For this project, we got together several times to shoot pictures, because I wanted them to have a huge variety, and to love the images. And the results completely speak for themselves. They're beautiful."

His favourite shooting locations are outdoors in the woods, though he's also a fan of busy urban scenes such as Bloor Street, Yorkville and the Distillery District.

"I love a busy scene in the background, but I also like shade, as direct sunlight doesn't do any favours to the client," he says.

It's important to Sylman that his clients enjoy the shoot and have fun doing it. That enjoyment is reflected not just in the images, but also in their appreciation and memories of taking those pictures once they are printed.

Most clients choose a custom album after their event, containing anywhere from 80 to 180 photos. Some of his favourite events to photograph are the bar and bat mitzvahs of children whose parents' weddings he captured years previously.

Gina Kohn was one those clients.

"Elliot is an incredible photographer," she says.

"He photographed our engagement, wedding and many family events in the last few years. Not only does he capture the moment exactly how we picture it, but he makes the photo-taking part of every event fun and entertaining."

Another client, Rosanna Breitman, agrees.

"Elliot has been our family photographer for 20 years now and is an extremely talented, hard-working and generous guy. His work is just stunning, and we can't wait to have him shoot our younger daughter's bat mitzvah this year!"

When he's not photographing weddings and events, Sylman does commercial portraiture and photographs Holocaust survivors.

He currently has a photographic exhibition showing at Baycrest Centre that runs until early December. Head there to see Sylman's images, or check them out online at sylmanphoto.com.

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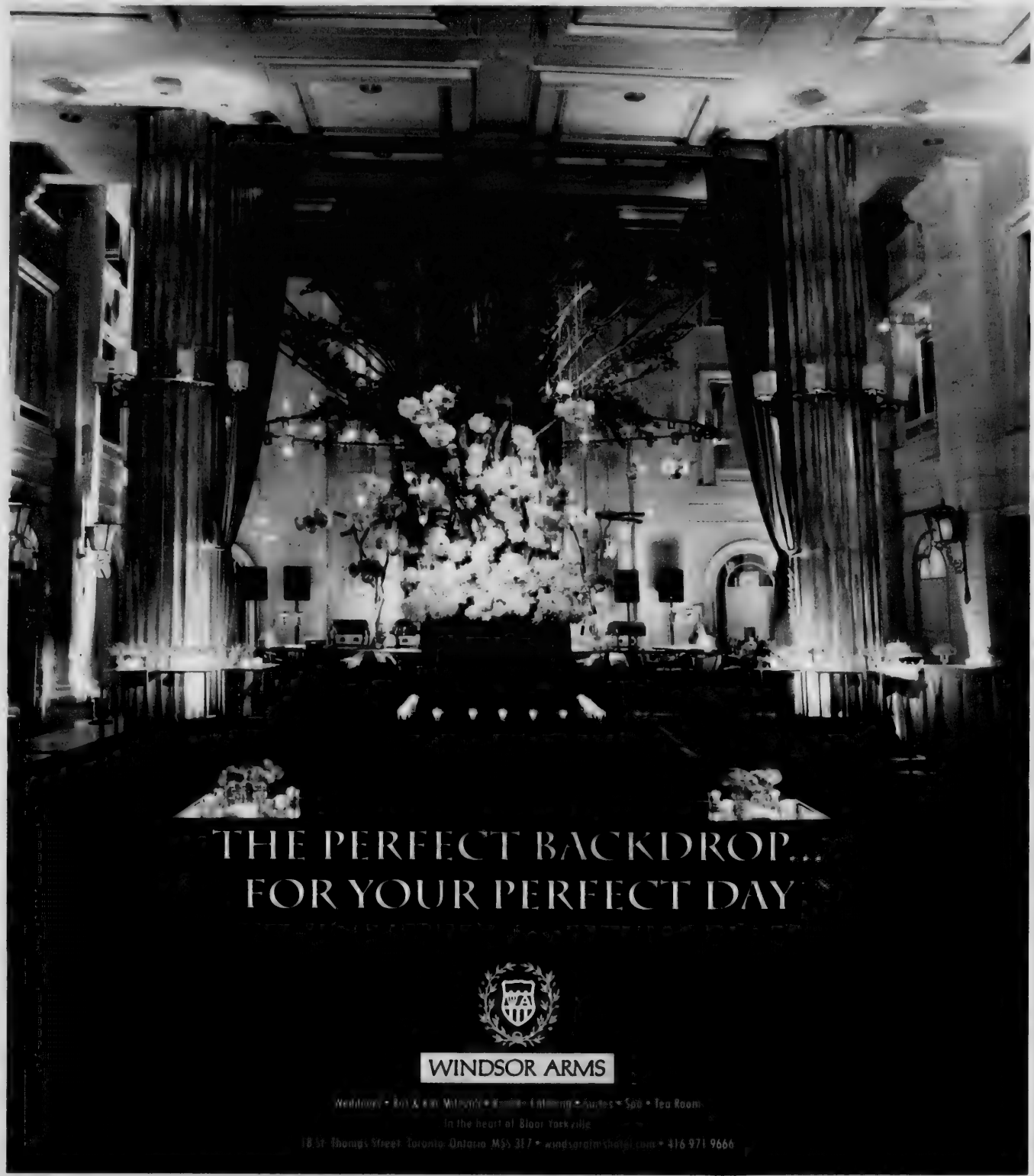
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Let Pickle Barrel take care of absolutely everything

Be a guest at your own party

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

There are so many decisions to be made when you hold a simchah. You have to choose a venue, plan the food, book the music, figure out decor, and if the celebration is a bar or bar mitzvah you've got to shop for giveaways and then have activities to keep the kids entertained.

But if you hold your event at the Pickle Barrel (416-984-5348), you can relax and leave almost all those decisions to the banquet department, says Tanya Murray, Pickle Barrel's longtime banquet manager (www.picklebarrel.ca).

"Hosts and hostesses can feel like guests at their own parties, because I will look after all the details.

"It's one-stop shopping, and I do everything from beginning to end. The customer meets me a few times and everything is done for them – the DJ, invitations, linen choices, menu selections, celebration cake, and centrepieces."

The party package even includes party favours and giveaways.

The Pickle Barrel party concept is very much appreciated by hosts and hostesses, Murray says. "They don't have to be stressed before or at the party. I do the worrying for them."

Party packages are available at Pickle Barrel's two banquet venues. The Rose Room, located downstairs at the original Pickle Barrel restaurant (5941 Leslie St.), can accommodate 100 people for a sit-down meal.

"It's a popular choice for bridal and baby showers, bar and bat mitzvahs, birthdays, engagement parties, baby namings, and Friday night dinners," says Murray.

The second banquet hall, which is in Markham, is located at the Markville Shopping Centre (5000 Highway 7 E., at McCowan Road). The space, named the Harold Soupcoff Room in memory of the Pickle Barrel's late co-founder, can hold 210 guests for a sit-down dinner and dance event.

Both venues have full speaker systems, projector screens, DVD players, podiums, and free parking. Only the Soupcoff room has an overhead projector, Wi-Fi and a microphone attached to the podium. The space has a private entrance and is wheelchair accessible. The Rose Room does not have a separate entrance, nor is it wheelchair accessible.

The party menus were revamped in the last year, and Murray says she's very pleased with the changes.

"Our packages are absolutely the best deal in town. People are getting premium quality food at excellent prices."

The Pickle Barrel has always offered party packages that have been well-priced, she adds. "It's hard to beat our prices for the quality of the food.

"We go to the market to get our food. You don't get much fresher. Our chefs are some of the longest-serving employees. Some have been here 30 years. They're really good at what they do.

"We've done special cultural foods and they were able to carry it off. I try everything before it leaves the kitchen."

She's also around for all the parties, she says. "I shuttle back and forth."

The bar and bat mitzvah packages, which are the same cost for both venues, start at $5,500 for 75 guests. The buffet has several hot entrees and side dishes, salads and desserts. The entrees include barbeque chicken, chicken fingers and a deli-carving station.

For an extra $5 per person, the carving station can be upgraded to prime rib or salmon, while table service costs an additional $5 per person.

As well, she says other additions such as popcorn machines and photo booths can be added to the party package.

Party packages even include fabulous food, party favours and giveaways.

One of the big party draws is the brunch menu, a full dairy buffet that includes salads, smoked salmon, cheeses, chopped egg and tuna, and an omelet bar.

And the desserts are always a huge hit, Murray says.

"We do cookies, cupcakes or plated cakes like chocolate fudge or cheese cake."

The Pickle Barrel has a pastry chef on staff, she notes. "She's amazing. She makes lemon squares you could die for."

And Murray says customer satisfaction is pretty high, because she gets many return bookings from families.

"I'm doing a lot of bar and bat mitzvahs for the same people. I'm on their second or third kids."

She advises people to book their simchahs early. "Our venues are very much in demand. I'm turning people away. I have bookings for 2015 already."

One-stop shop sells products for almost any kind of celebration

Party Supply Depot lives up to its name

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

When Mel Grevler opened Party Supply Depot more than 20 years ago, it was located in a compact, 1,800-square-foot store on Thornhill's Doncaster Avenue. Today, his one-stop shop for all things party remains on the same street, but in a space six times larger than the original. What hasn't changed, however, is the storeowner's friendly attitude toward his customers.

"Honestly, I appreciate every time a customer comes into the store," says the South African transplant. "I really appreciate the fact that they've chosen us."

Grevler prides himself on having a family-oriented business. His store receives visitors from as far away as Montreal, and many of his adult customers have been shopping there since they were in strollers.

"There was a woman in the store today who told me that she's now purchasing because her son is getting married and she did the son's bris with us," Grevler said. "So people have kept coming back because we must be doing something right."

He also attributes the store's success to his amazing staff – some of whom have been with the store since it opened. Grevler said he's happy to hire young people so that he gets as much time with them as possible before they head off to university and other paths. "Nobody's been there less than five or six years," he said.

The idea of opening a party supply store came to Grevler during a Passover seder. It was 4 a.m. and he was still cleaning up from the night's festivities. "I said to my wife, 'There's gotta be some better way of doing it,'" he recalled.

They spoke to a mutual friend who introduced them to disposables. The duo investigated the industry and opened the store in 1990 – the day after Rosh Hashanah.

The store has since evolved to include anything and everything you need to throw a great party, including balloons, loot bags, costumes, party giveaways and virtually anything else you can think of.

"Well truthfully whatever you say, no one can ever be the cheapest in everything," he admits. "However, we try to give a very fair price. We try to carry as much inventory as possible to satisfy everyone's needs – whether they're looking to get half a dozen plates or they're looking to cater to five or 6,000 people – we can accommodate the caterer.

The store tries to carry as much inventory as possible, and at different price points.

Founder Mel Grevler came up with the idea for his store 20 years ago while cleaning up from a Passover seder with his wife at 4 a.m.

"I try to carry as wide a range as possible. If we don't have it, we'll do our best to get it for the customer if they've given us enough time."

Party Supply Depot also caters to the Jewish community. Some of the tableware in the store can only be found there.

"There's always the Friday night before, there might be the aufruf before," Grevler said. "And then even the day after the bar mitzvah, the families usually get together before everybody goes home. So, in that way, we've got a huge range of tableware. Then we also do decorating – and balloon decorating in particular. We can make deliveries, or we'll go out and decorate a hall."

Grevler said he also has all the fun centrepieces and giveaways one would need for a party. "We're always on the lookout for the newest product. And basic stuff like hats and blowups and, you know, that sort of thing."

Then there's what seems like an endless supply of costumes for themed parties and Purim. "We've bought a lot of costumes with biblical characters, and all the general stuff," he said. "Even the superheroes are popular, [and] kings and queens, and so forth."

Speaking of party supplies, there's one thing you'll always find in Grevler's store: helium. He said there's a worldwide shortage of the chemical element used to fill up balloons. However, he makes sure that never happens at his store. "Some of the biggest competition have been without it for sometimes two or three months at a time," he said.

Grevler's goal for his store is to continue on the path he's been on for the last 20 or so years. "Some people have opened multiple stores and struggled with them, and we've stuck to our guns – one store – and made it work."

For more on Party Supply Depot, visit www.partysupplydepot.ca.

Give the gift of theatre from Mirvish Productions

First-class live entertainment has never been more affordable

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

For the past 50 years, David Mirvish and his family have been producing and presenting theatre, and the repertoire of shows for 2013-2014 will be the largest ever for the company.

Shows include *Les Miserables* at the Princess of Wales Theatre, the Broadway musical *Aladdin* at the Ed Mirvish Theatre, *Puppet Up* at the Panasonic Theatre and *I Love Lucy*, which played at the Royal Alexandra Theatre through Nov. 3.

Back in 1963, Ed Mirvish couldn't resist the $215,000 price tag on the historic Royal Alexandra Theatre.

"It was an unbelievable bargain," recalls his son, David. "But there was a catch: whoever bought the theatre had to promise to keep it running as a theatre for at least five more years."

At the time, most prospective purchasers of the theatre were deterred by that catch, given the blow dealt to theatre by movies and television.

"Making a go of a business everyone said was doomed was just the sort of challenge to get Dad interested," David says.

The first comedy at the newly purchased theatre was *Never Too Late*, and just before the first performance, Ed Mirvish confessed to William Bendix, the show's star, that he knew nothing about running a theatre. Bendix reassured him, the show went well and five years flashed into a half century.

"It's hard for me to believe how quickly those 50 years have gone by," says David. "But one thing I've learned is that people are far less interested in what you've done than in what you're going to do next. It's fun to talk about the past, but it's the future that's really exciting."

On the schedule for Mirvish in the 2013-14 season are 18 shows. They are available alone at regular price, or as two different subscription packages.

The main subscription, which is also 50 years old and is among the most subscribed in North America with more than 40,000 subscribers, has a mix of large-scale musicals and dramas. Besides *Les Misérables* and *Aladdin*, there are the Tony-winning musical *Once*; two dance-based dramas, *Arrabal* from Argentina and *Heartbeat of Home*, a new spectacular creation from the producers of *River-dance*; a stage adaptation of Kafka's groundbreaking *Metamorphosis*, which has been a smash hit in London and across Europe; and the London success *The Last Confession*, starring David Suchet and Brian Bedford.

The second series, called Off-Mirvish, because the shows are more edgy and quirky, features three shows. *God of Carnage* is a Tony-winning comedy about two seemingly sophisticated and civilized couples that somehow go over the edge when meeting to discuss their children; the powerful drama *The Two Worlds of Charlie F.*, and the hilarious new comedy *Dead Metaphor* from award-winning playwright George F. Walker.

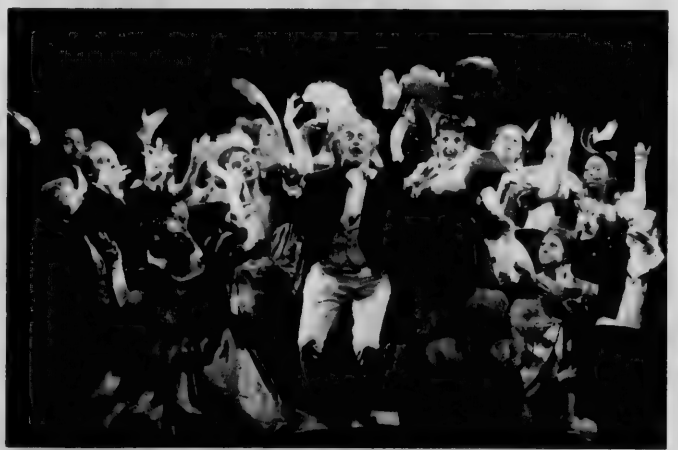
Then there are shows that are not part of either subscription series: *The Musical of Musicals – The Musical* is a spoof of musicals that was hot at this year's Fringe Festival. Perennial favourites such as *Chicago, the Musical* – featuring Olympic skater Elvis Stojko; a touring production of Disney's *The Lion King*; Green Day's *American Idiot*; *We Will Rock You*, which features the music of Queen, and the crowd-pleasing *Rain*, a tribute to the music and lives of the Beatles.

Best of all, the cost of attending first-class theatre has never been more affordable. You can become a subscriber from $153 for the main series or $99 for the Off-Mirvish series. Tickets to the other shows start as low as $19.

***I Love Lucy* was part of this year's season at the Royal Alexandra Theatre.**

And if you're looking for the perfect gift and can't decide on the show, Mirvish Productions offers gift certificates in any denomination, available for purchase in person at the box office or by calling 416-872-1212.

For more information, visit www.mirvish.com.



Tickets to *Les Misérables* would make a great Chanukah gift.

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Josh Israel teaches the art of invisibility

Rita Poliakov
Special to The CJN

Josh Israel (videobyjosh.com or 905-709-9277) prides himself on being invisible. In his line of work, it's not a bad skill.

"I try to stay a bit in the background," said Israel, who has been a videographer for about 34 years.

"There are a lot of clients out there who don't want video people to disturb [the event]. They'd like the event to continue without any noise or equipment," said Israel, who works in the Greater Toronto Area.

When Israel first started out as a videographer, blending seamlessly into the background was harder to do. But now, everything is cordless.

"You don't want people tripping. You don't want the place to become a mess. Most banquet halls are very well decorated. Clients don't want the decor affected in any way," he said.

For Israel, who mostly works at Jewish weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs, keeping up with changing technology is essential.

"There have been many changes. Anything from old VHS to digital video to high def video. Every few years, we have to turn over equipment, get rid of the old, learn all sorts of new software," said Israel, who uses a $40,000 camera.

"The lens on it alone is worth $20,000. The bottom line is, the consumer gets a lot more for their money than in the old days. The image quality has tremendously improved."

It may have been more than three decades since Israel first picked up his video camera, but the videographer still remembers his first gig.

'I try to stay in the background to get the best shots,' videographer says

"It was a wedding at Beth Emeth, a very popular, large synagogue. I learned a lot from it. [I learned] that it's very important not to miss anything. It's important to shoot much more. If you overshoot, you can always edit things down. If you don't shoot enough, you can't reshoot," he said.

For Israel, the best part of his work is when he's at the actual event.

"I enjoy the shooting the most. The editing can get a bit boring. The shooting is nice because the decor is usually quite beautiful. There's a lot of entertainment, music, fantastic bands. There's very good food," he said.

"When you shoot, you're mostly shooting people who are happy. It's not like having to go and shoot a funeral. It's great to shoot happy scenes."

Israel loves walking into a banquet hall.

"When I walk into a banquet hall, I totally forget about my personal life. I'm completely dedicated to the job from the time I arrive to the time I leave. I can feel it. When I walk in, I don't worry about being too tired, [having] pains, it all seems to disappear. You're there to do a job, to make everyone happy. When you drive away, your personal life becomes important," he said.

Unlike some videographers, Israel isn't shy about money talk. His prices are listed on his website.

"The average is around $2,000. It can go higher or lower depending on the party. There's even a $500 [package] for small events," he said, adding that having the price on his site reduces the amount of calls he gets.

As a videographer, Israel deals with his fair share of competition, and many times, competitors will offer lower prices. But, according to Israel, clients usually get what they pay for.

"There's too much competition, and it's mostly price competition. I find first-time clients are looking strictly at price. They're not looking at experience and materials. I find there's always a problem trying to make a sale to a first-time client," he said.

Be wary of low-cost operators, because you get what you pay for, he warns.

Clients who are planning a party for the second or third time are usually an easier sell.

"They find out the negatives of [going by price.] They're a little more educated," he said.

"The great majority [of my competition] are strictly into price. Their father buys them a cheap camera and computer, and overnight they're in business. The ones that have been around for a long time, their image quality is a lot better. Ten per cent [of my competition] are doing a great job. Those are the ones I compete with."

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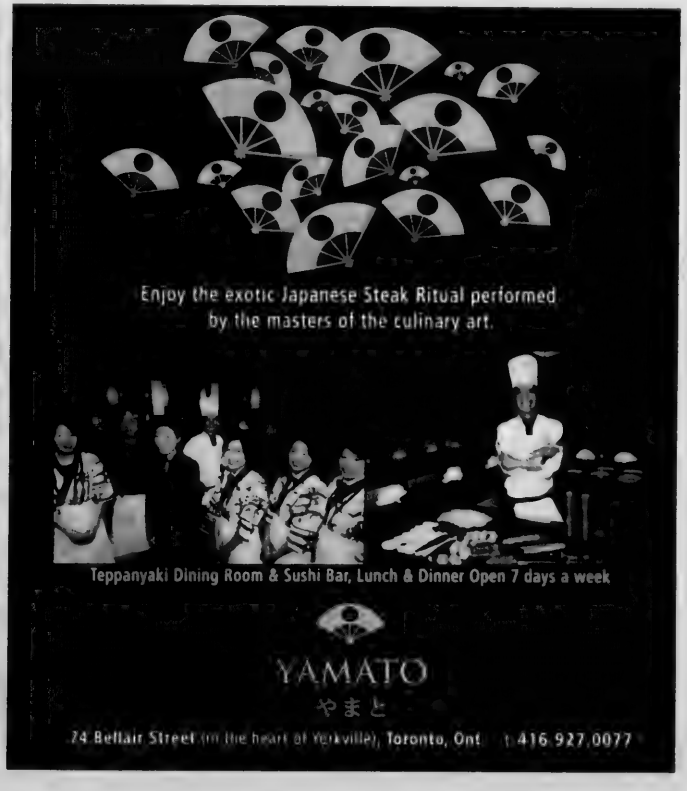
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Routes to Our Roots lets you see how Jews live around the world

Enjoy a cruise while learning about Judaism

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Jewish travellers can reconnect with their roots through new cruise vacation options that will teach them about Jewish heritage and culture around the world.

Routes to Our Roots is the brainchild of Sheldon and Hope Saul. During their 16 years of experience in running cruise tours, the couple found that many of their Jewish travellers were particularly interested in learning about Jewish experiences around the world.

"When they travel on cruises and go to different parts of the world, they want to know how the Jewish people live in that city or country, and how they experience the Jewish situation," Sheldon Saul said.

So he and his wife got the idea that they could bring like-minded people together and book cruises specifically with the goal of learning about Jewish heritage.

"It's inherent in us as a Jewish culture to know our roots," he said.

The company is currently booking for 2014. There are seven cruise options, with stops in places such as Italy, Turkey, Spain, Monaco, France, Latvia, Finland and more. Prices range from $6,199 to $10,099, depending on the cruise.

Saul said his company will help with the planning of group trips, tailoring them to the individual group's needs. For example, if a group is planning a cruise for a bar mitzvah, "we can arrange for the actual bar mitzvah and the Maftir to be done off a cruise ship in a port in a synagogue with a rabbi," he said.

Another group trip idea is a family reunion, allowing families to meet on the cruise and discover their own personal history.

"We could go back to their roots," Saul said. But the trip could also show them the area around their native land, such as Scandinavia or other parts of Europe.

It's not limited to Europe either. Saul said many people are surprised at the richness of some of the Jewish history in places in Asia or South America. For example, India has a number of Jews, and although there are many similarities between them and their North American counterparts, there are also many differences.

The two most popular cruises for this kind of trip bring Jews to Scandinavia and Russia, and along the Danube River between Budapest and Prague.

There are seven trip options, with stops in places such as Italy, Turkey, Spain, France and Russia. Pictured is one of the company's featured ships docked in St. Petersburg.

"We have found our clients want to know about Jewish heritage everywhere," Saul said.

Boats are small or medium-sized, with capacities ranging from 700 to 1,200 passengers. Those on a Jewish heritage tour would make up just a small portion of the number of passengers on the boat. Saul said he likes to do these programs with a busload of people – a minimum of 24 passengers and a maximum of 40 per bus.

"We like to keep it small," he said. "There's more camaraderie and it's a much better experience if the group is small."

Although this is the first year for official Jewish heritage tours, the Sauls are tackling the challenge with their many years of experience, including several Jewish heritage cruises organized for individual groups.

The Sauls have been selling cruises since 1998, running a CruiseShipCenters franchise in the north end of Toronto. In their years of experience, they have won numerous awards, including the Eastern Canada Regional Franchise Of The Year and National Franchise Of The Year for the five years from 2002 to 2006.

The business has also received every major award from all the major cruise lines, including Oceania Connoisseur Club for top producers, from its inception in 2006 to present.

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Pegasus has a venue to meet everyone's needs

Three unique sites means one is sure to be the perfect wedding fit

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

As soon as a couple gets engaged they receive plenty of well wishes. Then people start asking when they're getting married and where their simchah will take place.

Since there are so many wedding venue options in Toronto, couples have a lot to think about before they decide on a location.

Choosing a wedding venue takes more thought than whether or not the bride and groom like a particular spot. There's a lot more to consider than that. Luckily, Pegasus Hospitality Group (416-385-7705) has three unique venues in Toronto so one of those is sure to meet a couple's needs.

Palais Royale (1601 Lake Shore Blvd. W.) is well known as one of Toronto's premier event venues. With a capacity of 350 for a sit-down dinner and dancing or 800 for cocktails, the recently renovated ballroom overlooks Lake Ontario. Other amenities include a gas fireplace with a large hearth, state-of-the-art sound and lighting as well as plasma TV's, projectors and screens, two custom full service bars and a baby grand piano.

The Grand Luxe (3125 Bayview Ave.) is a luxurious grand ballroom featuring contemporary canvas artwork, custom millwork and chrome accented walls. With more than 6,000-feet of event space, the venue can accommodate 450 people for dinner and dancing and 650 for cocktails.

Let their chefs create a menu that reflects your unique personality.

Casa Loma, Toronto's majestic castle estate, is the third venue in the Pegasus Hospitality Group. Guests will have access to the main floor of the castle including a large ballroom, the library, the conservatory and the outdoor terraces. Casa Loma can accommodate more than 500 people for cocktail receptions or 200 for a sit-down dinner.

Markos Markoulis, director of Pegasus Hospitality Group, says the biggest benefit of hosting your event at one of his venues is the attention you will receive.

"Every event has a team of staff dedicated to it. We focus on each event as if it's our only one – this means no detail goes unnoticed, and our clients always feel like their event is important."

Each event at all three venues is assigned to a wedding co-ordinator who will help with all the event details.

"They will come with you to appointments, and help you make all your decisions. We never want you to feel like you're planning your wedding alone," said Markoulis.

The venues all have an on-site kitchen and menus are customized to each event.

"The most important criteria is that the menu meets your needs and the needs of your guests," said Markoulis.

"Our chefs are good at everything, so we want your menu to reflect your personality and include your favourite foods."

Each site has dedicated pastry chefs who are also available to design wedding cakes.

The venue can supply clients with a wedding band or DJ, or the client is welcome to bring in outside performers at no additional cost. All three locations are accessible by TTC and have free parking.

The Grande Luxe features more than 6,000 feet of event space and can hold 450 people for dinner and dancing.

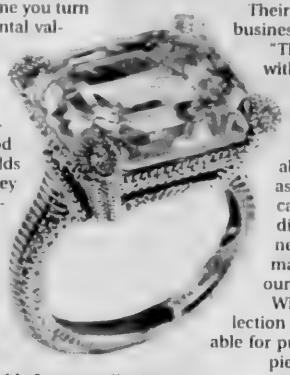
Jewelry holds unique place in women's hearts

Danielle Kubes
Special to The CJN

There's just something about a nice piece of jewelry that makes a woman's heart go aflutter. It's a combination of the aesthetic value – something that catches the light every time you turn your wrist – and the sentimental value – a memento to remember special occasions, such as graduations, birthdays and anniversaries.

Jeff Karadjian and Haigo Derian clearly understood the unique place jewelry holds in a woman's heart when they co-founded Cupido (647-346-2176,) a moderate to mid-priced jewelry and watch store with locations in the Greater Toronto Area.

"Derived from the Latin word for desire, the idea was exactly that – allowing people to have just what they wanted, affordable luxury for both women and men," says Christina Patriarca, Cupido's public relations manager.



Cupido features affordable luxury.

Karadjian and Derian know what women are looking for and are determined to provide it.

"Everyone wants to have something that is unique, something special. We know that sometimes that special something is hard to find," Patriarca says. "It's our job to find you a piece that you will fall in love with." And they mean that.

Their passion for the business is palpable.

"Those who shop with us share in the excitement of the find. We want our customers to be just as excited about the product as we are," Patriarca says. "When we discover something new, we can't wait to make it accessible to our clientele."

With the wide selection of pieces available for purchase, finding a piece to fall in love with shouldn't be a problem. Every year, Karadjian and Derian travel to conventions where they carefully choose which brands to bring back and sell. They look for brands that meet their standards of "quality, aesthetic appeal, comfort and practicality," Patriarca explains.

"Cupido enjoys delivering product that is constantly on trend, new, and exciting, and [offers] pieces that will last," Patriarca says. "We like to think of ourselves as a boutique-like shop where you can find the most interesting pieces."

One of the most popular brands they carry is Pandora. If you look closely at trendy Torontonians, you're sure to see Pandora's charm bracelets dangling off most of their wrists.

"This brand has modernized the charm bracelet concept and focuses on allowing the consumer to customize their own jewelery, and capture memorable moments in their life," Patriarca says.

Another popular brand is Canadian-owned HERA. "[Their] greatest inspirations came from absorbing elements of exotic cultures, the beauty of nature, and the flowing movements of the ocean, which are all reflected in [the] designs," Patriarca says.

They also offer a wide selection of watches and are an official Hermes dealer.

Store has many watch choices.

"Cupido is known for having different products," Patriarca says. "Our customers often tell us they enjoy shopping with us because they know they will find something that is diverse."

Besides Cupido's impressive array of designers, jewelry and watches, it's the focus on customer service that sets it apart from the competition. Karadjian and Derian's main mission is to make the customer content and thoroughly satisfied.

"We pride ourselves on providing a memorable customer experience," Patriarca says.

"We have built many relationships with our customers, sharing in their joys and sorrows. Our goal is ensuring our customers are happy."

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Sky's Band wants you to party all night

We follow your lead, bandleader says

Ilan Mester
Special to The CJN

Morris Kast has been performing at weddings across the GTA for the past decade with his group, Sky's Band. However, he isn't interested in selling music – he'd rather sell energy.

"We're a party band," he told *The CJN*. "People don't pay money to see us. Really what I sell is strictly energy and party music all night long. We don't sell music. If people wanna go see the best musicians, they gotta go see the Toronto Symphony. That's not what I sell. I sell energy – strictly, strictly energy."

Kast may be a veteran when it comes to performing at weddings, but he certainly hasn't lost touch with what's current.

"When you say you've been in the business for over 30 years, people think you're an old fart," he joked. "But that's not true at all because we're right up to date with our music – everything that's current on the radio we learn it."

Kast said versatility is one of the many factors that make his band unique. He wants to see five-year-olds and 105-year-olds up on the same dance floor.

"If somebody wants more of an oldies music, we can play all night long," he said. "If somebody wants current, right-up-to-date music, we can do that all night long. And that's where we're very versatile as opposed to the competition… they seem to please a certain age group and not everybody."

Versatile and up-to-date group gets everyone up on the dance floor.

Another thing that separates Sky's Band from others is that Kast doesn't use set lists. He decides on a song when he gets a feel for the crowd. "The dance floor determines which is the next song that will come up in order to keep people on the dance floor," he said.

Sky's Band started out as a three-person band featuring Kast and his sister, along with a keyboardist. Today, the band can include as many as 10 artists, including percussionists, a saxophonist, a trumpet player and up to four singers.

So what's the secret to getting people up and dancing? Kast said it's not enough to just sing a song – you have to sell it.

"Each crowd, each wedding is totally different from the other," he said. "So, in other words, I could be doing one sibling's wedding on a Saturday night and do the other sibling on the following Sunday. It's the same family, but it would be a totally, totally, totally different wedding."

Sky's Band also caters to the Jewish community. "When we play a horah, it's not like a foreigner trying to play a horah," he said. "It's like a true Jewish horah. And we can play as much or as little as people want."

Kast said there are many advantages to hiring a band versus a DJ for your function. A band plays live, which means the volume can always be controlled.

"I've seen people in functions that I went to with DJs where the volume is so high that the party ends by 10 or 10:30. And people are spending thousands and thousands of dollars on these functions," he said. "It's really a pity when a party ends at 10:30 or the majority of the people leave by 10:30 because the volumes are so astronomically high."

Kast's goal is to make sure people are having fun until the very end of the party – sometimes even later. "Where the Sky's Band is, there's always a party," he said.

Despite having been in the industry for so long, Kast said he can never get enough of weddings. "I still can't wait to do the next wedding because for me, I really enjoy what I do. It's my pleasure to go out and do the next wedding."

For more on Sky's band, visit www.skysband.com.

Girls get pampered at tween-oriented spa

Danielle Kubes
Special to The CJN

It's notoriously difficult to plan birthdays for tweens. Every idea you present them seems to be answered with an eye roll.

They've lost interest in what was fun a few years ago – bowling, pizza and bouncy castles – and what will be enjoyable in a few more years – bars and clubs – just isn't an option.

Enter Glama Gal (905-482-4435.) Started by sisters Laura and Josie Cannone, it's a tween-oriented spa where young people can go and get pampered for bar mitzvahs, birthday parties, and other celebrations. They also offer summer and March break camps, as well as mobile spa and PA day programs.

Parents love it because tweens love it, and it gets them off the hook for party planning.

"We do everything for their party, right from the invitations all the way to the candle on top of the cake," Laura says. "It's the easiest spa birthday party." Parents can even book online.

The entire spa is geared toward young girls, from the bright pink font on the website to the spa menu that reads like a dessert menu: Chocolicious Sweet Sin Facial, Cupcake Sprinkles Manicures, Vanillalicious Hand and Foot Sugar Scrub. And there is also literally dessert available. Clients get a scoop of ice cream or a cupcake during pedicures.

There's also some spa-craft fun as the girls are shown how to create their own take-home products, such as lip glosses and foot scrubs.

The entire experience is geared toward young girls.

The spa offers services for children as young as two, with their "Posh Tot" package, all the way up to adults, with their "VIP Mom and Me" package.

Continued on page B23

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Applause Catering makes food look great and taste fabulous

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

An article published last year in the *Journal of Physiology and Behaviour* says it's true that people eat with their eyes.

That's why presentation is such an important element in the cuisine prepared by Applause Catering (416-628-9198), the kosher catering company based at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

"If the food doesn't look good, it will never taste good," says Cary Silber, a co-owner of Applause.

If you look at photographs of some of the meals Applause (applausecatering.ca) has prepared, it's clear this caterer is offering haute cuisine. The dishes could easily be featured in any gourmet food magazine.

"When people try our food, they say, 'I can't believe this is kosher,'" Silber says, explaining that well prepared kosher food can rival any gourmet meal.

Silber, a Montreal native with a degree in food science from McGill University, has 35 years of catering experience behind him. His return to Beth Tzedec is somewhat of a homecoming, because he began his catering career in Toronto with Caterers York, which was based out of that synagogue.

Applause, which is three years old, will be marking its second anniversary at Beth Tzedec in January.

"When we took over the kitchen, there were three weddings booked a year. Now Beth Tzedec has over 25 weddings booked."

Applause works out of a number of other Toronto venues, including Palais Royale, Liberty Grand, the Factory, the Warehouse, the Grand Luxe, Casa Loma, the Westin Prince Hotel, Koerner Hall in the Royal Conservatory of Music, and the Arcadian Court at the Hudson's Bay store at Queen and Yonge streets.

Silber describes the food from Applause as "upscale and innovative."

The company goes to great lengths to stay up to date with current food trends, he says. "We go to conferences and food shows so we can find new products and be innovative."

Some of the ingredients Applause chefs have incorporated into their meals include soy, almond and coconut milk. "We use whatever ingredient we can to make a dish as authentic as possible."

They also use soy-based cheeses in their meat-pareve kitchen to make such dishes as pareve eggplant parmesan, pareve macaroni and cheese, and pareve grilled cheese focaccio. "We create these items for luncheons."

Silber stresses that all the food from Applause is prepared from scratch. "All our sauces, soups and dressings are made in-house. We don't buy any ready-made soups or dressings."

The style of the foods and the presentation is restaurant-style. "Each plate is made to order. Each plate is presented and made separately."

'We use whatever ingredient we can to make a dish as authentic as possible'

Some popular main dishes from Applause include Arctic char stuffed with halibut, short beef ribs, prime rib and grilled veal chops, he says. "We customize every menu based on the host's likes and dislikes, budget, and the style of the party."

Tapas, Spanish for small plates, is a very popular style for food stations, says Silber. "We do steamed buns with Mongolian beef that are presented in front of the guests. With the black cod lettuce wraps, the fish is pan fried in front of the guests."

The shwarma station is also very popular for cocktails, he adds.

When it comes to desserts, Applause tries to stay away from cream desserts that taste artificial and oil-based. "I think people are looking for desserts that taste and feel like the real thing.

"For our desserts, we use a pareve chocolate, which to the taste seems like it's milk chocolate. This helps us in achieving our goal of making our desserts as authentic-tasting as possible."

Silber says it's necessary to stay current with the latest food trends. "People are travelling more. They watch the Food Channel. They have more sophisticated tastes.

"We're trying to get our kosher cuisine to emulate the food styles that are shown on the food networks and that are served at high-style fine dining restaurants."

Applause marks its second anniversary at Beth Tzedec Congregation in January.

Lesley's Party Sandwiches serves 'em fresh

Stephen Sweet
Special to The CJN

Lesley Byrne knows how to make a great lunch.

Byrne started up Lesley's Party Sandwiches in her kitchen 20 years ago and it has been running strong ever since.

With great sandwiches and other items available for various functions, Lesley's Party Sandwiches, now in a much larger location, has steadily grown while maintaining a loyal clientele.

"I've always loved food," said Byrne, who thought that catering might be a good idea when she came to Canada a couple of decades ago. "To prepare and cook and bake, I've always enjoyed that."

Lesley's Party Sandwiches, which are also sold at Pusateri's Fine Food stores, are good for many occasions.

"We do [brit milahs,] baby namings, shivas, office lunches, brunches, lots of high teas as well," Byrne said. "We do it all."

And there's a reason why Lesley's Party Sandwiches are so popular.

"It's all made fresh daily," Byrne said. "Everything is fresh and we use the finest quality ingredients."

Byrne couldn't see doing things any other way.

"It's got to be fresh," she said. "That's just the way I run my business. It's got to be fresh for the day you need it and I've always done that."

Byrne's menu extends beyond just sandwiches.

"I do a fabulous teriyaki salmon that's a great hit," Byrne said. "I do fabulous salads too, as well as beautiful blintzes and french toast."

Lesley's Party Sandwiches also does wraps, fruit and vegetable platters, and desserts.

But, as the company name would indicate, one item is ordered above and beyond anything else.

"The party sandwiches are the most popular," Byrne said. "Basically, whatever we do is great."

The reason Byrne can make that claim is because she doesn't over-extend herself.

"There are always new things to look into, [but] I try to keep to what I know best," Byrne said. "Instead of having lots of different things, I just keep it more about lunches and brunches and early dinners, things like that."

The party sandwiches themselves come with the potential for many different options, with around two dozen types to choose from.

"We have all kinds of different fillings," Byrne said. "We have the regular ones, but we also have fig preserve, cheddar and tomato, watercress, cream cheese with dill and (many others)."

Byrne has been making sandwiches and other items in her industrial unit on Glen Cameron Road, near Yonge and Steeles in Thornhill, for the past dozen years, and more recently, she was joined in the business by her daughter, Nicky.

"It's great to be able to work with her and have her with me," Byrne said. "She knows the business."

For Lesley's Party Sandwiches, it's about being fresh, in more than one way.

"I've always enjoyed it and I love the business," Byrne said. "I love being able to come to work every day and be creative."

You can contact Lesley's Party Sandwiches by phone at 905-660-0551 or find them online at www.lesleyspartysandwiches.com.

All sandwiches are made fresh daily from the finest quality ingredients.

Tween girls love Glama Gal

Continued from page B21

The sisters have thought of everything. There is even a service offering pampering to dolls, where little girls can get a "matching mini hairdo and hair accessory for you and your doll".

The sisters developed the business after "a family relative asked us to come up with a new type of kid's birthday party for her similar to my bridal shower," which was spa-themed, Laura says.

"So we decided to have a kids spa party for her. The kids loved it, and Glama Gals was born."

The spa first started off mobile, and the sisters would travel to clients' homes. But eventually the demand just got to be too much, and they decided to open a venue. Now, Cannone says they have performed some 5,000 birthday parties since they opened in 2006.

That's a lot of glittery manicures.

One of the most memorable parties is when they hosted a 40-girl bat mitzvah party.

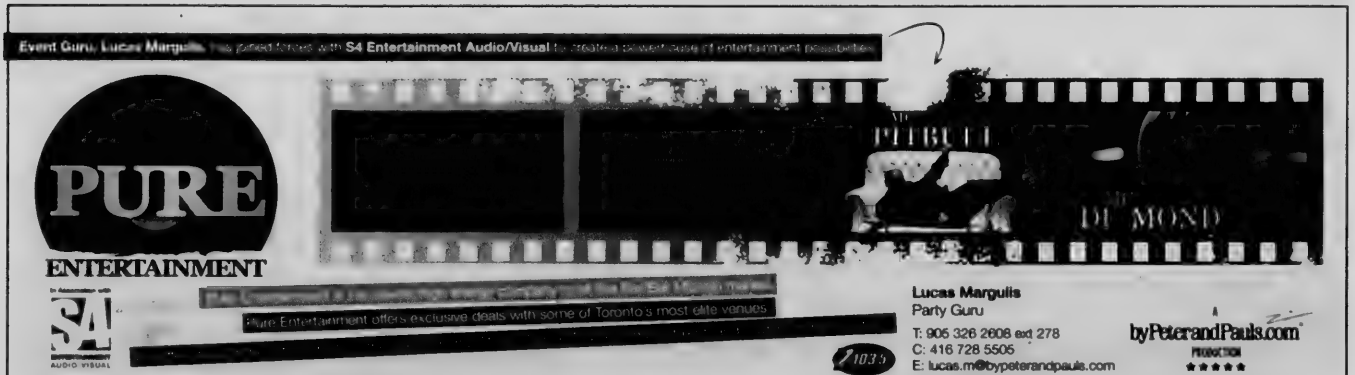
"We managed to provide manis, facials, makeup and lip gloss to over 40 girls in three hours," Laura says. "It was crazy, and they were beyond happy."

And there's little worry young girls will become too focused on their appearance. The sisters are careful to emphasize that inner beauty is of utmost import. The walls of the spa have a "Glama Gal Oath" where tween guests are reminded of their inner beauty and the Glama Gal motto is "Be Confident! Be Positive! Be YOU!"

The sisters also offer lunchtime workshops in elementary and middle schools where they discuss bullying, and peer pressure.

The future certainly looks bright for these sparkly sisters. They currently have locations in Vaughan, Ajax and Oakville and are planning to opening three more in Toronto, Newmarket and Markham by next year.

Visit Glama Gal online at glamagalparty.com.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Israel helps Philippines relief efforts

Marcy Oster
JTA

Obviously wanting to get back to work as the medical manager of the field hospital set up by the Israel Defence Forces in the Philippines, Lt.-Col. Dr. Ofer Merin spoke hurriedly about the three days his team has been seeing patients in the typhoon-ravaged nation.

He told of at least 12 babies the hospital had delivered – most of them premature – and the stabbing victim who might have died if not for the IDF hospital in Bogo City on Cebu Island, one of the areas hardest hit by last week's Typhoon Haiyan.

By 5 a.m. Sunday, Merin said, at least 50 people had lined up in front of the field hospital to receive treatment.

"If we stayed here two months, or even two years, we would have patient work," he said in a phone call with the media from the Philippines early Sunday morning.

The field hospital began operating last Friday morning, about seven hours after the team arrived on the island. The parents of the first baby delivered by the Israeli team that morning named him Israel in gratitude to the volunteers. Established adjacent to the local hospital in Bogo City, the Israeli field hospital is the only one located in a region of about 250,000 residents. Merin said. Representatives of other countries have visited to view its operation.

The 125-member Israeli team has been seeing about 300 patients a day who were either injured in the typhoon or unable to care for chronic conditions such as heart disease or diabetes because there's no running water or electricity. Others with untreated diseases, including those with advanced cancer, have also made their way to the facility.

Some 22 members of the team are medical doctors, 15 are nurses and the rest are technicians, lab workers and members of the Homefront Command who are co-ordinating logistics.

Continued on page 42

An Israeli doctor treats a patient in the field hospital established by the IDF in the Philippines. Please see related story on page 14. *[Israel Sun photo]*

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PQ bans candidates from wearing religious symbols

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

More coverage on pages 6, 26, 28

MONTREAL — The Parti Québécois (PQ) national council adopted a resolution at its convention Nov. 10 that effectively prevents anyone wearing religious symbols from running for the party.

The resolution states that future PQ candidates must make "a solemn declaration" not to wear headgear or accoutrements that identify a religious affiliation.

Premier Pauline Marois said she was "ill at ease" that the originally proposed charter of Quebec values banned religious symbols among public employees, but was silent on those elected to the National Assembly.

Section 38 of Bill 60, introduced on Nov. 7, allows the legislature to establish rules "to govern the wearing of religious symbols by members."

Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville, who is responsible for the charter, later said the intention is that the National Assembly establish a rule that unanimous consent of members be required before a member wearing overt religious attire be allowed to sit.

The PQ caucus had already adopted a policy promising that members won't wear religious symbols as long as they are in office.

The PQ is inviting other parties to follow suit.

The party's position is at odds with an opinion expressed by Quebec International Relations Minister Jean-François Lisée, who is also responsible for anglophones and the Montreal region, before the charter bill was tabled.

Continued on page 20

Vayeshev
Candlelighting: 4:29
Havdalah: 5:32
Greater Toronto Area

Time to get ready for Chanukah
See pages 43–56

French president vows to maintain Iran sanctions — please see page 40

CANADA

Trustee Resigns

CAMROSE, Alta. — A newly elected school trustee in central Alberta resigned last week after apologizing for racist, sexist and anti-Semitic tweets. In a statement released last week, the Battle River school board said James Andre, 50, resigned as trustee for Flagstaff West. He admitted to sending more than 80 tweets from his since-closed account containing profanity and jokes about blacks, Muslims, Jews, Aboriginals, Mexicans, Asians, women, and gays. Many were retweeted from an account called the Funny Racist. The tweets started last January and continued through the fall vote for the 6,300-student board. One was posted Oct. 21, after he was elected and before he was sworn in, the *Edmonton Journal* reported.

Museum To Open

WINNIPEG — After years of funding problems, content controversies and construction delays, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights announced it will open Sept. 20, 2014. The museum was proposed more than 10 years ago by the late media mogul Israel Asper. Construction on the $350-million facility, with funding from three levels of government and private donors, began in 2009. The museum has raised $138 million of its $150-million goal from donors, chief fundraiser Gail Asper told the *Winnipeg Sun*. The facility will be the first national museum outside Ottawa. Some groups objected to plans for a space dedicated to the Holocaust, saying all genocides should be treated equally.

WORLD

Investigation Ends

LONDON — A police investigation into sex abuse allegations against a prominent London rabbi has been dropped. London police said Nov. 15, the Crown wouldn't bring charges against a 54-year-old man regarding allegations of sexual assault, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported. Several London rabbis have confirmed that the man in question is Rabbi Chaim Halpern, head of the Divrei Chaim synagogue in the heavily Jewish Golders Green area of the capital. He was arrested in February but denied wrongdoing. The Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations will have to decide whether to reconvene a special rabbinical court, which was suspended during the police inquiries, to examine his conduct, the *Chronicle* reported.

Pew Reveals Dramatic Orthodox Growth

NEW YORK — The rate at which America's Orthodox Jewish population is growing – and the non-Orthodox population is shrinking – is more dramatic than previously thought, according to Pew Research Center survey data.

Steven. M. Cohen

In a finding first reported Nov. 12 in the *Forward*, sociologist Steven M. Cohen, parsed the data from the centre's recent survey of U.S. Jews to show that 27 per cent of Jews under18 live in Orthodox homes versus Jews 18 to 29, of whom only 11 per cent are Orthodox.

Previously published Pew data didn't indicate the proportion of Jewish children in Orthodox homes, the *Forward* reported, instead suggesting that Orthodox growth was tempered by high drop-out rates.

For every 100 Orthodox Jewish 50-year-olds, there are 230 Orthodox 10-year-olds, Cohen told *JTA*. Meanwhile, for every 100 non-Orthodox 50-year-olds, there are 70 non-Orthodox 10-year-olds.

"The Orthodox are moving in one direction and the non-Orthodox in the other direction," he said, adding that the shift is "equally a function of birth rate and intermarriage." He noted that Orthodox Jews have far more children on average and intermarry at much lower rates than non-Orthodox Jews.

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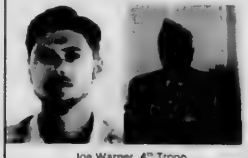

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Hillel creates scrapbook to support terminally ill teen

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

It's a video that has touched almost a million people: 16-year-old Olivia Wise, sitting in her new wheelchair, singing Katy Perry's hit *Roar*.

"I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire," she sings as a smile grows on her face.

And the Toronto teen is indeed a fighter, keeping her spirits up even as she's been fighting an inoperable brain tumour that she discovered early last year after suffering a seizure while on vacation in Florida.

When York University business student Zev Gasner saw the video, his first urge was to help.

"I had this overwhelming sense of indescribable influence," he said. "I wanted to go out and do something for her."

Even Perry herself was moved by the video, replying with one of her own in which she sends her love to Wise.

Gasner said he watched the video over and over for a week, then decided he had to act.

As vice-president of social affairs for York's Hillel chapter, he suggested that the group should send well wishes to the terminally ill teen.

Hillel students decided to put together a physical and video scrapbook to give to her family.

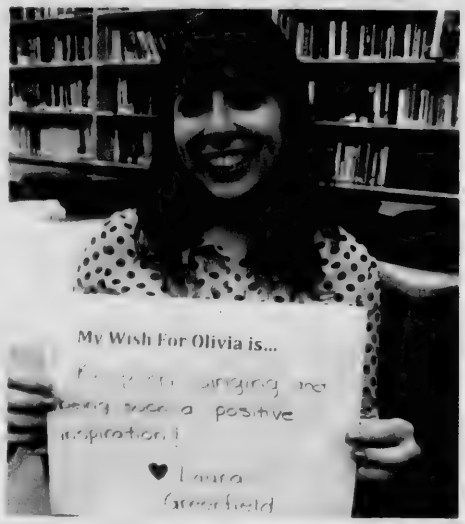
"What's really special about this case was that she's a teenage girl in Toronto," Gasner said. "Everyone could really see themselves in this position, or know someone in this position."

Danielle Miller, Hillel's co-ordinator of Jewish student life at the University of Toronto, echoed that sentiment in explaining why her group joined the initiative.

"She's only two years younger than our first-year students, so this really hit home for them," she said, adding that the fact Wise is Jewish really made them realize that this could be a girl they might know from school or camp.

The idea snowballed as others caught wind of the plan. Gasner invited his brother, a high school student at Yeshivat Or Chaim, to join in the scrapbook and to invite his classmates, along with students at Ulpanot Orot, to take part.

Continued on page 19



U of T student Laura Greenfield displays her message of support for Olivia Wise.

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What really happened in Geneva with Iran

Where does the truth lie?

That's the question a lot of journalists are asking these days, even if, as many would argue, it's the primary responsibility of the media to determine what's true.

CBS's flagship investigative program *60 Minutes* recently ran afoul of this responsibility – in what's being called its "Benghazi scandal" – when it interviewed, as an apparently credible source, a security contractor who claimed to have witnessed the attack last September on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi in which American ambassador Chris Stevens and three of his staff were killed. When other news outlets pointed out that this source had previously confessed to the FBI that he had not in fact been at the compound, *60 Minutes* was forced to admit that they got it wrong, despite the host's assurance that "The most important thing to every person at *60 Minutes* is the truth."

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On another Middle East-related story, determining the truth has been a different sort of challenge.

When the P5+1/Iran nuclear talks in Geneva were leading to an impasse on Nov. 9, reports circulated that it was French foreign minister Laurent Fabius alone who refused to go along with what U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and others were prepared to concede to Iran for an interim deal limiting Iran's nuclear program in exchange for reduced sanctions.

Fabius himself famously said that France could not play a "fool's game" by yielding too much to Tehran – particularly by allowing Iran to continue work on its heavy-water facility at Arak that could produce plutonium, another path to a nuclear bomb, nor was France prepared to allow Iran to keep its stockpiles of 20 per cent enriched uranium.

On Nov. 9, Hossein Naqavi Hosseini, spokesman for Iran's parliamentary foreign affairs committee, said "the behaviour of the French representative in the nuclear talks shows that France is trying to blackmail" Iran and that "the French government prefers [enacting] the will of Zionist regime," meaning that France is acting as Israel's agent.

Kim Ghattas, the BBC's U.S. State Department correspondent, reported on Nov. 10: "French diplomats have told me in recent years they believed the Obama administration was willing to concede too much, too soon."

Also, on Nov. 10, when the talks with Iran concluded without an agreement, Kerry went on NBC's *Meet the Press* to deny charges by Israel and the Gulf states that the Americans were prepared to reach a bad deal with Iran. Kerry declared: "We are not blind, and I don't think we're stupid."

The following day, when Kerry was in Abu Dhabi, Mark Landler of the *New York Times* reported that he "is insisting to allies that the United States will drive a hard bargain with the Iranians and doing his best to dispel rumours [that the Americans are caving in to Iran]."

Landler continued: "The latest round of talks failed, he said, not because of dissent from France, as has been reported, but because the Iranians rejected an offer put on the table by the French, along with the United States, Britain, China, Germany and Russia. 'The French signed off on it. We signed off on it,' Mr. Kerry said. 'There was unity, but Iran couldn't take it.'"

Kerry's remarks prompted Iranian officials to criticize him, but his comments also raised questions about what had actually happened during the Geneva talks. Did the French prevent the Americans from accepting a weak deal or, as Kerry claims, were the parties united against Iran?

For days, reporters ended up with "he said/she said" stories, and no one, it seems, determined which account was accurate.

Why was it so hard for reporters to determine where the truth lies? Did they not dig deeply enough or have sufficient time? Bloggers overwhelmingly credited the French for saving the day while criticizing the Americans for weakness.

This column appears on Nov. 21, just as the next round of the Geneva nuclear talks resumes. As difficult as it may be, we should pay close attention to what's true in the reporting.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

TEEN GROUPS LAUDED: DJ Schneeweiss, consul general of Israel for Toronto and Western Canada, and his wife, Jo, recently hosted a gathering in their home of supporters of NCSY Canada and Torah High, saluting the work these organizations have done building connections between Jewish teens and Israel. Pictured, from left, are Rabbi Glenn Black, CEO NCSY Canada and Torah High, along with Paul Jacoby; Shir Dror; Sarah Wise; Adira Shiff; DJ Schneeweiss; Jo Schneeweiss; Sonya Budd, director of development at NCSY; Orna Serruya, chair of NCSY's women's division; Clara Serruya, and Laurie Conn Zuckerman, senior development associate at Torah High. [*Penny Kravetsky photo*]

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The PQ should stand down

Guest Editorial

It's been an inauspicious month for Premier Pauline Marois' minority Parti Québécois (PQ) government.

First it tabled its so-called charter of Quebec values. Bill 60 – whose full, Orwellian name is the "Charter affirming the values of state secularism and religious neutrality and of equality between women and men, and providing a framework for accommodation requests" – seeks to ban public servants, broadly defined, from wearing religious symbols at work.

There's no point sugar-coating the plan. It's exclusionary and reactionary, plain and simple. As many critics have noted, it's a classic case of a solution in search of a problem. There was – and is – little evidence that public servants can't put aside their religious beliefs when doing their jobs.

But as is so often the case with divisive, wedge politics, the charter's true purpose lies elsewhere. Bill 60 sacrifices minority rights in a craven effort to gain a majority and provoke a fight with Ottawa, with the ultimate aim of achieving separation for Quebec.

Hard on the heels of the charter came the party's adoption of a resolution that forbids PQ candidates from wearing religious headgear or symbols. This means that, even if they were to believe in the PQ's goals, hijab-, turban- and kippah-wearers can never represent the party in Quebec's National Assembly.

It's sad to see the PQ, a broad coalition of left-wing social democrats and centrist economic separatists, exploit right-wing bigotry and left-wing secularist fears of religion to score cheap political points. And it's no excuse to say that most Quebecers support the idea.

These tactics aren't in keeping with the party of former PQ premiers René Lévesque and Lucien Bouchard, who both were careful to respect minority rights when they headed the party. Indeed, it's telling that Bouchard was joined by fellow former PQ premiers Bernard Landry and Jacques Parizeau in condemning the charter, especially given the latter's own history of unguarded comments about ethnic groups in Quebec.

As a long-established minority in the province that understands the dangers of persecution, Jews have a duty to confront the charter and the xenophobic tendencies behind it, although it is irresponsible and inaccurate to liken the current situation to Germany in the 1930s, as some have done.

Perhaps the battle is one that's best fought in the places that would be most affected. Thus, kudos are due to Montreal's Jewish General Hospital – now led by Dr. Lawrence Rosenberg, an observant, kippah-wearing Jew – for declaring its intention to fight the charter.

"This bill is flawed and contrary to Quebec's spirit of inclusiveness and tolerance," he said last week. "Since the bill is inherently prejudicial, there is no point in taking advantage of any clause that would grant us temporary, short-term relief. If approved, this offensive legislation would make it extremely difficult for the JGH to function as an exemplary member of Quebec's public health-care system."

If the PQ ultimately wants to fight a third referendum, it should do so on the merits, or lack thereof, of Quebec sovereignty, not by violating religious freedoms.

The Parti Québécois is better than this. It would be best for all Quebecers if it backs down from its divisive strategy, one that's splitting the party and the province.

Daniel Wolgelerenter

Dry Bones

KING SOLOMON AND HIS ADVISER

Declaration's main goal is homeland, not democracy

There is much to disagree with in Barbara Landau's letter, titled "Israel must halt settlements in capital" (*The CJN*, Nov. 14), but I would like to examine only one sentence, which is: "If a peace treaty is not achieved soon, Israel risks losing its status as a democracy, and with that, the support of progressive Jews who cherish the values in Israel's Declaration of Independence."

Although the Israeli Declaration of Independence deals with equality for all, its main objective is the establishment, maintenance and protection of a Jewish state.

Establishing a Jewish homeland, not establishing a democracy, is the number one reason for the existence of Israel. Because of the need to maintain its Jewish nature, it cannot be both universally democratic and Jewish. It must choose.

JSpace and its Jewish progressives have chosen democracy over Judaism. Many of us politically conservative and socially conscious Jews choose protecting our Jewish homeland over ensuring that Israel has a universal democracy.

Jonathan Usher
Toronto

• • •

Areas disputed, not occupied

Letter writer Barbara Landau, a member of JSpace Canada, is most certainly entitled to her point of view as to what steps Israel should take in achieving a peaceful settlement with the Palestinians ("Israel must halt settlements in capital," *The CJN*, Nov. 14).

She states that settlement expansion in east Jerusalem is an act of provocation and bad faith during peace talks. The fundamental error in her opinion is to state that east Jerusalem, and by extension the West Bank, are occupied territories.

Many scholars have opined that the areas in question are disputed, but certainly not occupied. A spokesperson for any Jewish organization should certainly recognize the important distinction between occupied and disputed.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

She urges world leaders to take strong positions condemning actions by both Israelis and Palestinians. Please, Landau, there is enough unwarranted condemnation of Israel already without your encouragement.

Bert Raphael
Toronto

• • •

A Jew is a Jew

I am shocked to read Larry Swern's letter to the editor ("We must not glorify assimilation," *The CJN*, Nov. 14).

First off, a Jew is a Jew no matter what they say or do. Raising children as Christians doesn't make Ellen Burka no longer Jewish.

Secondly, her story is an amazing one that needs to be told, and kudos to *The CJN* for publishing it.

Lastly, she didn't choose to be raised as a Christian. She was one of the lucky few that were taken in by a non-Jewish family.

For Swern to judge her for this is shameful.

Allan Bloom
Saint-Laurent, Que.

• • •

Remembrance Day is about soldiers

I was lucky enough to attend the rededication ceremony at the Lipa Green Centre on Remembrance Day.

Although this is a minority opinion, I was hoping to hear about the Jewish soldiers that fought, lived or died in the war that Canada participated in – the Jewish soldiers that were captured and killed for being Jewish.

Unfortunately, it became another Holocaust Remembrance day, about the horror of Auschwitz and children that are not alive today.

There was little talk about the soldiers – guys who died in Normandy or served in Italy, the Pacific, Korea and now Afghanistan.

There are many days to remember the horrors of the Holocaust but Remembrance Day is not one of them.

Adam Berel Wetstein
Toronto

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Women of the Wall seeks to reinvent the Kotel

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

I recently led a special delegation of 16 rabbis from across North and South America to be with Women of the Wall (WoW) on Rosh Chodesh Kislev for its monthly services at the Kotel, as well as to meet with Knesset members, lobbyists, and the WoW board. Two days after we celebrated the 25th anniversary of WoW at the Kotel with more than 600 women –and with little of the usual chair-throwing, whistle-blowing and cursing that they normally endure monthly – Avigdor Liberman, the former and since reinstated Israeli foreign minister, donned a tallit and celebrated his acquittal at the Kotel.

I was struck by the juxtaposition. For 25 years these pious, multi-denominational, serious women have tried to pray at the Kotel with tallit, tfillin and Torah and have only recently won the tenuous right to the first two, but not the third. But Lieberman can swagger right up to the front and be sure he will be welcome.

In previous months on Rosh Chodesh, busloads of yeshiva girls have been encouraged to jeer, intimidate and, by sheer numbers, push WoW away from the Wall itself into the plaza. We were determined not to let that happen this time, so on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, we arrived an hour early to "stake out" a portion of the women's section. At the last minute, the Bnei Akiva rabbis called off the buses. The few 15-year-olds who did come stood defiantly, yelling and waving fingers at women the age of their mothers with a rudeness I still cannot believe. We tried to be dignified as we sang to their taunts. Soon, WoW participants swelled and filled most of the section, while 20 female police officers made a line of protection around us.

I cannot fully describe the sound of 600 women singing with fervour. From the men's side – unusually sparse that day – a microphone drowned out our voices. But just as we began the Shema, the microphone suddenly went silent. We were stunned to find out that the police had cut the electricity, allowing us to proceed without having to engage in a prayer-shouting match.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein holds up the empty Torah mantle at the special 25th anniversary service at the Kotel on Rosh Chodesh Kislev (Nov. 4).

Unafraid for the first time to don tfillin or tallitot at the Kotel, we held up six empty Torah mantles, symbolizing our desire and our inability to read from a Sefer Torah, since a new order from the rabbi of the Wall gave him ultimate authority over who gets to bring in a Torah scroll.

The most moving moment for me was holding our tallitot over our heads in a "group" aliyah. If you've ever witnessed the priestly blessing done on holidays with hundreds of black-and-white tallitot covering the men, imagine instead tallitot of all colours, silk and lace and rainbow. Words cannot fully do justice to the sight. We were "priests" for the first time in our lives.

I understand those for whom the Western Wall's stones are the only stones that have the weight of tradition. In my dreams, I want a Western Wall where every Jew feels welcome, nurtured and valued. But that Kotel does not exist, and for me the Western Wall stones have been sullied since their "liberation" in 1967.

Women of the Wall now face a critical crossroads. Some believe that if they fight hard enough, women's prayer with tallitot will one day be welcome there. Others know this is not possible, will never be possible, and in the meantime, the right of tallit and tfillin hang on a thin thread.

This latter group, represented by the board of WoW, has agreed to move the monthly service to the southern part of the Western Wall. There you stand above fallen Herodian stones that share the same antiquity as the Western ones, minus the visual optics of being "the" Wall, and the connection to the iconic paratrooper liberation photo of 1967.

Until the government builds a beautiful, appropriate and equal southern site, WoW will continue to fight for space and dignity in the women's section. But if WoW's demands are met – including one entrance for all, visible and equal choice between three sections (men's, women's, mixed), equal funding for all three sections, equal state recognition for all three sections, and authority over the new section ceded to co-ed advisers from all denominations – WoW can have a Rosh Chodesh service with a mechitzah at the southern stones of the Western Wall and all of us will be able to pray without harassment.

Which do we want more: to get what *we* want, or for the haredim to not get what *they* want?

Women of the Wall aren't moving *from* the Kotel. They are *moving the Kotel itself.* Women of the Wall may go down in history as having reinvented the Kotel. The same imagination that allowed us to envision a woman in a tallit when we had never seen one, a woman leading prayers when we had never heard one, and a female rabbi when we had never met one will get us there. While these southern stones may not be the stones we remember, they will be the stones our grandchildren remember. This will finally be a truly pluralistic Kotel for a truly pluralistic people.

When all the WoW demands are met, the new Kotel will be ready, and those stones will gain a deep sacredness just like the others. We will, to be sure, miss the old Kotel, like immigrants miss the old country. And while Liberman may still be welcome at the old Kotel, I will finally be welcome at the new one.

Rabbi Goldstein will be offering a slideshow and discussion on WoW on Monday, Dec 2, at 8 p.m. at Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. No charge and no RSVP necessary.

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ROMSPEN

A more nuanced sense of remembrance

Jean M. Gerber
in Vancouver

This past summer, we travelled to England for a month's vacation. There were many things that struck us about the English countryside: thatched roofs, castles, stone circles. But one element appeared everywhere, over and over: memorials to war.

For example, a plaque in Salisbury Cathedral was dedicated to a soldier who had died in World War I.

It read: "In proud and unfailing memory to Edward Wyndham Tennant 1st battalion Grenadier Guards, eldest son of Lord and Lady Glenconner, who passed to the fuller life in the battle of the Somme 22nd September 1916 aged 19 years. He gave his earthly life in such manner as he set great store by the honour of his country and his home."

Imagine the pain of his parents when they erected this memorial to their dead son and heir.

Remembrance Day – called Armistice Day when I was in grade school – gives us the opportunity to recall how many have died because of war in the past century, and to reflect on both the triumphs and waste of those wars.

This column will appear between Remembrance Day and Chanukah. Why not continue the theme of remembering?

Chanukah is a great time for kids, who have learned that each night a gift will appear after lighting the chanukiyah and before the latkes.

Chanukah, however, also memorializes the end of another terrible time: thousands died to drive out the Syrian Greeks and re-establish a Jewish nation and temple in Jerusalem. It's difficult to imagine such pain, since the events occurred 2,000 years ago. They have been superseded by even greater losses, including the Land of Israel, until the 20th century – a century that carried its own horrific burden of Jewish suffering.

Let me link the two events, the Great War and its millions dead, and the war of the Hasmoneans against the Syrian Greeks.

First, we understand now that the miracle of the oil was a construct of the rabbis who, coming decades after the rise of the similarly tyrannical Hasmonean dynasty, decided to gloss the military triumph with a sacred idea: consecrated oil miraculously lasting eight days, thereby shifting the reasons for military success from human strength to godly intervention.

Second, history has revealed a much more complex interaction of Jews and Greeks in the Hellenistic age. In his introduction to *The First Book of the Maccabees*, H.A. Fischel deconstructs that relationship.

He writes: "Wherever Judaism and Hellenism encountered each other under favourable conditions, a fruitful amalgamation soon ensued... Jewish law in its later form, Jewish mysticism in its various shades, the religious philosophy of Philo, the midrash, and the medieval Jewish thinkers – all these are unintelligible without an appreciation of Hellenism. In the first century CE, and possibly earlier, the educated traditional Jew of Palestine included Greek in his studies, and in the Middle Ages, Plato and Aristotle were greatly revered names among Jews.

"The core of the conflict [which led to the war] lay elsewhere: in the cruder forms of Hellenism, in its pagan and secular aspects, and above all in the political ambitions which utilized it."

In other words, the Jews of Palestine had a very complicated and ambivalent attitude towards the Greek ethos. The stumbling governance of the Syrian Greeks managed to inflame a Jewish nationalistic spirit. That revolt led to the installation of the Hasmonean dynasty – with its guerilla tactics and the disarray of Syria at home – and it worked!

Victory led to a positive, if brief, historical event: the reconstruction of a nation and its most visible symbol, the Temple in Jerusalem.

The end was not so good. The successors of the Maccabees soon became like their enemies, and the perushim/rabbis became their opponents. Hence the introduction of a miracle.

Today, memorials to the Great War ring somewhat hollow as we understand its terrible slaughter, often the fault of inept generals bloated with a casual disregard for their own men. Its death toll was dwarfed by World War II.

This is not to say that we should not celebrate with thanksgiving the liberation of the Jewish nation, or recall the bitter lessons of World War I and subsequent conflicts. Not at all. But we should temper these with knowledge of the limits of military victories. Be careful of what you win, I guess. It might come back to haunt you.

One-dimensional views lead to misdiagnoses

Norma Raumel Joseph
in Montreal

As I sit down to write this column, I am at an Israel studies conference. Listening to the various papers and presentations, I'm struck not just by the diversity of topics and scholarly perspectives, but by the relative absence of the usual topic. Significantly, we're not focusing on war or the Palestinian conflict.

Oh, we are talking about Palestinians, but not monolithically, and about that tired and mishandled topic, "the unity of Israel in its conflict with the Arab world."

There is far too much to study, far too much depth and range to always cover the same territory. Israel studies is not about a unified picture, but rather, as Ilan Troen noted, it's about seeing the pixels in the giant picture – the massive number of identifiers and describers that illuminate and locate the vibrant culture and citizenry of the place called Israel.

There are 40 centres or institutes of Israel studies in North America, with more than 12,000 students taking almost 400 courses. What do these numbers tell you? It should signal that there is a lot to learn.

From one aspect our knowledge of the history of the land and the state is shifting in so many ways, as scholars unearth new information and research new understandings, new ways of looking at the material enlighten us.

Economists are probing the business models of Israeli start-up companies and examining the growth of the IT world in Israel. Political scientists are intensely occupied with the structures and efficiencies (or lack thereof) of Israeli systems. Biologists are exploring the shifting sands – quite literally –and the famous desalinization project that has altered many science labs. Linguists are studying the rapid acquisition of multiple languages at varying ages. Sociologists delve into patterns and relationships of communities and immigration policies, as the pressure cooker that is Israel forms one of the best case studies for ethnic absorption, clashing communities and government (mis)management of these issues. Legal theorists have a field day studying the intersection of church and state combined with diverse holdovers of colonial law. Israel is a wonderful research project, a case study for multiple studies, and Israel studies is growing by leaps and bounds.

How can one appreciate the range of scholarship, the excitement of discovery and the chaos of Israel itself if we only rely on media headlines or the usual discourse of the Jewish communal agenda? Both sources use the conflict as a unifying agent and defy the complexity of Israel itself. Yet one-dimensional presentations are inaccurate, they don't help us understand things, and they're boring.

Let me give an example. When my father was near the end of his life and quite ill, the doctors all labelled him as the old man with a heart condition. Of course, they didn't see him as the vibrant father I knew him to be. I accept that. But because they knew him to have a heart condition, they didn't look further into his pain and complaints. They missed his cancer of the spine. He died in agony, unnecessarily. He was a one-dimensional patient to them – misdiagnosed.

When we look at Israel, we need to see way beyond any headline or conflict. We need to see it as a place of both wonder and disorder, a country that managed to take in thousands of immigrants but that mistreated its mizrachi immigrants in unacceptable, ethnocentric ways. Yemenite Jews were forced into labour settlements to become cheap labor for Ashkenazi landowners to replace the Arab workers. Women were discriminated against. They couldn't find work in a state that claimed equality. It's not so easy to see a complex picture, but that's the reality that scholarship enables.

So as I sit and learn, I marvel at those who work in this arena. They're so open to new approaches and new material. They don't rely on old tales or one-dimensional views. Their world is often filled with a cacophony of sounds, not a smooth symphony, and the material they work on is not always appreciated within their institutions. They often go against the grain of the current discourse. But they learn and uncover voices not heard before.

Life in Israel depicted in a three-dimensional way, with all its warts and smiles – this is worth learning about.

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Human trafficking not so rare: panel

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Sammy, who immigrated here from the United Kingdom as a young girl, grew up in a middle class home, had lots of friends, played sports and did well in school.

Few people could have predicted that, as a teenager, she would become part of a human trafficking ring.

Sammy told her story at last week's panel on human trafficking, sponsored by National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto section. Also on the panel was Thai Truong, a detective in the organized crime bureau, drugs and vice unit for York Regional Police, and Tamara Cherry, a crime reporter for CTV.

Sammy said that in high school, she was confident and independent, "and always attracted to the 'bad boy.' I didn't know the path that would lead me down."

After her boyfriend was arrested, his friend, "Mark," took Sammy out for pizza, and asked her to hold his wallet. When she returned the wallet, he accused her of stealing money and drugs.

"He began punching me, and I admitted it just so he'd leave me alone. He told me I owed him that money, as well as money that my boyfriend owed him. His debt was passed on to me. He told me I had to work as a prostitute to work it off."

He let her go, but after a few days, she was picked up from her home and taken to a downtown hotel. A few men took pictures of her wearing skimpy outfits, and posted the pictures on an online prostitute site.

Eventually, they had her working from 7 a.m. to 4 a.m. for almost two years, and gave her no breaks and no money.

"They also fed me drugs, so I became dependent on them. My family and friends thought I was selling my body to pay for my drug habit."

She eventually escaped, and ended up in hospital, "but I was [afraid and ashamed] and didn't tell anyone I had been trafficked."

She began healing emotionally, she said, after talking to someone from the Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking. "I hope and pray that by [telling my story] I can get the message out that we can prevent human trafficking before it happens."

Truong explained that human trafficking is different from human smuggling. "Smuggling [occurs] when a person comes to a country illegally. It becomes trafficking when the person is forced to work to pay off a debt."

He said that although he is shocked every time he hears about a human trafficking case, "I hear about it over and over again on a daily basis. It happens in our own community, in our own city, across Canada."

The police face a lot of barriers when investigating these cases, he said, because typically, the person is afraid to tell the police.

Even when a victim is free, he said, there are a lot of issues to resolve. "These girls need lots of help. Every victim has a unique set of circumstances, and they need to be dealt with. We have to get the girls back to a healthy state of mind."

Cherry, who wrote a series on human trafficking when she worked for the *Toronto Sun*, said it scares her to think how easily a trafficking case can start up. "It has been going on for hundreds of years, and nothing has changed. I'm happy that there is a room full of people who want to learn about it."

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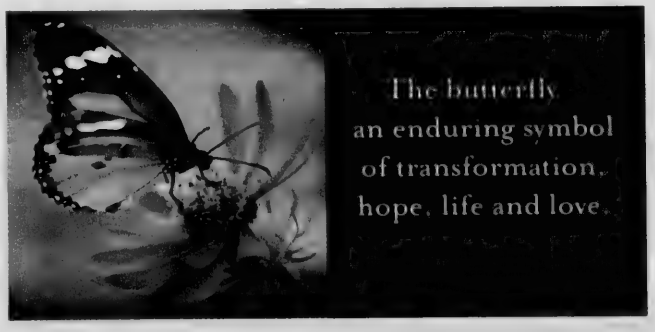

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Second anti-Israel motion passed by student union

U of T Scarborough students endorse IAW

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

The students' union at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus (UTSC) has voted in favour of a motion to officially endorse Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), an annual week of events in support of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement against Israel that runs simultaneously on campuses around the world.

The motion passed at the Scarborough Campus Student Union (SCSU)'s annual general meeting on Nov. 13. The student union represents 10,000 undergraduate students at UTSC. At the AGM, any student can vote, and any student who cannot attend can have a student vote on their behalf.

In April, the same union passed an endorsement of the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement against Israel.

Although Toronto Students for Justice in Palestine (TSJP) have run events on the campus to coincide with IAW, this is the first time that it will run a week of events that is officially endorsed by the student union.

Josh Miller, a member of the Hillel-affiliated UTSC Jewish Student Life who was at the meeting, said he was frustrated with the result of the vote.

"It basically means that our student union is standing in solidarity... and that they agree there is an Israeli apartheid," he said. "As much as they would want to say they support open dialogue, they at the same time are supporting a more disagreeable environment on campus."

His group released a statement condemning the endorsement, saying that it takes no issue with TSJP running IAW, but draws the line at the student union's endorsement, since choosing a side contradicts the union's equity statement.

However, Mitra Fakhrashrafi, an executive member of the TSJP, said the group sought the endorsement to make sure IAW participants aren't reprimanded for their actions as they have been on several Canadian campuses.

In March, for example, Students Against Israeli Apartheid at York University lost its status as an official campus group after organizing a rally that the university deemed disruptive to classes, and one alumnus, Hammam Farah, was banned from York's campus following the event.

In a statement to *The CJN*, University of Toronto spokesperson Althea Blackburn-Evans said freedom of speech is a core value of the university, and it would not attempt to censor, control, or interfere with any group based on its beliefs or philosophies.

The university is a place where "ideas are exchanged, challenged and debated with mutual respect, tolerance and civility – even when those discussions challenge some of our views," Blackburn-Evans said, noting that the SCSU is independent from the university and thus the motion does not reflect the university's political position.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) condemned the motion.

"The passage of this racist resolution at the University of Toronto – Scarborough is a clear declaration of hate and intolerance for Jewish and Israeli students, and an effort to add to the voices calling for the destruction of the Jewish homeland," said FSWC president and CEO Avi Benlolo.

However, Sabrine Azraq, another executive of the TSJP, said that isn't the case.

"Would events aimed at raising awareness of Canada's ethnic cleansing and systematic discrimination toward the indigenous peoples constitute as intolerance toward Canadian students? Of course not," she said.

She added the goal of the week is to bring awareness to the actions of the Israeli government, not to rally against individual Israelis or Jews, and that TSJP has partnered with Jewish groups such Independent Jewish Voices in the past.

Miller said instead of an endorsement of IAW, however, he would have preferred to see the creation of an Israel-Palestine week that would include events that explain the intricacies of the issue.

Although the Jewish group has not yet approached the TSJP with that proposal, Azraq told *The CJN* she thought it was "a beautiful idea."

Miller explained an event of that kind would allow for discussions of the issues in an environment that is welcoming to all students and supportive of both clubs.

"It would give a chance for all students to interact in a cause they believe in and become more informed on what they want to stand for," he said.

SCSU representatives did not respond to *The CJN*'s requests for comment.

Technion to launch Arabic-language course online

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Among the many calumnies faced by the State of Israel is the claim that it's an apartheid state. In some quarters, that allegation has prompted calls for an academic boycott of Israeli universities and colleges.

Yet on Jan. 3, 2014, the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, headquartered in Haifa, will launch its first ever "massive online open course," or MOOC, in the Arabic language.

Peretz Lavie

The course on nano-technology will be led by Hossam Haick, a faculty member in the Technion's chemical engineering department who is an Arab.

So far, students from Saudi Arabia, Syria, Abu Dhabi, the Gulf Emirates and even Canada have registered to take the course, said Technion president Peretz Lavie.

Lavie was in Canada last week to meet the school's supporters, help negotiate a pending agreement with Toronto's University Health Network (UHN) on a joint research and development project, and to address audiences in Toronto, Waterloo and Ottawa on the Technion's innovative entrepreneurial agenda.

Lavie said Haick is one of the university's bright stars and an accomplished scientist. He's responsible for developing the Na-nose, a device that analyzes particles exhaled from the nose to diagnoses for diseases, such as cancer.

Over the last few decades, the university has invested heavily into improving the outcome of its Arab students, said Lavie. Funded in large part by Canadian oleh Benny Landa, founder of Indigo Digital Press, the effort has paid off. Ten years ago, only nine per cent of the school's students were Arabs; today that figure stands at 20 per cent. Ten years ago, the dropout rate for Arab students was 47 per cent; today, it's nine per cent, the same as the rest of the student population, he said.

"How can you identify the university as apartheid?" Lavie asked.

The Technion boasts three Nobel laureates – a fourth, Arie Varshar, graduated in 1966 but is now at the University of Southern California – and it plays an important role in training the engineers and entrepreneurs who have turned Israel into an internationally recognized start-up nation, Lavie said.

In December 2011, the Technion partnered with Cornell University to win a bid to establish a new applied science and engineering institution in New York City. Later, Chinese billionaire Li Ka-Shing donated $130 million toward creation of the Technion Guandong Institute of Technology. Since then, "scores of universities" have approached him inquiring about partnerships, Lavie said.

In Toronto, the Technion is close to finalizing an arrangement with the UHN on joint research on stem cells that ultimately will benefit cardiac patients. UHN represents Toronto General Hospital, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Toronto Western Hospital and Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, which are all affiliated with the University of Toronto.

The project requires an investment of tens of millions of dollars, but if clinical trials prove successful, "the sky's the limit" as to potential financial benefits, said Lavie.

The Canadian Jewish news

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Deadlines for the December 26 issue are as follows:
Display Advertising - Wed. Dec. 18 at 11:00 a.m.
Classified and Organizations - Tues. Dec. 17 at 11:00 a.m.

****There will no January 2 edition****
We will resume printing in the new year with the January 9 edition.

The CJN offices will be closed the week of December 23 and will re-open on December 30.

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Canadian Jews raise over $100,000 for Philippines

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Since Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines on Nov. 8, the Jewish community has stepped up to help out the devastated country.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto reports that as of Nov. 15, it has raised more than $85,000 since establishing the UJA Philippines Typhoon Relief Fund, with 100 per cent of the money going to support the efforts of IsraAID, the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid, UJA's partner agency.

Steven Shulman, UJA Federation's campaign director, said that in the past, federation has qualified for a program whereby the government matches funds raised for emergency aid, and he expects it will qualify again.

On Nov. 11, a seven-person IsraAID team of Israeli professionals including medical, trauma and relief specialists landed in the Philippines and travelled to Tacloban, a coastal city of 220,000 that was almost destroyed by the typhoon.

Shulman said a second IsraAID team, comprising 15 to 20 medical and trauma personnel, was set to join their colleagues and travel north where a hospital is set up.

"We're looking to send a third team. IsraAID works with local government officials and the United Nations to provide emergency services to those affected. [Our] community has a great reason to be proud. It tells you something about Jewish values," he said.

Shachar Zahavi, founding director of IsraAID, said in a statement that "people are rioting due to the lack of food, clean water and access to health facilities and accommodation. Without health facilities, our first goal is health intervention. After the immediate medical issues are addressed, the next concerns are issues like the influx of people who have become homeless."

Robin Segall, director of programs and marketing for Ve'ahavta – The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee, said the agency has raised about $15,000 for its Philippines fund. "Ve'ahavta will be directing funds raised through the Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief [JCDR], and its response will focus on immediate as well as mid-term needs of the local population.

"As an executive member of the JCDR, Ve'ahavta is able to leverage the funds we raise by pooling our resources with those raised by up to 44 other coalition members across the United States and United Kingdom for maximum collective impact. Jewish organizations work in unison to allocate desperately needed financial resources to trusted, reputable partners engaging in immediate first response on the ground," she said.

In times of crisis, she said, "there is a need for short-term aid delivery as well as a need to manage the long-term painful aftermath. Ve'ahavta has worked closely with the Israel Trauma Coalition [ITC] on previous crises and is in close communication with ITC to determine how we might support their response to Typhoon Haiyan."

Terri Boldman, director of marketing and communications for Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA (JFC-UIA), said that the organization is accepting donations on behalf of the federations in London and Windsor and individual donations from non-federated regional communities. She said that as of Nov. 15 Montreal, has raised $38,000, and Edmonton, Vancouver, Hamilton and JFC-UIA have raised about $60,500.

Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Centre said that it's been called on to send a team of medical personnel to join IDF medical and rescue response team that was dispatched to the Philippines. The selected members all have extensive training in rescue-and-recovery missions within the IDF Medical Corp and were extensively briefed prior to departure for what they can expect upon arrival in the disaster zone.

David Smith, president of Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation, said in the release that the money it raises in Canada is being sent to support Shaare Zedek's IDF clinic and to help train and prepare the medical personnel.

In a more local response, at a Toronto bagel restaurant, Bagel World on Wilson Avenue, a group of employees, many of whom are Filipinos, have decided to donate all their tips to the relief fund. Bagel World's owners were touched by the gesture and agreed to match all the proceeds.

An IDF humanitarian mission arrived at Bogo City on Cebu Island last week to assist victims of the typhoon in the Philippines.
[Israel Sun photo]

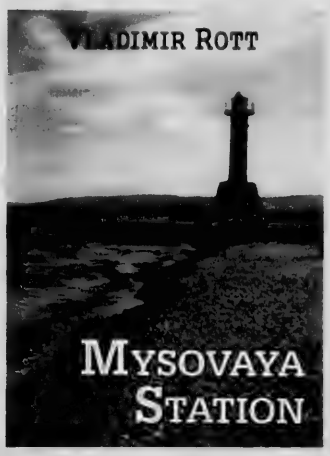
Toronto author helps to restore Siberian Jewish cemetery

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

In 1974, engineer, author and research historian Vladimir Rott defected from Russia and settled in Toronto. Two years later, he was able to liberate his wife Iya and his children "with the help of great Canadians."

Now, 40 years later, he's dedicated to finding the descendants of the small town of Mysovaya in Siberia and restoring the destroyed Jewish cemetery where his wife's family lived for generations.

While the last burial took place in 1937, this abandoned cemetery dates back to 1825. His wife's grandfather, Shlomo



Chaim Guterman, who was a prosperous tinsmith, is buried in the Mysovaya Cemetery.

Mysovaya, which is now called Babushkin, was once a prosperous town with more than 1,600 Jews. It was a bustling camel stop along czarist Russia's Great Tea Road until 1907, when the Trans Siberian Railway was completed, bypassing the town.

As a result, most of the Jews left, as there was no longer any business.

In 2009 and 2010, Rott published two books titled, *In Defiance of Fate: Joy of Sadness*, and *Joy of Discoveries*. The books tell of his life in Russia and his father's disappearance in the Gulag as an enemy of the state when Rott was very young. Rott and his entire family were also designated enemies of the state.

"That's why I had to leave," he explained.

His books caught the attention of Taisya Chernykh, a technical librarian who lives in Mysovaya. She contacted Rott and told him that she was very excited to learn that Jews had once lived in the town and that his books had made the town famous.

Chernykh began to research the Jewish community's archives and discovered the remains of the Jewish cemetery. She sent a photograph of the broken gravestones to Rott.

In 2011, the Rotts visited Mysovaya and met with Chernykh. She offered to help work with them to restore the forgotten Jewish cemetery.

On his return to Canada, Rott wrote a book titled *Mysovaya Station* about his trip to Mysovaya, the Jewish community that had lived in Mysovaya and about finding a cousin, the only Jew in town, who was in a psychiatric facility. Their cousin died shortly after the Rotts returned home.

"When my cousin died, Taisya researched the laws of Jewish burial on the Internet," Rott said. "She did everything to have him buried according to Jewish law."

A TV crew was filming a documentary on the 300th anniversary of the Tea Road. They met with Chernykh to research the area. They were also intrigued to discover that Jews once lived in their town. Rott was interviewed for the anniversary special.

Rott began working closely with Chernykh, raising money for a dedication memorial to those who had been buried in the Mysovaya Cemetery. The surviving tombstones are lying broken on the ground and many were stolen. The remnants of the scattered gravestones outside the cemetery are being collected.

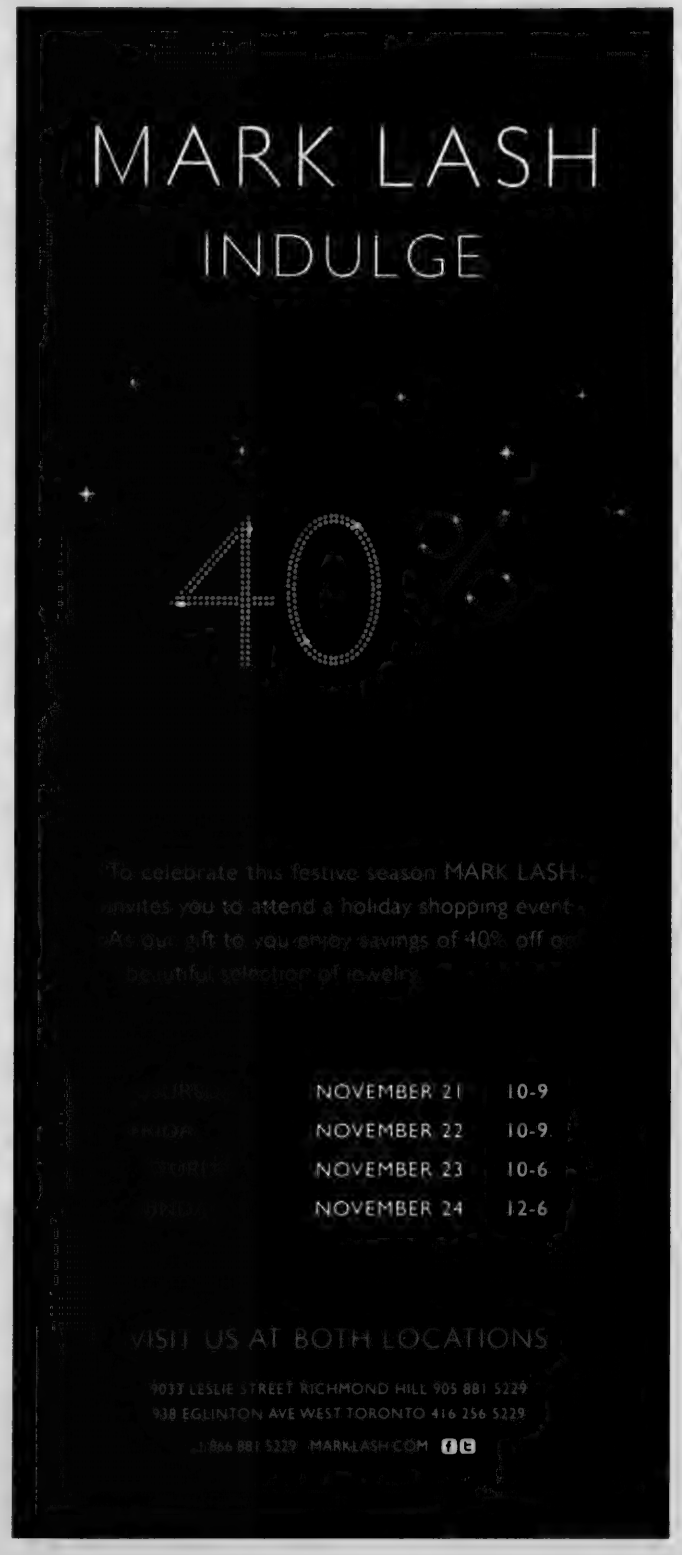
Rott has been deciphering the remains of the Russian letters on the tombstone, and Gary Kipper, the ba'al koreh of the Torah Emeth Congregation, where the Rotts are members, is restoring the Hebrew.

To date, they have discovered 44 names. These names will be inscribed on an eight-foot high black granite Shalom Memorial, in the shape of the Hebrew letter shin, signifying shalom.

The stone has already been mounted and the names of those buried there will be inscribed before the official dedication in the spring, after the harsh Siberian winter, Rott said.

"I hope other descendants will come forward with names to be inscribed on the stone," he told *The CJN*. "My father never had a proper burial in the gulag. I want to keep the memory of those buried in Mysovaya kept alive. Why should these poor souls be forgotten?"

If you have any information on someone who was buried in Mysovaya or would like to make a donation to the campaign to complete the memorial, please contact Vladimir Rott at rott@sympatico.ca, 416-782-3175 or taya2109@yandex.ru.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Diab extradition case hinges on handwriting analyses

Monique Elliot
Special to The CJN

OTTAWA — The curve and style of a few words are again the focus in the extradition appeal of an Ottawa professor suspected by French authorities of a bombing outside a Paris synagogue in 1980.

In arguments heard in Ontario's Court of Appeal on Nov. 4 and 5, lawyers for Hassan Diab challenged an expert who said Diab's handwriting could be the same as the writing identified to be that of the suspected bomber, who killed four people and injured dozens of others.

French handwriting expert Anne Bisotti and Canadian Crown attorneys defended the handwriting analysis, which concluded that Diab signed a hotel registration card using an alias at the time of the attack.

Diab's lawyers brought in three of their own experts to challenge Bisotti's analysis, arguing that it's unreliable and did not use established procedures to forensically examine handwriting.

The panel of three appeal judges challenged the defence to show why the opinion of their three experts should be considered more reliable than the French expert.

The comparison between Diab's writing and that of the suspected bomber was the reasoning Justice Robert Maranger used to commit Diab for extradition in June 2011, while acknowledging the case against him was weak and that it was unlikely Diab would be convicted, assuming he got a fair trial in France.

The case against Diab has relied heavily on the handwriting analysis and additional publicly unverified intelligence that will not be shared with his defence lawyers, the Crown prosecutor, the judge who presided over Diab's extradition hearing, nor the French examining magistrate.

The defence considers the handwriting analysis to be flawed after the French withdrew discredited analyses from two experts after it was shown the comparison sample they had was not Diab's writing. Bisotti's analysis has replaced the discredited reports.

Longtime Diab supporter Donald Pratt travelled from California to be in the Toronto courtroom to hear the arguments.

Pratt echoed defence lawyer Marlys Edwardh's argument to the court that the extradition process should not be a "rubber stamp" for the sake of diplomacy.

"It [should be] more of a meaningful opportunity for the person sought to exercise at least minimal charter rights," Pratt added.

Diab has maintained his innocence throughout the extradition process.

"I've always found him to be fair-minded and view bigotry with a repugnancy," said Pratt, who attended graduate school with Diab at Syracuse University in the 1980s.

"He's always shown himself to be a peaceful person, not someone who's shown himself to be inclined toward any kind of violence."

Diab's lawyers are appealing the decision to extradite him to France for questioning.

French authorities requested Diab's extradition in 2008 for questioning based on allegations of his involvement in the attack. The allegations are based on intelligence of unknown origin.

Diab was arrested in November 2008 by the RCMP and was initially denied bail. He was freed on bail after more than four months spent in detention, and now wears an electronic ankle bracelet.

Though he is currently only being sought for questioning by authorities, his lawyers and human rights groups say Diab would not face a fair trial in France, since he would be unable to defend himself against the secret intelligence evidence in a French court.

A ruling in the appeal could take months.

"It's very hard to read the court," Pratt said. "It's probably going to be a long process from start to finish, however you define that."

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JUMP gets larger home

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

The Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) is making some big changes, including cutting half its staff and moving from its mid-town Yonge Street location to a much bigger space on Avenue Road north of Bloor Street.

The Dec. 1 move is part of an effort to cut costs at the organization, which runs programming for Jewish young adults.

By working with developer Mark Mandelbaum of Lanterra Developments, JUMP has been able to save money while at the same time moving to a larger space near upscale Yorkville, said Rabbi Joel Wardinger, JUMP's director of education.

The new space is 3,100 square feet, compared to the current location's 1,800 square feet.

"By assuming a more urban location and perspective, [Mandelbaum said he] would get behind our work as an investor," Rabbi Wardinger said. "It's an opportunity that is positioning us to open up our further engagement with donors, local donors, to allow us to have a sustainable base."

The rabbi said the changes will make the six-year-old organization bigger and more relevant to young Jews.

"We would like to continue, enhance and ramp up the work we've been doing," he said, explaining that he hopes JUMP will eventually be able to host weekly Shabbat dinners – they're currently monthly – and have much more programming happening in JUMP's space.

In a statement sent out to JUMP's mailing list, Rabbi Wardinger said the organization has achieved many milestones over its six years in operation, including serving some 6,000 Shabbat dinners and offering 1,200 programs.

An average of 400 people come through the centre each month, he told *The CJN*, but he said in the statement that JUMP is reorganizing due to what he called "a mix of new challenges and opportunities."

The statement also alluded to "key personnel changes" – referring to the departure of director of strategic development Alana Kayfetz and director of programs and trips Shlomo Buzaglo.

Kayfetz said she's still working with JUMP as a consultant on an upcoming event, a Chanukah party at the Britt – the former Sutton Place hotel, which has been turned into a condominium building by Mandelbaum's company – but she's no longer a JUMP employee.

She said she's confident about the direction of the organization, including its relocation to a new physical space.

"It's the right move, and I am so excited to take my career to the next level," she said. "JUMP gave me some amazing opportunities to create real Jewish community engagement pieces, and I look forward to its continued successes."

Buzaglo declined to comment to *The CJN* on the changes or his departure.

In addition to the two staff cuts, Rabbi Wardinger said JUMP has added a "consultant on ongoing upper-admin and strategy" who would prefer to remain anonymous.

Rabbi Wardinger said he's confident about JUMP's future, because although, like other organizations, he works hard to get people out to events, he said JUMP is a known commodity in the market and people are interesting in its programming.

"I think that this place is so relevant to the future of Jewish life and I think… building it along with community partnerships is an answer to a lot of the concerns we have generally in the Jewish communal continuity questions," he said.

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German commander's son embraces Judaism

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Anyone who has ever made the difficult, life-changing decision to convert to Judaism has his or her own story to tell. But perhaps none is more dramatic than the one behind Bernd Wollschlaeger's conversion.

Wollschlaeger's father, Arthur, was a highly decorated German army tank commander in World War II who was awarded the Knight's Cross – the highest honour given by Nazi Germany to soldiers for their military leadership – by Adolf Hitler himself.

It was Wollschlaeger's discovery of his father's involvement in the persecution of German Jews during the Holocaust that led him to ultimately turn away from him, and toward the Jewish faith.

"As a child... I idolized my father, and my father meant a lot to me. We spent a lot of time together, until I asked questions out of curiosity about his family and his past," said the 55-year-old Wollschlaeger in a phone interview with *The CJN* hours before he shared his story at Chabad of Markham on Nov. 12.

"All he told me was that there was a war, it interrupted everything, caused tremendous harm, that I don't have any grandparents because of the war and that was it," he said.

The turning point in Wollschlaeger's relationship with his father happened in 1972 when he was 14, and when Munich hosted the summer Olympic Games, during which Palestinian terrorists murdered Israeli athletes.

He said the massacre initiated a national discussion about the fact Jews were killed on German soil again, and the media reviewed the role of Germany during World War II and of course, the Holocaust.

Wollschlaeger said that until that point, he knew nothing about the Holocaust. In school, when taught about the war, they were told that six million Jews were killed among 80 million other people who perished in the war.

"It was regarded as collateral damage of the war, and not framed in the unique context of systematic murder of Jewish people as German policy, by the German government, elected by the German people," he said.

"That led me to confront my father, to find out what he knew about it. He denied the existence of the Holocaust, denied that it ever happened, or that he had any knowledge about it."

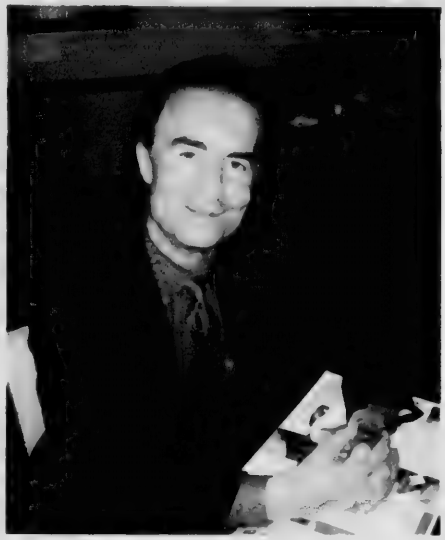
Wollschlaeger said he later found out the truth: that his father had not only known about the persecution of Jews, but had been part of a unit that participated in a human shield operation that killed about 200 civilians.

"Of course they knew it, they did it and that led me to turn away from my father in disgust."

It also caused him to turn toward the very people his father despised.

"I was searching for answers, why these people? Why the Jews? What makes them unique that you would single them out to kill them? I didn't understand it."

Following a trip to Israel when he was 18 "to discover what it means to be Jewish in a Jewish country," Wollschlaeger returned to his hometown of Bamberg and approached the small Jewish community there to learn about their culture and traditions.



Bernd Wollschlaeger *(ICRF photo)*

"They accepted me as a Shabbos goy... over the course of seven years, I transformed from having an interest in learning intellectually to an emotional connection and then spiritual connection and finally a religious conversion," he said.

Although difficult because it meant that he'd be tearing himself away from a family that didn't understand his choice, Wollschlaeger said he embraced the idea of becoming a Jew and moved to Israel in 1987.

He lived on a kibbutz where he studied Hebrew and worked and served in the Israeli army, first in a hospital for a year to obtain his Israeli medical license and then in the military as a medical officer.

Upon starting his new life in Israel, Wollschlaeger chose to not to tell anyone, including his wife whom he met and married in Israel – about his family history and his conversion.

"I wanted to keep it as low-key as possible, because I felt embarrassed. I became Jewish, but I had such a family history where it was hard to believe that you can be the son of a father who represented exactly the antithesis that Israel stands for... I couldn't reconcile that at that point."

It was this decision to keep the details of his family history from his first wife – with whom he fathered two children and moved to Miami in 1991 – that ultimately led to the end of their marriage. He has since remarried and had a third child.

Wollschlaeger, who has been sharing his story with the public since 2007 and has even published his memoirs called *A German Life: Against All Odds, Change is Possible*, said it was his own son who inspired him to share his story when he began asking questions about his family history.

"I knew that if I concealed that from him, I might lose a long-term connection with him, so I told him when he was 14."

But Wollschlaeger's conversion to Judaism and his mission to speak out about his experience is not how this story ends.

Growing up, Wollschlaeger suspected that his mother might have been concealing a family secret of her own.

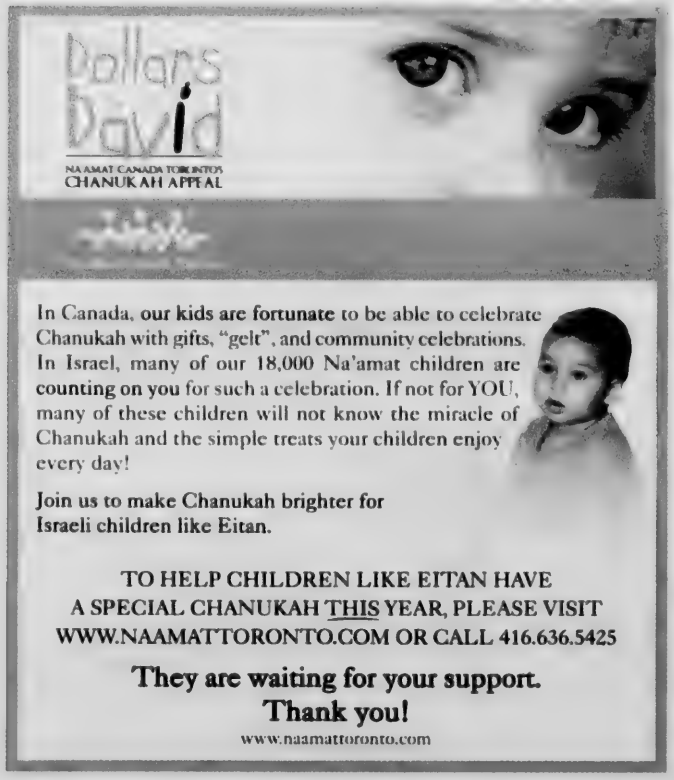
"She had knowledge about Jewish rituals. I thought it may be due to the fact that she lived in and grew up in Czechoslovakia and it had a large Jewish population... but she had some knowledge about Jewish rituals, even though she was a devout Catholic, and that puzzled me," he said.

Following up on a suspicion that his mother had Jewish ancestors, he did some genetic testing that revealed his maternal family line might have been connected to the Marrano Jews of Northern Spain and France.

"I never knew this, nor did it motivate me [to convert], but now, of course, it's curious and may be very revealing."

Wollschlaeger said he hoped that through his lecture at Chabad Markham, he would help people understand "that individuals can make a choice, can change a life, face issues that affect all of us... and that you're not doomed to make the same mistakes that you've been taught to repeat.

"What I've learned is that people are not inherently bad or good... There are many shades of grey."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1,000 pages in scrapbook

Continued from page 3

Meanwhile, someone else brought students at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto into the loop.

As word spread, students from a number of high schools – not just Jewish ones – sent in scrapbook pages.

Laura Greenfield was one of the U of T participants. She can be seen in the scrapbook holding a sign telling Wise to keep on singing and being a positive inspiration.

"Even through I've heard her condition is getting progressively worse, she still has a positive attitude and that's amazing," Greenfield said.

Wise's cousin, Jeff Kassel, told *CNN* her condition has deteriorated since she made her video in early September, and she's now drifting in and out of consciousness.

In total, some 1,000 pages have been included in the scrapbook.

As well, Wise's family has set up a fund in her honour through SickKids Foundation to collect donations for brain tumour research. The initial goal of $50,000 was quickly surpassed, so her family raised it to $150,000. To donate, visit bit.ly/LivWiseFund.

Miller said situations like this are difficult, because you want to help, but you might not be able to do much.

"Other than support and love... it's kind of hard to do much else," Miller said, adding, however, that people can certainly make financial contributions.

But Gasner said the ultimate goal of the initiative was to show her family how much she has inspired others.

He noted that participants were mostly people who have never met Wise, but were touched by her voice and her story.

"It showed her family how much support is out here for them," he said.

INDIAN INSPIRATION: After her parents' recent trip to India, Robbins Hebrew Academy Grade 3 student Ashley Kimmel and her friends decided to work together and assemble 200 "rainbow loom" bracelets to donate to children in India.

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CIJA denounces PQ resolution as exclusionary

Continued from page 1

He said that public employees should appear religiously neutral because they represent the state, but MNAs need not be because they represent the people who elected them.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) denounced the resolution as exclusionary and a break with the tolerance that characterized the PQ's early history.

"This resolution is a disavowal of the principles of inclusiveness upon which René Lévesque built the PQ," said Jonathan Kalles, CIJA's associate director for government relations in Quebec.

"It sends a troubling message that practising Jews and members of other visible minority faiths are unwelcome in the PQ."

He believes the PQ is "cynically" hoping to build popular support for Section 38 of Bill 60.

"Unsurprisingly, no PQ MNA has ever worn a religious symbol. Just like the charter itself, this resolution seeks to resolve a non-existent problem," Kalles said.

"It is deeply offensive for the PQ to claim that a religious symbol compromises the neutrality and integrity of an elected official or any public employee," Kalles said.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz, spiritual leader of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem, excoriated the PQ decision in an article posted on FaithBlender.com and reprinted in this week's *CJN*.

"Pauline Marois has now made it clear: as a kippah-wearing Jew, I don't belong in the PQ. Well, I'm glad to be excluded. I'd never want to be part of a party that shamelessly undermines rights and courts bigots; I'd never want to be part of a party that will trample on democracy in order to further its political goals," he writes.

FaithBlender.com is a website shared by Rabbi Steinmetz, Catholic priest Father John Walsh, and Muslim Imam Ziyad Delic to offer their perspectives as religious leaders on current issues.

THURSDAY NIGHT LIVE: Three Saturday Night Live alumni, from left, Chris Kattan, Horatio Sanz and Rob Schneider, were in Toronto last week to perform at an annual Israel Cancer Research Fund event. More than 650 people gathered at the Toronto Centre for the Arts for the event called "Live from Toronto... It's Thursday Night," which was hosted by ICRF to raises funds to find a cure for cancer.

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Canadians address Knesset committee

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The Knesset's aliyah, absorption and Diaspora relations committee has been faced with some pretty weighty issues as of late.

In the wake of the release of the Pew Research Center's findings on the assimilation of American Jews, it held hearings on the internal challenges facing Jewish communities, and last week, it heard from Diaspora communities confronting the external challenges of growing anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

Representatives of communities in Australia, Belgium, Croatia, France, Hungary, Latvia, Serbia and the United States addressed the committee, including a delegation from Canada representing the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and local federations.

Joel Reitman, right, co-chair of the Toronto Local Partner Committee of CIJA and the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, with Yoel Razvozov, chair of the Knesset Committee on Aliyah, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs. *[CIJA photo]*

Speaking to the Knesset committee, Joel Reitman described efforts undertaken in Canada to boost Israel's image while addressing the country's opponents in the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) and anti-Zionist movements.

Reitman, co-chair of the Toronto local partner committee of CIJA and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said the community's "Shared Values" advocacy approach has proven successful, as reflected in Canada's "unwavering support for the Jewish state in forums like the United Nations and the G8.

"Shared Values is about tailoring our message to the interests and world view of our target audience – non-Jewish Canadians in positions of influence. By emphasizing the values Israelis and Canadians share – freedom, pluralism, family and democracy – we open the door to discussing more substantive pro-Israel messages, [which] we would never be able to convey if we didn't first humanize Israelis," he said.

(The signature ad in CIJA's "Size Doesn't Matter" campaign features two attractive young people in an intimate setting. It garnered more than one million hits, along with many subsequent visits to the advocacy website, where information about Israeli culture and politics was offered.)

Reitman told the parliamentarians that "we have worked to ensure that support for Israel in Canada transcends party lines and reflects no single political ideology. It is widely known that Prime Minister [Stephen] Harper and the Conservative Party of Canada are strong supporters of Israel. But Canada's left-of-centre parties have shown extraordinary support for the Jewish state too. On all the important issues – including increasing Iranian sanctions and disavowing BDS – Canada's Liberal and labour parties have been remarkably supportive of Israel."

Reitman said CIJA supports bilateral ties at the grassroots levels, particularly in academia and business. That broadens the stakeholders involved in the bilateral relationship, "in effect insulating support for Israel from the vagaries of political developments," he said.

CIJA has countered BDS efforts by encouraging "BUYcotts" of Israeli merchandise, creating "a direct incentive for Canadian businesses to seek Israeli products."

In addition to addressing the Knesset committee, CIJA and federation representatives also met with counterparts from other Diaspora communities.

"Whether it's fear of wearing a kippah in public, efforts to outlaw kosher slaughter or to ban circumcision, or attempts like those we see in Canada and elsewhere to make expression of support for Israel into a source of shame, my meetings with the leaders of the European communities made it clear that we face similar challenges to our ability to live fully and confidently as Jews," said Sara Saber-Freedman, executive vice-president of CIJA.

"European delegates see the Canadian Jewish community as an important strategic ally and source of moral support. The educational and advocacy strategies that work in Canada are seen as having potential benefits in Europe. I was touched by the warm reception our delegation received, especially from representatives of the Jewish communities of Belgium, France, and Spain," she said.

Reitman and Saber-Freedman were joined by Linda Kislowicz, CEO of Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA; Howard English, vice-president of CIJA for the Toronto region; and David Weinberg, director of CIJA's Israel office.

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Parliamentary committee calls for recognition of Jewish refugees

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Dean Allison has long been familiar with various aspects of Jewish history; he knew the Jewish people had been persecuted and he knew that following the creation of the State of Israel, a Palestinian refugee population had arisen.

But he was "totally surprised" to learn that large numbers of Jews had been made refugees from Arab lands as well.

"I didn't understand the depth and breadth of it," said Allison, a Niagara-area MP who chairs the House of Commons standing committee on foreign affairs and international development. Last week, the committee tabled in the House a report titled *Recognizing Jewish Refugees From the Middle East and North Africa.*

In hearings that began last May, the committee heard from Jewish refugees, advocacy groups and experts on the expulsion of 850,000 Jews from Arab lands in the Middle East and North Africa, beginning in 1948.

"One of the main messages to emerge from the committee's hearings is that two refugee populations were created by the Arab-Israeli conflict: one Palestinian and one Jewish," the report stated.

"The committee was told of the rich Jewish heritage in the Middle East and North Africa, which had existed for approximately 2,500 years. However, those communities have for the most part been displaced since 1948.

"Jewish people living in these [10 Arab] nations left as a result of discrimination, intimidation and fear."

Allison said the witnesses who spoke before the committee "wanted acknowledgment that this happened."

The committee's findings and recommendations help "balance the narrative," he added.

The committee recommended that:

• The government "officially recognize the experience of Jewish refugees who were displaced from states in the Middle East and North Africa after 1948";

• The government "encourage the direct negotiating parties to take into account all refugee populations as part of any just and comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflict."

Shimon Fogel

In a supplement to the main report, the New Democratic Party stated its support for the first recommendation only.

Stanley Urman, executive vice-president of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC), said the committee findings make Canada the second country after the United States to recognize the rights of Jewish refugees.

"It's a significant recognition, and we hope it will encourage other countries that have provided safe havens for Jews fleeing Arab countries to do likewise," he said.

Urman, who testified at the hearings, urged the federal government to adopt the committee's recommendations.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which also gave evidence to the committee, called the report "ground-breaking and multi-partisan."

"Peace and reconciliation cannot be achieved without mutual understanding, including recognition of the historic suffering of Jewish and Arab refugees alike," said CIJA CEO Shimon Fogel. "While Canada's current policy on the Middle East acknowledges the plight of Arab refugees, it makes no mention of nearly one million Jews forced to flee Arab countries in the years after Israel's founding.

"For years, CIJA has raised this as a key shortcoming in Canada's standing policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. We are hopeful that the federal government will quickly enact the committee's recommendations, and ensure that Canadian policy reflects a fair, accurate, and complete account of the history of Middle Eastern refugees."

Sylvain Abitbol, the Moroccan-born co-president of JJAC, said, "The effort to ensure that Canada recognizes Jewish refugees is the lead initiative in an international campaign, and we are gratified that Canadian parliamentarians have been receptive to this important cause. For those of us who were personally impacted by the Jewish exodus from Arab countries, it is a matter of justice that any future peace accord acknowledges this painful – and widely neglected – chapter of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

As part of its campaign on behalf of Jewish refugees, JJAC will co-host a symposium on the issue at the United Nations on Nov. 21, in partnership with the World Jewish Congress and Israel's UN mission.

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NDP govt. would be Mideast player: Mulcair

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Under a New Democratic Party government Canada would again play an active role in the Middle East peace process, said party leader Thomas Mulcair, who lambasted the current Conservative government for allowing this country to lose its once respected stature in international affairs.

"Canada is absolutely nowhere, we are not players. Our voice could count for a lot," Mulcair said during a public event at the Gelber Conference Centre Nov. 12, organized by the Montreal Friends of Peace Now and the Labour Zionist History Circle.

"Stephen Harper says he is a steadfast ally [of Israel], but what do allies do, if not take part in the process?

"Working for peace means working with countries that don't necessarily agree with us. That's the essence of diplomacy. We [an NDP government] are going to be at the table… and not just harp on the sidelines."

The NDP's policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict favours a two-state solution arrived at through mutual negotiation and resulting in borders that allow each of the peoples to live in peace, he said.

"Everyone in the NDP agrees on that," Mulcair said, speaking without text or notes and taking written questions from the audience. He acknowledged that there have been "attempts within the party to chip away [at that position], but they have gotten nowhere."

Thomas Mulcair speaks with audience members during his appearance at the Gelber Conference Centre. *[Janice Arnold photo]*

Mulcair said his caucus is "100 per cent" in support of that policy, and it is what the NDP will take into the 2015 federal election.

Mulcair described himself as "a friend of Israel under all circumstances" – a stance he said he has been reproached for, although he did not say by whom.

"But that is not to say that I don't see problems or that things could be done better," he said.

Mulcair said his "heartfelt and honestly held" view is that there must be an "inviolable homeland for Jews in the Middle East… Creating a homeland for the Jews is one of the noblest things the world community was able to accomplish since the war."

In response to a question, Mulcair said he came to that belief because his wife, Catherine Pinhas, is Sephardi and the daughter of Holocaust survivors.

However, accusing the Palestinian leadership of a "cycle of rejectionism," as a "lobby" charged [an apparent reference to a July 29 statement by Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs president David Koschitzky upon the renewal of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks] is not helpful, Mulcair indicated.

He also took to task Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's assertion that the international community is too soft on the Palestinians, made on Nov. 10 at the General Assembly of North American Jewish Federations in Jerusalem.

"What purpose does that have?… What is he hoping to accomplish?" Mulcair asked.

And building new Jewish settlements "clearly doesn't help, it's playing with fire," Mulcair said. He congratulated the United States for "not taking the bait" and allowing the Israeli government's move to derail the peace talks.

Mulcair said the NDP sees "the slight upgrade" of the Palestinian Authority's standing at the United Nations as "a positive step" and preferable "to other options" that might be outside international law.

He agreed with a questioner that the UN's regularly "singling out Israel as a pariah" is wrong, "but you can't get change if you criticize from the outside."

Mulcair rejected the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel, saying it is "exactly the wrong direction we should be going in."

Accusing Israel of apartheid also "serves no purpose."

As for a "one-state solution," Mulcair asked, "What does that mean? I've never received a clear answer," then continued: "Anyone who proposes a one-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians has been asleep for 60 years. It's not a realistic solution, it's not going to happen. It would mean invariably the death of the State of Israel… It's just another way of saying Israel does not have the right to exist."

Mulcair deplored the adversarial attitude the Harper government has taken with the United Nations.

"There is a lot that is negative about its structure and what has happened, but the UN is the only game in town. It's what was built out of the ashes of World War II," he said. "We don't get to play if we are in attack mode.

"With Harper, everything is black and white – we are right and everyone else is wrong… It doesn't matter what we do, we're serving a higher cause."

This attitude has been particularly detrimental to advancing the Mideast peace process, Mulcair believes.

"The tone is, there is no discussion, no debate, no analysis, nothing is open," he said.

Mulcair lauded U.S. President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry for the leadership they are showing in getting negotiations restarted.

Neither Israelis nor Palestinians should add new issues, particularly historic injustices, once the framework for negotiations has been established, Mulcair said. "There is always something that can be added… always one more roadblock… to getting a result."

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Naomi Seidman is Koret Professor of Jewish Culture and Director of the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California and author of *A Marriage Made in Heaven: The Sexual Politics of Hebrew and Yiddish* and *Faithful Renderings: Jewish-Christian Difference and the Politics of Translation.*

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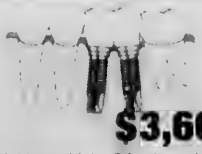

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Vancouver's first Jewish cemetery gets facelift

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — A crowd of 150 gathered at Vancouver's first Jewish cemetery, Mountain View, last month to witness the rededication of 147 previously unmarked graves, each of which was given a marker to indicate who is buried beneath them.

This forgotten Jewish cemetery forms part of a larger, 106-acre cemetery operated by the City of Vancouver and contains 450 Jewish graves dating back to 1892.

Some of them belong to notable pioneers in the community, such as Zebulon Franks, who arrived in Vancouver from Russia in 1887 and is regarded as the first leader of the Orthodox Jewish community. The family of Simon Petersky, president of Vancouver's Reform congregation, Temple Emanu-El, is interred at Mountain View, as is Abraham Nemetz, whose grandson Nathan Nemetz became the chief justice of British Columbia's court of appeal and a chancellor at the University of British Columbia.

Shirley Barnett, another one of Abraham's grandchildren, was the driving force behind this restoration project. A year ago, she approached the Schara Tzedeck Cemetery board, assembled a project team and started garnering support for the clean-up.

"I liked the setting. I have done a lot of projects in the Jewish community, and I thought I would like to do this," she said.

The rededication of the Mountain View Jewish cemetery last month drew a crowd of 150 to the site on Fraser and 37th streets.

Among her team members is Vancouverite Norman Franks, who has four family members interred at Mountain View.

"The cemetery is a diamond in the rough," he said. "With the proper landscaping, hedging, paths throughout and headstones cleaned, it's going to be a jewel in our community."

When it's completed, the restoration project will include rejuvenating the hedge that separates the Jewish cemetery from the rest of the graves, cleaning the headstones, adding a washing station for ritual hand-washing, adding benches, redoing the pathways and restoring the gates to their original artistic and historical significance.

The work comes with a $500,000 price tag and will likely take between two to three years, said project administrator Myra Adirim.

The professionals involved include renowned landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander, JB Newall Memorials and Bill Pechet Design Studio.

The Oct. 20 rededication ceremony, conducted by Rabbi Andrew Rosenblatt, was an important moment, Adirim said.

"This cemetery holds the key to a lot of the Jewish history that began in Vancouver," she explained.

"A lot of notable people are buried there and they're the ones responsible for our Jewish life now, today."

Between the Schara Tzedeck Cemetery board and Mountain View Cemetery, the records of all the people buried at the cemetery remain intact, including that of Otto E. Bond, the first Jew to be interred there on Dec. 19, 1892. Until last month, his grave was unmarked.

"The people buried there are basically the pioneers in our Jewish community," Franks said.

"It's important to pay respect to them. And we were so impressed by the numbers that turned out to mark the rededication."

In 1891, Mayor David Oppenheimer granted a reserved section of land at Mountain View cemetery to the Jewish community. It was consecrated in 1892, but after a new Jewish cemetery opened in New Westminster in 1926, the Jewish section of Mountain View went into decline. Today, a few remaining vacant plots at Mountain View Jewish Cemetery are reserved for future interment.

The cemetery constitutes part of the Jewish Historical Society's walking tour.

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Thanks, Pauline Marois, for excluding me from PQ

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz

Comment

The Parti Québécois took an important step at its convention earlier this month when it decided that candidates for the PQ can no longer wear visible religious symbols. This new policy helped clarify an issue that has arisen in the PQ's past roughly zero times. But the PQ felt it was important to institute this rule as a gesture, to explain how serious they are about their proposed "Charter Affirming The Values Of Secularism And The Religious Neutrality Of The State, As Well As The Equality Of Men And Women, And The Framing Of Accommodation Requests" (or "Charter of Values," for short).

This means that if I wanted to run for the PQ, I could no longer wear my kippah. The PQ feels that public officials shouldn't display religious symbols, because it would compromise their neutrality. But one wonders: what does neutrality mean? Why not apply neutrality to other forms of expression? Will they allow someone running for the PQ to wear a Montreal Canadiens jersey? Perhaps there's a diehard former Québec Nordiques fan who roots for the Colorado Avalanche who will be intimidated by the jersey. And who knows, there may be some hockey fans in Gatineau who root for a non-Quebec team like the Ottawa Senators? Perhaps the PQ should order candidates not to wear regional baseball caps, with names such as Montreal or Heroúxville written on them. After all, by showing favoritism to one region, they are losing their neutrality!

Apologists for the Charter of Values will counter that religion is different than sports or regional interests. To them, religion is uniquely divisive, and, therefore, must be completely hidden in the public sphere. After all, wars are fought over religion. But then again, most wars are motivated by nationalism. Does this mean that nationalism isn't kosher? Should we remove nationalism from the public sphere? (Last I looked, the PQ was a nationalist party.)

Actually, experience shows that rather than being divisive, full freedom of expression brings about true tolerance. Just to the south of us is a deeply religious country, the United States. In it, people of multiple religions work together, and many of them wear their religious symbols proudly. And yet, despite these shocking displays of kippahs, turbans and hijabs, even in the public service, the United States does a better job than Quebec in ensuring that people of different backgrounds get along with each other. (Not to mention that the U.S. economy has grown much faster than our own as well.) In the American system, the most important cultural values one must learn relate to democracy and civil rights, not clothing styles or religious habits.

While grasping for a rationale for this law, apologists advance another argument. They say that the new Charter of Values is really about promoting the equality of women. They claim the hijab is an instrument of male domination. While the patriarchal structure of deeply religious societies certainly can lead to the oppression of women, refusing women with hijabs jobs certainly doesn't liberate them, and it's absurd to believe that discriminating against religious women will improve women's rights. And by refusing religious Muslims jobs, you prevent these very women from truly integrating into Quebec society.

Then, of course, there's the Celine Dion argument: "You are in Quebec and we have embraced you and opened our country for you to live in a better world, you have to adapt to our rules." In other words, if you want to live here, you have to be like us. But please tell me, what does "being like us" mean? Is there a Quebec uniform I somehow overlooked? I see people dressed in every possible way, business suits and ties to coloured hair and piercings. Some people wear tuques; others wear kippahs. What's the difference? Unless of course, the difference is that by wearing a kippah you acknowledge that your ancestors lived somewhere other than New France.

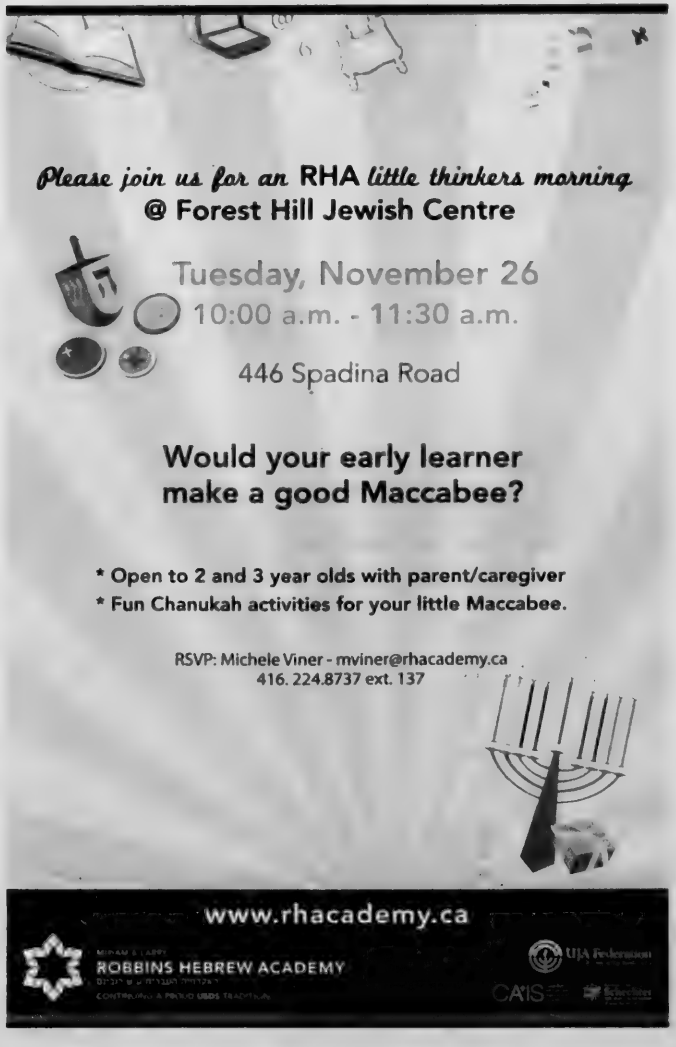
Jumping past the laboured explanations, it's obvious that the Charter of Values is a blatant political ploy. It is the solution to a problem that doesn't exist. Without cause and without reason, it cuts down our right to self-expression. The Parti Québécois simply wants to advance its political goals, and hopes that demagoguery will lead them into the promised land of sovereignty. Premier Pauline Marois cannot pretend that she doesn't know that this secular charter will appeal most to xenophobes and racists.

I oppose this charter not because I'm Jewish, but because I'm a Canadian and a Québécois. Democracy is founded not just on the rule of the majority, but also on protecting the rights of minorities. The social contract that holds all of us together requires me to respect the PQ government, even if I'd prefer another one, and it requires this government to protect my rights, even if I didn't vote for them. And one needs to recognize that democratic rights can be slowly sliced away, like salami, until they eventually disappear. Just just look at what former president Hugo Chavez did in Venezuela and what President Vladimir Putin did in Russia. Both of these dictators used populâr support to create near-dictatorships. Any country that tolerates a pointless restriction on civil rights is courting danger.

Marois has now made it clear: as a kippah-wearing Jew, I don't belong in the Parti Québécois. Well, I'm glad to be excluded. I'd never want to be part of a party that shamelessly undermines rights and courts bigots. I'd never want to be part of a party that will trample on democracy in order to further its political goals.

So, in short, thank you, Pauline, for excluding me from the Parti Québécois.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz is spiritual leader of Tifereth Beth David Synagogue in Cote Saint Luc.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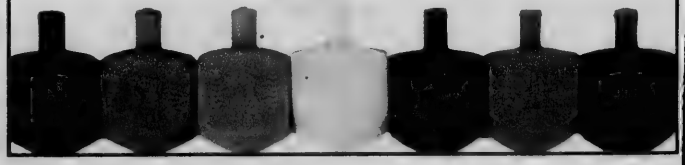

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PQ candidate backtracks on JGH comments

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — After outrage from Jewish groups, a Parti Québécois (PQ) candidate has backtracked on comments she posted on the Internet appearing to suggest that the word "Jewish" be removed from the name of the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) and that circumcision be banned.

Tania Longpré, who is running in the Dec. 9 byelection in Montreal's north-end Viau riding, made the comments on Facebook in an exchange on the proposed charter of state secularism.

Tania Longpré

She wrote: "Answer me publicly: must we include in the charter the withdrawal of the word 'Jewish' from the hospital? Forbid circumcision? Sidelocks in the public service?

"I answer yes! Anyway, thank you for the idea for the next text."

After complaints from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and B'nai Brith Canada and others via social media, Longpré, a former *Journal de Montréal* blogger, wrote on her Facebook page Nov. 10: "After what has circulated on social media, I would like to correct the facts: exasperated a few weeks ago, I responded nonsense to someone in a virtual exchange that does not reflect all my thoughts." She said, however, that she supports the proposed charter as it is.

Longpré, who currently teaches French to immigrants, followed that up with a second message on her Twitter account referring to the incident as an "infantile controversy."

Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville, who is responsible for the charter, told reporters, "Before she was a candidate, she was a citizen who had freedom of speech. Now she's a PQ candidate and she must endorse the policies that were taken by the PQ government."

Premier Pauline Marois did not take Longpré to task. On the contrary, she called her "an excellent candidate" on Nov. 12.

CIJA is "not buying" Longpré's explanation, and won't be satisfied until she "owns up to what she said, acknowledges that it was wrong and renounces it," said David Ouellette, the organization's associate director of public affairs.

Longpré's Facebook comments were not isolated, he suggested. "In the past, she has made statements that reflect a radical conception of secularism," and are especially troubling because she is a "passionate promoter of the charter."

CIJA, he said, also wants to hear a clear statement from the PQ government that it "by no means seeks to suppress, question or challenge this Jewish institution [the JGH], which is the pride of Quebec Jews."

Longpré's comments show an "utter ignorance," Ouellette added, of the JGH's care of all Quebecers regardless of origin since its founding almost 80 years ago, and of Jews' "rootedness" in Quebec for 2-1/2 centuries.

CIJA had earlier urged Marois to "call her candidate to order for this attack on Jewish identity and on the generosity provided by the community to the benefit of all Quebecers for many generations."

CIJA took the occasion to further criticize the proposed charter, Bill 60, saying it would effectively prohibit Jewish doctors who wear a kippah from practising anywhere but in Jewish establishments. This was a reference to a clause that would allow health-care institutions up to five years to "transition" to compliance with the law and those with a "confessional" mandate possibly longer.

B'nai Brith urged the PQ to distance itself from Longpré, noting how especially insensitive her remarks were at a time when the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht was being commemorated.

"It is truly shameful that the lessons of Kristallnacht... have fallen on deaf ears," stated B'nai Brith CEO Frank Dimant.

"In fact, the Nazis banned circumcision and often taunted Jews by cutting their beards and payot [sidelocks].

"Hopefully, the comments endorsed by Ms. Longpré are not reflective of the PQ. We call on party leadership to immediately disavow themselves from such offensive and worrying comments and thereby make it clear that such notions form no part of their platform."

B'nai Brith said Longpré's explanation of her comments to date are unsatisfactory.

Viau was held by Liberal Emmanuel Dubourg from 2007 until he resigned to enter federal politics. He is seeking the seat vacated by Denis Coderre, who was elected Montreal mayor this month.

On Nov. 13, the JGH board of directors affirmed its opposition to Bill 60, the charter of state secularism, calling it "discriminatory and deeply insulting to public-sector workers."

Should the "offensive" bill pass, the JGH said that, as a matter of principle, it will not seek any delay in its application, as is foreseen in the law or that the government might extend to it.

"Since the bill is inherently prejudicial, there is no point in taking advantage of any clause that would grant us temporary, short-term relief," said executive director Lawrence Rosenberg.

The JGH said many of its staff wear attire denoting a wide variety of faiths, and there are no complaints from users of its services.

"As long as services are delivered with professional competence, courtesy and respect, no legislation should be allowed to override the freedoms of religion or expression that are guaranteed by" both the Canadian and Quebec rights charters, it stated.

Public hearings on the bill will begin on Jan. 14 before the National Assembly's commission on institutions. Deadline for the submission of briefs or requests to appear must be received by the commission no later than Dec. 20.

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New JGH director slams charter

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Lawrence Rosenberg, who is in the forefront of the Jewish General Hospital's defiance of Bill 60, indicated to his fellow physicians that he's not one to back down from a fight.

Rosenberg, who was the chief of surgical services, became the executive director of the JGH this month, just as the hospital entered into an open challenge to Quebec's secularism charter, which it terms "patently discriminatory."

He succeeds Hartley Stern who left in September after five years.

Speaking at a Combined Jewish Appeal event organized by the Maimonides Society at the JGH on Nov. 13, Rosenberg related that he is descended from a long line of chassidic rabbis.

His great-grandfather was Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg, a renowned Talmudist and Kabbalist, and "a bit of a rebel," he said.

Rabbi Rosenberg was a key figure in what became known as Montreal's "kosher meat wars" in the 1920s – a battle over control of supervision of kosher meat and poultry abbatoirs.

Lawrence Rosenberg

"He took on the Vaad in an argument over selling chickens. That's my heritage," said Rosenberg, a kippah-wearing Orthodox Jew.

Rabbi Rosenberg, the "dissident chief rabbi," was at loggerheads with the official chief rabbi of the newly formed Vaad Ha'ir, Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Cohen.

Rosenberg is a cousin of the late writer Mordecai Richler, who was also not known for shrinking from speaking his mind.

On Nov. 13, the JGH confirmed that, if the bill passes, it will not apply for the "transition period" offered to hospitals to give them time to comply with the law, implicitly signalling that it does not intend to impose the ban on religious wear among its employees.

In the official announcement on Nov. 6 of his appointment, Rosenberg stated, "As executive director, I appreciate that I am being called upon to preserve the underlying values of our community that are deeply embedded in the hospital and which have been a key driving force of achievement for decades."

75th anniversary of Kristallnacht marked

Holocaust Education Month opens in Ottawa

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA – Kristallnacht, or the "Night of Broken Glass," – Nov. 9, 1938 – was a night of terror for the Jews of Germany and Austria.

On that night, the Nazis unleashed a wave of unprecedented violence and destruction of Jewish-owned property, burning synagogues, looting homes and businesses. It was a turning point in Nazi Germany's persecution of Jews.

To mark the 75th anniversary of that horrible night, a program was held on Nov. 9 at Ottawa's Congregation Agudath Israel as the opening event of Holocaust Education Month in the capital.

Mina Cohn, chair of the Shoah (Holocaust) Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, and herself a child of survivors, welcomed those present and began by telling two moving anecdotes from the lives of her own family.

Following an excerpt from a video by the same name (*Kristallnacht: The Night of Broken Glass*), David Engel presented the keynote address. His topic, "The Context of Kristallnacht: Poland, Polish Jewry and the Refugee Crisis," and outlined the political and geographic scene in Europe leading up to, and following, the events of Nov. 9 and 10, 1938.

From left, keynote speaker, David Engel; Holocaust survivor Tova Clark; chair of the Shoah Committee, Mina Cohn, and president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Andrea Freedman (*Peter Waiser photo*)

Engel, a professor of Holocaust studies, Hebrew and Judaic studies and history at New York University, a senior fellow of the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University and a member of the academic committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, is the author of numerous books and the recipient of several honours and awards.

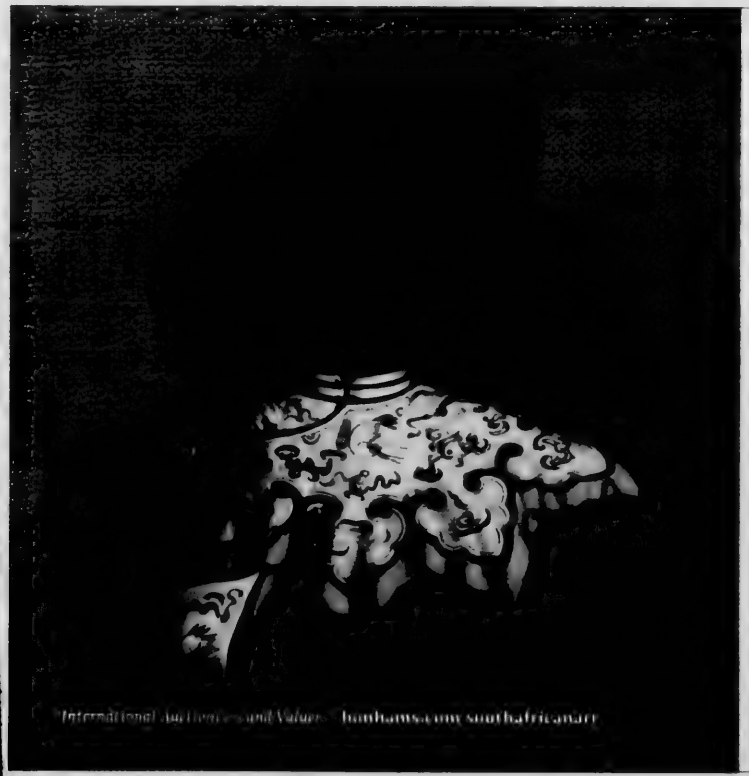
On the eve of Remembrance Day, the audience was reminded of the plight of Jewish refugees trying to flee Europe and find a safe haven. Unfortunately, Canada's record for accepting Jews was the worst of all western nations, Engel said.

While each country did, and does today, base its decisions about, among other things, who will live there, taking into account the existing population and its needs, Engel emphasized that "these decisions can have life and death consequences."

He urged audience members to "at least ask these questions and try to seriously consider" what, if any, other methods could be used to help refugees today and in the future.

One of the few places where Jews were welcomed during the World War II was Shanghai, China, where Tova Clark and her family lived for nine years before leaving for Israel. Clark read from her book, *Compartments*, the story of how her comfortable childhood in Germany was forever changed.

The program was presented by the Shoah (Holocaust) Committee of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa with co-operation from the U.S. Embassy, Agudath Israel Congregation and the Max and Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies of Carleton University. Holocaust survivors and their families, parliamentarians, ambassadors from a number of countries, Jewish community officials and members of the public attended.



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Ve'ahavta gala honours tikkun olam leaders

Vicky Tobianah
Special to The CJN

A world-renowned violinist who is using music to help poverty-stricken youth in troubled neighbourhoods, a Holocaust survivor and educator, and two kids who raise thousands of dollar for cancer research from lemonade stands were a few of the nine people honoured at the 11th annual Starry Nights: Ve'ahavta's Tikun Olam Awards Ceremony on Nov. 10.

The event, which attracted about 500 people, including Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, honoured nine people in five categories: human rights leader and activist Chief Phil Fontaine for humanitarianism, Joe Gottdenker and Faigie Libman for remembrance, Moshe Hammer for education, Dr. Andrew Simor for medicine, and Jamie and Alexandra Eckler and Amanda and Joshua Belzowski for young leadership.

"It's enormously inspiring," said Robyn Segall, director of programs and marketing for Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee.

"We often recognize people who haven't been in the limelight, who have been doing tikkun olam quietly – people who may not have the recognition they deserve."

Wynne, who took to the stage unplanned, said that the work Ve'avahta is doing is very much in keeping with what she sees as her role as a politician – to make the world a better place.

Hammer is a world-famous violinist who is helping inspire children who live in poor areas stay out of gangs through the use of music.

In 2006, during Toronto's so-called "summer of the gun," Hammer noticed the heavy gang and gun violence amongst young children and teenagers in certain areas of Toronto and was struck by the fact that the words "violin" and "violence" are quite similar.

He realized he could use his talents to help inspire children, and teach them musical lessons – something most children in the schools he works in do not have a chance to take – to help them develop life skills, a positive self-image and sense of responsibility, and encourage them to become better citizens.

In its first year, the Hammer Band, as his project is now known, had 40 students. This year, he has 600 students, for a total of more than 1,200 school children who have taken part in the musical lessons.

"The philosophy behind what we do is that, besides making better adults, which I'm sure we are, because we're in some very dangerous areas, we are convinced that when we get the kids when they're 9, 10 or 11, their chances of joining a gang will be completely reduced," Hammer said.

"Kids who feel disenfranchised, lonely, out of place, and weak, those are the kids that are lured into gangs. We give kids that kind of belonging. They belong to a band."

Hammer and his team of professional musicians enter schools in poverty-stricken areas and teach students the violin and cello, for free, while encouraging them to develop their creativity and passion. The majority of the students are immigrants, and Hammer's team has taught students from 39 different cultures. To date, the Hammer Band has performed more than 50 concerts.

"We challenge their creativity, challenge their imagination, that's what kids don't get enough of," said Hammer. "My aim isn't to create hundreds of musicians but to create thousands of better people, because then how much better will our communities be?"

Faigie Libman and Joe Gottdenker *[David Fitzpatrick photo]*

Another honoree, Holocaust survivor and educator Gottdenker, has made it his mission to ensure the Holocaust is never forgotten. Born in Poland in 1941, he was hidden with a Polish family for 3-1/2 years during the war. After the war ended, he was reunited with his parents and moved to the United States and then Canada, where he now resides. However, he never forgot the sacrifice the Polish family made to save his life, and he kept in touch with the parents, their children and grandchildren.

He is vice-chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem and a board member of several organizations, including UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Neuberger Holocaust Education Center.

"Fortunate is not strong enough of a word to have survived through the goodness of these people," said Gottdenker, who was the principal donor to the International Seminars wing at Yad Vashem's International School of Holocaust Studies, which opened in 2009.

"I feel I have to give back and to give back in a number of ways."

The keynote speaker of the night was Frank O'Dea, founder of Second Cup, who spoke about living on the streets of Toronto before founding the coffee empire.

Zareinu students the stars of annual fashion show

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

The power of fashion can indeed transform us – it can give us the confidence to keep on going, said Canadian fashion icon, Jeanne Beker welcoming some 650 guests to the 10th annual Zareinu fashion show.

The Nov. 12 event, hosted by Beker at Bellvue Manor in Vaughan, Ont., raised close to $300,000 in support of the Zareinu Educational Centre, a treatment centre that delivers programs for children with special needs, including cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder and other neurological and developmental impairments.

The highlight of the night came when the children from Zareinu and students from across the GTA walked hand-in-hand together down the runway. The kids were dressed in original and Freeman Formalwear.

Zareinu student Rachel Kenley made her way down the catwalk beaming with delight. "For a kid that we thought would never walk, this is huge and I owe it all to Zareinu," Rachel's mother, Marlene Kenley told *The CJN*.

Zareinu student Rachel Kenley walks the runway with her former teacher, Nadine Joffe. *[George Pimentel Photography]*

"Imagine if you had a child that does not speak and has a feeding tube. Imagine dropping off your child at school and not knowing how they were cared for because your child can't tell you how their day went. For me to drop off my daughter, who is the centre of my universe, at Zareinu, and know not only is she learning, not only is she being taken care of, but to know the therapists are aware of every twitch that Rachel makes and every facial expression, that if they think she is off even a little bit, they call me right away. That's massive for me."

Zareinu president and chair Danny Gordon paid tribute to the evening co-chairs: "Three people spearheaded the fashion show since its inception 10 years ago: Renee Rosenzweig, Stacy Markin and Esti Cohen. Together they have helped raise over $3 million cumulatively over the last 10 years.

"What began as a moderate yet momentous event has become one of our committee's monumental evenings of the year. These funds have directly contributed to a number of programs including state of the art equipment, interventions and physical therapies. The success is due to the efforts of these fashion co-chairs. We are fortunate to have them on our team."

Guests schmoozed and talked fashion at the cocktail reception as they observed a spectacular fashion installation from Cat's Meow Vintage Couture, sampled gourmet food, sipped some bubbly and participated in a raffle and auction.

Professional models from high-end Canadian retailer Andrews, as well as the international luxury designer label Versace took to the runway to showcase their collections. New this year was a menswear collection by Versace and Dirk Bikkembergs. The Shoe Company provided the evening footwear, and models wore beautiful accessories by Fiori.

Dr. Golda Milo-Manson, Zareinu board member and vice-president of Medicine & Academic Affairs at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, addressed the crowd. "He or she can't do something is *never* something you will hear at Zareinu. Rather, it's, 'What can we do to make this happen?' The integrated education and therapy programs at Zareinu are unique and very special. It's a place for goals, dreams and endless possibilities that come to life with the help of donors, the community and the people here tonight."

Visit www.zareinu.org.

Conference aims to empower Orthodox women

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Friends of Nishmat, a Jerusalem-based organization that promotes higher Torah learning for women, is presenting a one-day conference that aims to educate Orthodox women about taboo issues.

The Nov. 24 Women's Health and Halacha Day conference, to be held at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, will promote Nishmat's Yoatzot Halachah program – the organization's "jewel in the crown," said conference co-chair Michele Herrmann.

Dr. Deena Zimmerman

Through Nishmat, women are trained for two years to become Yoatzot Halachah, women certified by a panel of Orthodox rabbis to be a resource to those who may feel uncomfortable discussing family purity law and women's health questions with their doctors or rabbis.

"The women work in tandem with rabbinic authorities to help Orthodox Jewish women become more comfortable in understanding family purity and ritual halachah," Herrmann explained.

Medical professionals from Canada, the United States and Israel, along with three Yoatzot Halachah, will lead sessions at the conference on topics including pregnancy, conception and miscarriage; how to talk to your daughter about puberty; post-partum issues; a Torah perspective on intimacy; perimenopause and menopause; and pre-natal genetic testing.

Dr. Deena Zimmerman, a Yale University and Albert Einstein College of Medicine graduate, who practises as a pediatrician, a Yoetzet Halachah and lactation consultant in Israel, will be a presenter at the conference.

She said she understands why women would prefer to hear from other women who understand their cultural background.

"You go to a doctor who doesn't understand where you're coming from, even if they're an amazing doctor, you might get a feeling that they don't really understand what's bothering you. Here, you get a sense that they really get it," said Zimmerman, author of *A Lifetime Companion to the Laws of Jewish Family Life* and *Mi Dor L'Dor: Genetics and Genetic Diseases: Jewish Legal and Ethical Perspectives*.

"The conference is not about feeling more comfortable with one [a rabbi] or another [a doctor]. It's about understanding the issues on both sides, so they are comfortable talking to both… and being educated about these issues both halachically and medically."

Zimmerman offered an example of an issue that can be very disruptive to the life of an Orthodox woman, but not to the general public.

"I think a common issue that comes up is a side effect of birth control that can cause irregular bleeding and spotting," Zimmerman said.

Orthodox women who practise the law of niddah cannot have any physical contact with their husbands until their menstrual cycle – a 12-day process that includes five days of bleeding, followed by seven "clean" days – is complete, and after immersion in a mikvah, a ritual bath.

"It has an impact on Orthodox Jewish women that it may not have on the general public, and that's why some doctors don't get it, because they think, you're fine, you're not anemic. It's a spot, put on a pad. But they don't realize the implications it can have on a particular group," Zimmerman said.

"But I think also, often women are not comfortable enough with the Halachah to discuss it with their doctor. They know it's an issue, but they don't know the nitty-gritty of the issue, so they're not able to explain to their doctor in a way that will be able to solve the issue."

Herrmann hopes the conference, which Canadian Friends of Nishmat aims to present biannually, will address issues like the one Zimmerman outlined.

"These topics will help and empower women to understand the routes to take, who to approach, what the best avenues are when you're looking for help, and to give it a halachic perspective," Herrmann said.

"We'll explore everything from intimacy in a marriage, what is halachically acceptable, what it is not – which is something Orthodox women are relatively clueless about and embarrassed to talk about…" to body issues and eating disorders, and caring for cognitively impaired parents or spouses.

"We can even bring out the halachic perspective relating to cancer. If you're suffering from cancer and you're going through chemo and it's physically debilitating, there is an issue of holding your husband's hand during your menstrual cycle."

Whatever the topic, Herrmann is confident the conference will be "a comfortable place for women to ask questions they usually feel uncomfortable asking."

For more information or to register, call Canadian Friends of Nishmat at 416-628-4634 or email info@cfnishmat.org.

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Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

The recently released Pew survey on of U.S. Jews has generated anguished discussion on the future of American Jewry. Some of its key findings include an intermarriage rate of 58 per cent, a number that rises to 71 per cent if the Orthodox are excluded (in 1970, the rate was 17 per cent), as well as the findings that two-thirds of Jews don't belong to a synagogue and one-third had a Christmas tree last year.

Jerry Silverman president and CEO, Jewish Federations of North America, stated simply that non-Orthodox Judaism is "facing an existential crisis." Similar views were expressed by many, if not quite as starkly.

One of the ideas Silverman floated to re-engage many with Jewish life free Jewish preschool for all Jewish families. Admittedly, at this point, this is an idea whose details and full costs have not been worked out. Nonetheless, we finally have an important federation leader publicly acknowledging the need for free Jewish education if we hope to ensure the Jewish future of the vast majority of American Jews. But while getting Jewish kids in the door is a great idea, unless there's a strong incentive to have these kids continue, it would be more effective to begin with the high school years, where adolescents are in their formative years.

This need for universal accessible (free) Jewish education is quite apparent, yet many are afraid to admit as much, fearing they may be asked to help implement such a program, one that requires heavy investment now and whose dividends will take years to show up in a future study.

At the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, where I teach, recent research showed that 96 per cent of graduates married other Jews. The student body is overwhelmingly non-Orthodox. The solution to intermarriage is readily apparent. Is our community up to the challenge?

What if an education at TanenbaumCHAT was free for all students. At the current enrolment of about 1,400 and with tuition at $23,500, we're talking about an investment of $32 million a year. That may sound like a lot, but it's actually a tiny fraction of the money sitting in Jewish foundations (not to mention personal wealth) and is less than half of what UJA raises annually in Toronto. Even if the in-marriage rate were to drop as low as 80 per cent for TanenbaumCHAT graduates, it means hundreds of people every year are marrying Jews because they received a Jewish high school education.

With many opting out of a Jewish education due to cost, offering free education would save hundreds more from intermarriage and help guarantee a vibrant Jewish future.

The Pew report noted that 96 per cent of Jews who marry other Jews are raising their children as Jewish by religion, whereas only 20 per cent of Jews who are intermarried are doing the same.

There's no need for an anguished response to reports of disconnected Jews. The solution is simple and is contrary to what many claim is most affordable. If the richest community in Jewish history is unwilling to find the money to rescue Jews from assimilation, it should anguish us all.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

Sufganiyot: paradise in a deep fryer – Pt. 1

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietkiewicz

When you think of Chanukah, the first food that comes to mind is probably the latke. While the potato pancake certainly has its virtues, its oily cousin, the sufganiyah, has it own unique, delightful pleasures.

Israeli folklorist Dov Noy says sufganiyot go back. Way back. An apocryphal Bukharan fable claims the first sufganiyah "was given to Adam and Eve after their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. This sweet doughnut had three characteristics: it was round like the wheel of fortune, it had to be looked at not for its external qualities but for what was inside, and it could not be enjoyed the same way twice." And its name? *Sof* (end) + *gan* (garden) + *y-ah* (of God's).

[http://bit.ly/sufg1]

Hmmm. Sufganiyot in exchange for expulsion from the Garden, working by the sweat of your brow and the pain of childbirth? Sounds like a fair trade to me.

Rabbi Josh Waxman has entered the etymological fray. He says sufganiyah is related to the Hebrew word for sponge, *sfog*. Sounds plausible when you think of that ball of dough soaking up all that oil and calories in a deep fryer. **[bit.ly/sufg5]**

Jewish Action magazine says the earliest reference is found in the 12th century writings of Rabbi Maimon ben Yosef, father of the Rambam. Surprisingly, in his day, some scorned the Chanukah treat. "One must not make light of the custom of eating *sofganim* (fried fritters) on Chanukah. It is a custom of the *Kadmonim* (the ancient ones)," he warned. **[bit.ly/sufg9]**

Or perhaps we have the labour movement to thank for the goodie. According to food writer Gil Marks, "in the late 1920s, the Histadrut, the Israeli labour federation, decided to champion the less widespread jelly doughnut as a Chanukah treat rather than *levivot* (latkes), because latkes were relatively easy and homemade, while sufganiyot were rather difficult for most home cooks, thereby providing work (preparing, transporting, and selling the doughnuts) for its members." **[bit.ly/sufg25]**

Too difficult for most home cooks? Here are a couple of case studies. In "Baptism by Fryer," Sara Ivry describes her maiden attempt at preparing a batch. Despite the fact that she didn't chill the dough as instructed (her fridge was on the fritz), she used the wrong oil ("I bought safflower, thinking the word sounds an awful lot like sunflower"), and had no oil thermometer, Sara persevered and delivered "two dozen slightly scrawny, knotted pastries, lacking specific centres and radiating absolutely no mouth-watering aroma. They looked nothing like the pristine, fluffy, round delights I picture when I think of sufganiyot." **[bit.ly/sufg22]**

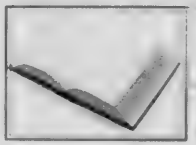
Miranda Levenstein had good reason to refrain from making sufganiyot. "My hair is like a sponge. If there is an aroma anywhere, you can be sure my porous locks will emit that stench long after I have left the space where the smell was produced." Miranda decided to throw caution to the wind and embrace her "inner Jewess". The upshot: "Do not be scared to make these. I was, and not just because of smelly hair. Yeast is intimidating, as is a large pot of burning hot oil. But these sweet jammy treats were surprisingly doable and truly delicious." **[bit.ly/sufg26]**

Next week, goodbye jelly, hello daring sufganiyot.

highway@rogers.com

Peace first, Chanukah second

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner



Rabbinic Reflections

Rabbi Abraham Twerski, in his book *Smiling Each Day*, tells of a Jewish community composed of many different religious sects, each one adhering to its own rabbi's authority. At one point a dispute erupted, mushrooming to such an extent that an outside sage was imported to resolve the strife.

This objective authority interviewed the various sides and investigated the issue at length before proposing a solution. When he finally presented an idea, though, one of the interested rabbis rejected it. He tried an alternative proposal, but another participant shot it down. A third approach was similarly demolished. Finally, he threw up his hands in exasperation and declared, "Now I understand why Abraham asked God regarding Sodom (Genesis 18:24), 'If there are fifty tzaddikim [righteous people] in the city, won't you desist from destroying it?' Abraham's logic was simple: If there are fifty tzaddikim in the city, they will make sure to bring it to ruin themselves. There is no need for You to intervene!"

The lesson of the story, to me, is that people pursuing righteous goals sometimes forget that they have homes, families and a world to maintain, and that shalom in that home, family and world must be given greater priority than our other pursuits.

The Talmud (Shabbat 23b) seeks to educate this forgetful Jew, declaring, "It is obvious that a Jew who must choose to spend on either the lights of Shabbat or the lights of Chanukah should spend on the lights of Shabbat, for the sake of the peace they will provide for the home." The core purpose of our Shabbat candles is to illuminate our homes in a dignified way, so that people will be able to enjoy Shabbat in peace, without tripping over obstacles and squabbling with each other. This goal is deemed so important that it even overrides the imperative to publicize Divine miracles through the lights of Chanukah.

This law is remarkable in light of the fact that the minimum length of time required for the lights of Chanukah to burn is just 30 minutes. We are talking about reducing the fuel for one's Shabbat lamp by only 30 minutes – and even that brief length of time is considered so important that it trumps the Chanukah lights. Judaism decrees that it would be better to omit all thanks for the Divine miracle than to have a home in pain for 30 minutes.

The home exists on multiple levels; there's the literal house, the broader family and the still-broader community. On each level, we need to preserve our shalom bayit, the peace of our home, lest people be pained. On each level, we must remember the Divine mandate: without the lights of Shabbat, one might as well not have the lights of Chanukah. First we build community and create shalom, and then we're able to celebrate Chanukah and thank God for the miracles. May we merit to have both parts, the shalom and the gratitude to God, in our homes.

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner is rosh beit midrash of Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov in Toronto.

Violence against women must end

From the Bimah
Rabbi Catharine Clark

We'd like to think it doesn't happen among Jews, but it does. Jewish women experience physical, sexual and verbal abuse perpetrated by their husbands, fiancés and boyfriends. It's time to put a stop to it.

Nov. 25 is International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. In the spirit of this day, here are some important steps for ending abuse of women in the Jewish community.

• Stop denying it. Denial has been a popular "strategy" since at least the 12th century, when Rabbeinu Tam wrote, "Wife beating is unheard of among the children of Israel." Denial, however, does not change the fact that Jewish women in abusive relationships live in fear and pain inflicted by their partners.

• Recognize that Jewish law prohibits a man from striking his wife. In his commentary on the Tur (Even HaEzer 154:15), Rabbi Yosef Karo quotes Rabbeinu Simhah, who says that "we must treat a man who beats his wife more severely than we treat a man who beats another man, since he's not obligated to honour the other man, but is obligated to honour his wife, more, in fact, than himself. And a man who beats his wife should be put under a ban and excommunicated."

• Understand what shalom bayit, "peace in the household," means. The person who is disrupting the wholeness of family life is the abuser, not the woman who seeks to stop the abuse or to leave the relationship.

• Speak about domestic violence from the bimah or in the synagogue bulletin. Rabbis, cantors and lay leaders who do so send the message that they take the problem seriously and will listen to a congregant suffering abuse.

• Insist that the leadership of your synagogue or JCC put the contact number of the local women's shelter in the women's bathroom and nursing room. This information empowers an abused woman to take her first steps toward help or to flee to safety in a critical moment.

• Listen and believe. If a woman tells you that her partner is hitting her, controlling money, demanding detailed accounts of where she is at all times or denigrating her, respect the courage she has shown in coming to you.

• Refer her to a domestic violence program so that she can develop a safety plan. A safety counsellor can help her protect herself, for instance by knowing when to call the police.

• Do not tell her that she should stay in the relationship for the sake of the children. Long-term exposure to violence inflicted by one parent against another has detrimental effects on a child's development. Moreover, children who witness domestic violence are themselves in danger of being physically injured.

• Support her in making in her own decisions, even if her decision is to stay with her abuser for now. Her partner probably is not always abusive. In fact, it is likely that the cycle of abuse includes times when he is thoughtful and charming. In addition, abusers often respond to attempts to leave with escalated violence.

Please take these steps. All of us have the responsibility to ensure true shalom bayit for the families of our Jewish community.

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The impact of Hungarian anti-Semitism

Christopher Adam

Csanád Szegedi invited to speak in Montreal

Csanád Szegedi, a member of the European Parliament and a founder of the rabidly anti-Semitic Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary – a far-right political party that last year suggested Hungarian Jews posed a national security risk and should be forced to register with authorities – never thought that he would one day be participating at an event hosted by Montreal's Westmount Chabad.

Since his election in 2009, Szegedi has regularly attended sessions of the European Parliament dressed in a black vest and adorned with a red-and-white striped crest worn by the disbanded Hungarian Guard, the far-right paramilitary wing of Jobbik. He brought to life terrifying memories for Hungarian Holocaust survivors, who recognized how similar this uniform was to those worn by Hungarian fascists during World War II.

As Szegedi discovered in 2012, one of those Holocaust survivors was his grandmother. She was tight-lipped about her family's past, but had Szegedi paid closer attention, he may have been able to decipher the tell-tale signs of his family's hidden past.

But I am hardly in a position to blame Szegedi for not having been able to put together the pieces of the puzzle. However incredible Szegedi's story of self-discovery may seen on this side of the Atlantic, it was not uncommon for Holocaust survivors to provide their children with the image of a clean, untroubled family past and to bury both their Jewish heritage and their horrific experience during World War II as deeply as possible.

I only discovered that my father, aunt and my grandmother were Holocaust survivors – and that my grandfather was killed in Mauthausen concentration camp – on a damp February afternoon earlier this year, as I was emptying out my late aunt's apartment in Montreal. My father, who died in 2004, was 12 years old when his father was deported. My father, grandmother, aunt and uncle were taken from their home in Budapest and were moved into one of the 2,000 "yellow star houses," where Jews were forced to live between June and late November 1944, before being taken to the Budapest Ghetto. My father shared snippets – hardly more than blurry, abridged memories – of his experiences surviving the war as a child, but remained silent on his family's persecution during the Holocaust. His father, Béla Ádám, one of some 600,000 Hungarian Jews murdered during the Holocaust, had "died on the front" according to one story and had been executed in late 1944 for trying to desert, according to another.

While my paternal grandfather hailed from a generation of Budapest merchants, the official family history chronicled my grandmother's family as being patriotic Hungarian Protestants from Transylvania. My grandmother, Mária Borsai, was an author of children's books, her father was a widely respected chief physician in the county and a philanthropist, supporting ethnic Hungarian authors and artists in Romanian-controlled Transylvania.

But with the death of my aunt early this year, the carefully crafted narrative created by three generations of my father's family unravelled at lightning speed. In an effort to assimilate, my great-grandfather changed his family name at the beginning of the 20th century and established a scholarship at the Unitarian secondary school in the town of Cluj. His children took the process of assimilation a step further and converted to Christianity, while my father's generation crossed the last 't' after the trauma of the Holocaust by pledging never to speak of the family's past to their children, sparing them the heavy burden of persecution. One of my father's cousins tried to break the silence in 1999, but met resistance. His letter revealing the family's deeply hidden secret was never shown to me.

Death sometimes has a way of baring all. It isn't always possible to take secrets to the grave. A generation of Hungarians arose from the shattered cities and communities in 1945 with a mindset that they would be building a new world, rather than preserving the painful memories of a previous one. And by forgetting, they believed that they were shielding their children from the visceral anti-Semitism of the likes of Szegedi, but also from the bias that they knew permeated Hungarian society.

Szegedi once noted that since discovering his Jewish heritage, he has gone from the persecutor to being the persecuted. Thousands of other Hungarians, including myself, grew up and lived their adult lives knowing nothing about their family's Jewish roots and their parents' experience during the Holocaust.

Yet this lack of knowledge did not stop us, as it did in Szegedi's case, from having compassion for those who survived the horrors of the Shoah and for condemning all forms of anti-Semitism.

It seems to me that the test of human empathy is whether you are able to walk in solidarity with "the other." Szegedi's former colleagues on the far right, as well as many supporters of Hungary's current, authoritarian government, find solidarity that crosses religious, cultural and ethnic boundaries wholly undesirable. Szegedi was once a firm proponent of this viewpoint, and it took an unexpected revelation to convince him to change direction. The difficult question that remains unanswered – and perhaps requires more reflection – is whether Szegedi will now find forgiveness.

Christopher Adam is a historian based in Ottawa and has taught European history at Carleton University.

No single solution to hatred

OPINION

The winds of change are blowing for Jewish communities all over the world. A shocking poll released recently by a European Union agency found that 76 per cent of Jewish people polled believe there has been an increase in anti-Semitic hostility in their European home countries. Close to half of the poll's respondents (46 per cent) are afraid of being verbally attacked or harassed because they are Jewish, while more than 23 per cent said they had actually been discriminated against recently.

Avi Benlolo

Hate is a mutating illness that knows no borders and has no boundaries. Canada has not been immune to pernicious anti-Semitism and Israel defamation. For the last 13 years, we have been battling anti-Jewish hate on university campuses, at gay pride parades and on city streets, all the while seeing vicious propaganda and slander adopted by unions and church groups. Families and neighbourhoods that have been hit by anti-Semitism struggle with the age-old question – "Why us?"

The rise of anti-Semitism, whether by stealth as practised by university students, or the more overt methods employed by radical Hezbollah supporters, is real and must not be ignored or played down. This is particularly true of university campuses, where students and faculty alike have spearheaded the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement against Israel.

How we as the Jewish community of Canada engage with problems of anti-Semitism, defamation of Israel and the threat to democracy and human rights will ultimately define not only who we are today, but also our very future.

We are fortunate to be residing in one of the most dynamic and engaging communities in the world, with supportive federal and provincial governments. But with the seeds of hate being planted today, can we take our comfort for granted? The new proposed Quebec charter of values is an example of how the tide of religious freedom can easily turn. Although one Parti Québécois candidate has already had her knuckles rapped for suggesting the removal of the word "Jewish" from the name of Montreal's Jewish General Hospital, it seems safe to say we can expect increasing incidents of anti-Jewish hate in Quebec if the charter becomes law.

As history shows, there is no single solution to anti-Semitism. Any suggestions to the contrary must be looked upon with suspicion. I support all community methods of advocacy, education and programming as a convergence of efforts to push back.

In my capacity as leader of a Canadian human rights advocacy organization my strategic approach has been to build a sphere of influence outside of the Jewish community. Most non-Jews are revolted by the sight of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment. By harnessing friendships with educators, police, governments, community and religious leaders, we can strengthen our efficacy. Projects such as Freedom Day, Tools for Tolerance, Compassion to Action, Speakers Idol, diversity workshops and now, the new Tour for Humanity mobile Tolerance Education Center, allow us to engage with the world.

Alone, we are a light unto the nations. Together, with friends who share our values, we become a beacon of light that can transform the entire universe.

Avi Benlolo is president and CEO of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Family rescues their rescuers

Muslims helped save Jewish family during World War II... debt repaid during Yugoslav war in 1990s

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Sara Pechanac lives a film script that could be titled "The rescuers became the rescued." She's fine with that. Indeed, she smiles broadly and her eyes dance when she recounts her family's story.

"I find that today, in the 21st century, I need to share my story with people because it's a very important time we are living in," said the 56-year-old Pechanac, in Toronto last week for some speaking engagements sponsored by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). "I think people need to hear this story."

It's an irresistible one.

It begins in April 1941, when the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia. Pechanac's family lived in Sarajevo, now the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, then part of Croatian territory. The city was bombed relentlessly from the air.

The clan was Muslim, and their sole concession to observance was to eschew pork. Sara's mother, Zejneba Hardaga-Susic, wore a face veil, but only in public. They lived across the street from a synagogue and had many Jewish friends and acquaintances.

Among them was Josef Kavilio, who owned a factory near the Hardaga home. Bombed out of their house and marked for deportation, Kavilio, his wife and two children were taken in and offered haven by the Hardaga family, comprised of Musafa, his wife Zejneba, Mustafa's brother, Izet, and Izet's wife, Bachriya.

Following a short stay, the Kavilios fled to Mostar, in an area of Croatia under Italian control where Jews were relatively safe. Kavilio himself stayed behind to liquidate his business, but was caught and imprisoned by the Ustase, Croatia's fascist, anti-Semitic movement.

Heavy snow prevented the transfer of Kavilio and other prisoners from Sarajevo to the infamous Jasenovac concentration camp near Zagreb, where the Ustase systematically killed Serbs, Jews and Roma.

"Instead, the prisoners were taken, with their legs chained, to clear the roads from snow," states the website of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial and museum. "This is where Zejneba saw Kavilio. Kavilio later testified that he saw her standing at the street corner, her face traditionally veiled, watching the plight of their family friend with tears in her eyes. Undisturbed by the danger, she began to bring food to the prisoners."

Josef Kavilio managed to escape and make his way back to the Hardaga home. The family welcomed him and nursed him back to health. Gestapo headquarters were nearby and the danger was immense. In his testimony to Yad Vashem, Kavilio described the notices on walls threatening those who hid Serbs and Jews with death. Not wanting to further endanger the Hardagas, he again fled to Mostar to rejoin his family.

Sara Pechanac

By this time, the Hardagas had learned a family secret: Zejneba's father, Ahmed Sadik, had been hiding a Jewish family named Papo in his home. Sadik was caught and shipped to the Jasenovac camp near Zagreb, where he was murdered.

"My mother tried to do everything to save her father," Pechanac said.

Meantime, the Kavilios all survived, and at war's end, they revisited the Hardagas, who returned the jewelry that Josef had left with them for safekeeping.

The Kavilios immigrated to Israel, where they began a campaign to have the four Hardagas recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. In 1985, the family, as well as Ahmed Sadik, became the first Muslims to be so honoured, in a ceremony attended by Pechanac's mother and the Kavilio descendants.

Fast forward to the early 1990s. The civil war in Yugoslavia was raging, with Sarajevo in the crosshairs. "When my mother saved the Jews," Pechanac said with a sigh, "she never thought that a half-century after that, we would find ourselves in the same place – but now, we needed help. You could not arrange things like that."

Shimon Peres, now Israel's president, wrote the nascent Bosnian government inviting Pechanac, her mother, husband and daughter to the Jewish state. In February 1994, they arrived "with one suitcase and no money," Pechanac recalled. It didn't matter; Israel had repaid a debt.

As if to acknowledge that, a year later, Pechanac, her husband and their daughter all converted to Judaism. Pechanac said that for her, it was natural.

"I grew up near the Jewish community. I had Jewish friends. I didn't think it was bad to be a Muslim, [but] all my life I knew that I wanted to become a Jew." Avoiding pork, she added, "helped me really to feel like a Jew."

Pechanac, who was born in Sarajevo, said her mother did not speak of the family's heroic exploits, and that Pechanac herself did not discover them until she was an adult.

"My mother didn't find it was necessary to talk about that. My mother was a special woman. She never spoke too much. She'd done so much in her life.

"She educated us: 'If you want to do something, do it.' But not for this"– Pechanac slapped her chest to indicate self-satisfaction. "You do it because you believe in God."

Her sole regret is not pressing her mother for more details. Zejneba Hardaga-Susic died eight months after arriving in Israel. Pechanac's husband also died there. Pechanac has a sister, a Muslim, in Sarajevo, and a brother, who's Christian, living in Mexico City.

"Three children, three religions, from the same mother," Pechanac noted. Her daughter, now 30, was an officer in the Israel Air Force.

Another kicker: Pechanac works in the archives department of Yad Vashem.

Asked what messages she brings to Toronto, she replied, "Many... You need to do only good things in life. Always put yourself in the situation of others. Bad things can happen to you, too. Follow your feelings and try to do the best you can."

IN MEMORIAM: In honour of Remembrance Day, York Centre MP Mark Adler attended a ceremony and laid a wreath at the Memory of Flames monument for Jewish war veterans. Erected in 2011, the monument honours Jewish men and women in uniform.

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American rabbis deal with new challenges

Conservative shuls wrestle with non-Jews in pews

Uriel Heilman
JTA

NEW YORK — To an outsider, the battles might seem to be over trifles — in some cases, just a few feet.

Where may a non-Jewish parent stand in the synagogue during his child's bar mitzvah? Can a non-Jew open the Holy Ark? Should non-Jewish synagogue members have voting rights?

Such questions have been pushed to the fore by the growing percentage of Conservative homes that include non-Jewish family members — more than one-quarter of them, according to the recent Pew Research Center survey.

For many Conservative synagogues, the issues are not trivial. They cut to the heart of a philosophical and practical debate about how open they should be toward the non-Jews in their midst.

"For a variety of reasons, my colleagues are being challenged to rethink positions that in the past we accepted almost as dogma," said Rabbi Charles Simon, who, as executive director of the Conservative movement's Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, organizes seminars for Conservative synagogues on how to be more inclusive of non-Jews.

"It doesn't mean that the standards of Conservative Judaism are changing," he said. "It means that my colleagues are metaphorically learning they have to broaden their own tents."

In some ways, the dilemma is not unique to Conservative Judaism; the Reform movement has grappled with some of the same issues. But Jewish law does not bind Reform synagogues, and the movement accepts intermarriage – two key distinctions from Conservative Judaism. On the Orthodox side, the line against non-Jewish participation is pretty clear; many strictly Orthodox synagogues won't even allow the Jewish partner in an interfaith marriage to lead services.

Conservative synagogues are navigating the perilous middle, wrestling with how to adapt to an era of increasing non-Jews in their ranks while still adhering to Conservative principles of Jewish law that among other things forbids intermarriage.

The discussions also come at a time of serious decline for the Conservative movement, whose share of the American Jewish population has fallen to 18 per cent, according to the Pew study.

"Since such a large percentage of our younger families include interfaith marriages and relationships, we want very much to keep our children as loyal and involved Conservative Jews, and we realize that in order to do so we need to be welcoming to their partners and spouses and families," said Rabbi Raphael Adler of the Woodbury Jewish Center in New York. "Many in our congregations are not willing to give up our children and our families to Reform synagogues or to no congregation at all. It seems wrong."

The ways Conservative synagogues are adapting varies widely. Many offer non-Jews the honour of reciting the English prayer for the government, Israel or peace. Some allow non-Jews voting rights but bar them from board positions. Others exclude them from membership.

For Debbie Burton, a gentile who was married to a Jew and was raising her kids as Jews, exclusion from synagogue ritual roles never really bothered her until her daughter's bar mitzvah, when she was told she could not speak from the pulpit of her Chicago-area synagogue.

"It was the first time that I had ever felt that I was excluded from a minyan activity because I was not Jewish," Burton, a professor of mechanical engineering at Northwestern, wrote in a 2010 essay for Interfaithfamily.com. "I was hurt to feel prevented from publicly sharing my thoughts on the occasion of a Jewish milestone of my child. After all, even though I wasn't Jewish, I had played an important role in my children's Jewish education and upbringing."

Burton told *JTA* that the experience prompted her to push for changes in her synagogue's policies, though in the end she didn't require the changes for herself because she converted.

Rabbi Jarrod Grover

During life-cycle events, many Conservative synagogues now offer non-Jews a place of honour, but with limitations. At the Woodbury synagogue, non-Jewish parents may join their Jewish spouses when receiving an aliyah to the Torah during a bar mitzvah service, but the non-Jew must take a couple of steps back when the blessings are recited. A non-Jewish grandparent may offer an English blessing composed by the rabbi, but only from his place in the pews, not from the bimah.

Adler says reaction to the changes has been mixed: Some members have threatened to quit if certain changes are adopted.

Rabbi David Booth of Kol Emeth in Palo Alto, Calif., recently began giving non-Jews in his congregation a standalone ritual role unconnected to lifecycle events: opening the ark. Last month, the Conservative movement's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards formally endorsed the practice.

At Congregation Kneses Tifereth Israel in Port Chester, N.Y., Rabbi Jaymee Alpert offers a public blessing to interfaith couples right before their wedding in an adaptation of the traditional Shabbat aufruf celebration that precedes a Jewish wedding. Alpert also presents the interfaith couple with the same synagogue gift bestowed upon Jewish couples.

"We should be as open and inclusive as possible within the parameters of Jewish law and the Conservative movement," she said. "It's not that the congregation is advocating intermarriage, but I think there's a little bit of acceptance that this happens, and don't we want our children and the next generation to feel comfortable in the synagogue?"

Rabbi Alpert says she finds it painful to have to explain to interfaith couples why she cannot officiate at their weddings. Though the Conservative movement also bars its rabbis from attending intermarriages, the rule often is ignored.

Like many Conservative clergy in Canada, Rabbi Jarrod Grover of Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto considers intermarriage a breach of Conservative Judaism. At Beth Tikvah, non-Jews are barred from membership. Synagogue mail sent to interfaith homes omits the name of the non-Jewish spouse. The synagogue does not allow blessings for interfaith unions.

"We do not recognize the validity of intermarriages — period. There's no simchah, there's no *aufruf*," Rabbi Grover told JTA.

He believes the best way to welcome non-Jews and encourage them to raise a Jewish family is to lower the bar for conversion.

"The danger of making the shul too welcoming for the intermarried is that there stops being any reason to convert, and I don't want that," Rabbi Grover said. "I want to push conversion because the right way to raise Jewish children is with two Jewish parents."

Rabbi Stewart Vogel of Temple Aliyah in Los Angeles rejects that approach.

"Parents who have made a commitment to raise a Jewish household and they don't convert, I think they're heroes," Rabbi Vogel said. "I think they deserve our praise and recognition. Instead, what do they get? At best, a feeling that they're accepted."

Rabbi Vogel's synagogue doesn't just welcome interfaith families but celebrates them. On "anniversary Shabbats," when couples celebrating anniversaries are acknowledged in shul, intermarried couples are honoured along with everybody else. At bar mitzvahs, the non-Jewish parent is invited to be part of the tallit presentation but must step back when the blessing is recited.

Vogel even officiates at funerals for non-Jewish congregants, noting in his eulogy that the deceased was not Jewish but was an "*ohev yisrael*" — a lover of the Jewish people. Vogel's synagogue also allows non-Jewish spouses who have lost their Jewish spouse or divorced to remain a member of the congregation.

"Some of my most committed congregants are non-Jewish congregants," he said.

Vogel says he initially was resistant to many of these changes, but his attitude shifted over time.

"My actions have been changed by the personal interactions with congregants and seeing how with a change in attitude we can really inspire them Jewishly," he said. "Someone who might otherwise turn away is now validated and sanctified. It's so affirming."

HAPOEL RIVALRY

The soccer match between rivals Hapoel Katamon and Hapoel Jerusalem at the Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem on Nov. 15 ended 2-1 for Katamon.

[Yonatan Sindel/Flash90 photo]

Lee Harvey Oswald's Jewish killer

My history with the family of Jack Ruby

Steve North
JTA

NEW YORK — We were sharing a pastrami sandwich and pickles at the Los Angeles landmark Canter's Deli. I was 24. She was nearly 50 years older, with a piercing voice as loud as her flaming red wig.

Her name was Eva Rubenstein Grant, and she was a little-known nightclub manager the morning of Nov. 24, 1963, when her brother left the apartment they shared in Dallas and blasted his way into infamy by fatally shooting Lee Harvey Oswald. It was history's first live televised murder.

Grant worked and lived with Jack Ruby and spent the rest of her life defending him against various allegations.

"I swear on my life, my brother was not three things," Grant told me, her voice rising. "He was not a homosexual. He was not with the Communists. And certainly not with the underworld."

I listened with fascination to Grant that day in 1977. (Years later she was perfectly portrayed in a TV movie by Doris Roberts, the high-decibel mom on *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Grant died in November 1992 at 83.)

"But Mrs. Grant," I said. "Jack had ties to the 'syndicate,' as you call it, as far back as your childhood in Chicago."

"Look," she replied in exasperation. "We would see these people in the neighbourhood and we'd ask, how's your mother? How's your sister? But that doesn't mean Jack was connected with them. I grew up with a bunch of boys who turned out to be no good. Who knew?"

It was a quintessentially Jewish response, albeit delivered in Grant's hybrid Chicago-Dallas accent. And the Rubensteins were a staunchly Jewish family, a fact that may have played a role in Ruby's killing of Oswald, John F. Kennedy's assassin.

Ruby was born Jacob Rubenstein in 1911 to a family of Polish-Jewish immigrants. His parents, Joseph and Fannie, were a volatile couple. Joseph was a mean and abusive drunk. Fannie suffered from mental illness and at one point was committed to an Illinois state hospital.

Their eight children had their fair share of problems, both before and after the parents separated. Ruby and three of his siblings were made wards of Chicago's Jewish Home Finding Society and placed in foster homes for periods of time during the 1920s.

Despite their dysfunctional world, the Rubensteins kept a kosher home, observed the holidays, sent their boys to Hebrew school and attended synagogue.

Ruby idolized Chicago Jewish boxing champion Barney Ross, who later described him as a "well-behaved" youth. But others recall Ruby's hair-trigger temper and street brawls, especially when taunted by the non-Jews in his mixed Jewish-Italian neighbourhood. Ruby's biographer, Seth Kantor, relates that as an Air Force private, Ruby once beat up a sergeant who called him "a Jew bastard."

After World War II, Grant moved to Dallas and began managing nightclubs and restaurants. Ruby received an honorable discharge from the Air Force in 1946 and joined Grant a year later in Texas. It was in 1947 that Jack, along with brothers Earl and Sam, legally changed his last name to Ruby.

Jack Ruby
[Wikimedia Commons]

As a young man in Chicago, Ruby reportedly ran errands for Al Capone's cousin and henchman Frank Nitti. A former Dallas sheriff once testified that Chicago mafia figures told him that Ruby was sent to Texas to run nightclubs that were fronts for illegal gambling operations.

According to evidence uncovered by the U.S. House of Representatives Assassinations Committee in the 1970s, Ruby was later linked to mobsters Carlos Marcello and Santos Traficante, who the panel considered prime suspects in a possible mob conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy.

Whatever he was doing behind the scenes, Ruby became known as a nightclub owner and at some point began attending services at Congregation Shearith Israel. Rabbi Hillel Silverman, who was the Dallas synagogue's spiritual leader from 1954 to 1964, says Ruby came to say Kaddish for his father.

"He came to minyan one day with a cast on his arm," Rabbi Silverman recalled. "I said, 'Jack, what happened?' He said, 'In my club, somebody was very raucous, and I was the bouncer.' "

Rabbi Silverman, now 89 and still leading High Holiday services every year, remembers Ruby well. Once Ruby showed up at the rabbi's house with a litter of puppies and insisted the rabbi take one. When the family went to Israel one summer, Ruby looked after the dog.

"The day of the assassination, we had our regular Friday night service, which became a memorial service for the president," Rabbi Silverman said. "Jack was there. People were either irate or in tears, and Jack was neither. He came over and said, 'Good Shabbos, rabbi. Thank you for visiting my sister Eva in the hospital last week.' I thought that was rather peculiar."

Two days later, Rabbi Silverman spoke to his Sunday morning confirmation class, expressing relief to the students that Lee Harvey Oswald was not Jewish or there might have been a "pogrom" in Dallas. He then switched on the radio and heard that a "Jack Rubenstein" had killed the assassin.

"I was shocked," said Rabbi Silverman. "I visited him the next day in jail, and I said, 'Why, Jack, why?' He said, 'I did it for the American people.' "

I interrupted Rabbi Silverman, pointing out that other reports had Ruby saying he did it "to show that Jews had guts." The rabbi sighed.

"Yes, he mentioned that," Rabbi Silverman said. "But I don't like to mention it. I think he said, 'I did it for the Jewish people.' But I've tried to wipe that statement from my mind."

Another person close to Ruby who tried, unsuccessfully, to block out the past is his nephew, "Craig" Ruby. (He asked that I not publish his real first name). His early memories are pleasant: Uncle Jack having a shot of whiskey with Craig's father, doling out silver dollars to the kids, his flashy sports cars.

Like millions of Americans, Craig watched Oswald's murder live on television. Soon afterward, he and his mother heard the name of the gunman.

"Did you ever hear the expression 'The colour drained from her face?' I literally saw my mother's face go from flesh to green," he recalled. "At age 12, that was a little freaky to watch."

Half a century later, Craig is still bitter over the dramatic effect his childless uncle's act had on the extended family, including bomb threats and huge legal bills. Given his last name, Craig was an easy target for bullies during his junior high school years in Dallas. But worst of all was facing Uncle Jack himself.

"One Sunday my dad insisted we go to see Jack in jail," Craig said. "Outside, a police car's siren started up, and my uncle was standing there with this incredibly intense, wild-eyed look on his face, and he yelled, 'You hear that? You hear that? They're torturing Jews in the basement!' That particular experience was traumatic enough to where talking about it right now, 50 years later, is turning my gut into a knot."

Rabbi Silverman, who later testified before the Warren Commission, also vividly remembers his jailhouse visits.

"In prison, he deteriorated psychologically," the rabbi said. "One time I walked in and he said, 'Come on, rabbi, duck underneath the table. They're pouring oil on the Jews and setting it on fire.' He was quite psychotic."

My initial connection to the Ruby family was through Grant, who I convinced to appear on ABC's *Good Night America* program in 1976. Later I visited her several times at her apartment in Los Angeles, where she once gave me the last piece of stationery from Jack's Carousel Club.

She introduced me to her brothers – Earl, who owned a dry cleaning store in Detroit, and Sam, who lived in the Los Angeles suburb of Sylmar. Sam showed me the one picture he had of their immigrant parents as well as the rusting car Ruby drove to the Dallas police station the morning he shot Oswald.

In 1991, Earl allowed me to rendezvous with him in Dallas on the day he retrieved Ruby's gun, which he won after a decades-long legal battle. I later showed the weapon on television for the first time since 1963, shortly before it was auctioned off for $220,000.

The brothers also downplayed Ruby's ties to the mob. Sam, who died in 2008 at age 95, leaned in close and lowered his voice, confiding: "These guys would come into Jack's club, and you had to be nice to them, ya know."

Ironically, when Earl chose a place for us to meet in Dallas the day he was given Ruby's gun, he picked an Italian restaurant better known for its links to the Mafia than its lasagna. (Earl died in 2006 at 90.)

Some conspiracy theorists believe Ruby was ordered to silence Oswald by his organized crime contacts. Others, who think the murder was an impulsive act, point to Ruby's fury over an anti-Kennedy advertisement in a Dallas newspaper the morning of the president's visit. It was paid for by a right-wing Jewish activist named Bernard Weissman, which Ruby thought put Jews in a bad light.

We will never know for sure. What Craig Ruby knows for certain is that he did not mourn his uncle's death from cancer in 1967. His family had moved to Chicago by then and when he saw the headline announcing Ruby's death, he felt like a weight had lifted.

As for having a connection to one of the darkest moments in American history, Craig Ruby's view has not changed in 50 years.

"I wish to God it hadn't happened to us."

(Steve North is a broadcast journalist with CBS News who's been reporting on the Kennedy assassination since 1976.)

Hollande urges halt to settlements

French president vows to stay vigilant on Iran nukes

JTA

JERUSALEM — France will uphold economic sanctions on Iran as long as necessary, French President Francois Hollande said in Israel on Sunday.

It was Hollande's first visit to the area since he became president more than a year ago, and he met with Israeli and Palestinian officials.

The meetings come as western powers are preparing for another round of negotiations with Iran over its alleged nuclear weapons program.

"France considers [Iran] to be a threat to Israel, and it is clearly threatening to the region and the world," Hollande said upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport. "France will not give up or compromise on nuclear proliferation, and as long as we are not completely sure that Iran has given up nuclear weapons, we will continue to maintain our position."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at a welcoming ceremony for Hollande that Israel views France as a true friend.

"France, like Israel, aspires to a stable, moderate Middle East in which the peoples live in peace with each other, in security and mutual respect," Netanyahu said. "You, Mr. President, have taken a resolute stance regarding Syria, and in the face of Iran's relentless attempts to arm itself with nuclear weapons, which would endanger not just Israel, but regimes and countries throughout the Middle East. It would also endanger France, Europe and the entire world."

It has been reported that France was the one country that stood in the way of the P5+1 world powers (the UN Security Council's five permanent members plus Germany) signing an agreement with Iran last week in Geneva. The agreement reportedly would have offered an easing of economic sanctions in return for Iran halting high-level uranium enrichment.

French President François Holland is seen with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the PM's residence in Jerusalem.

[Avi Ohayon/GPO photo]

"The citizens of Israel are full of gratitude to France for standing by our side in times of difficulty. We will never forget it," Israeli President Shimon Peres said at a welcoming ceremony at the President's Residence in Jerusalem.

On Monday, Hollande called on Israel to cease all settlement construction, praising Netanyahu for halting a recent announcement of more apartments in the West Bank. Speaking at a press conference in Ramallah alongside Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Hollande urged both sides to continue to make goodwill gestures to create an atmosphere conducive to peace, suggesting the Palestinians give up or at least soften their insistence on the right of return.

"For a peace agreement to be reached, France demands the total and definite halt of settlement construction because it compromises a two-state solution," the French president said. "I said that to the Israeli authorities in friendship. I say here to the Palestinians that they, too, need to make efforts to deal with difficult and complicated problems, notably the refugees."

For peace to be achieved, "realistic propositions" will have to be made, the French president said, referring to the Palestinian demand for a so-called right of return for some five million Palestinian refugees and their descendants. "If not, then there won't be an agreement."

Abbas said that in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative, a "just and agreed-to" solution to the refugee problem would have to be found. "Let's sit down around the [negotiating] table and let's discuss a just solution and see if we can perhaps agree on it, and sign this peace agreement."

Hollande travelled to Ramallah on Monday for a meeting with Abbas in the Muqata'a, the third meeting between the two leaders meet since Hollande took office in May 2012. Hollande also laid a wreath at the grave of the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Hollande said he was hopeful because Palestinians and Israelis had agreed to negotiate a final-status agreement. Both sides took painful steps to enable these talks to commence, "but more gestures are needed if one wants to arrive at an agreement," he said.

"France is an exceptional position, because it is a friend of the Israelis and it is a friend of the Palestinians who want peace," he said. "One has to make gestures, always gestures, because it's going to be the last gesture that counts, that will enable peace."

The French president mentioned that Netanyahu last week withdrew plans for new West Bank settlement construction, saying that he considers the prime minister's move as a gesture that allowed the Palestinian negotiators to continue with the talks.

Last Tuesday, Israel's Housing Ministry published tenders for the planning of some 20,000 settlement units — an unprecedented number. Netanyahu hastily ordered the project to be rolled back, saying it constituted "an unnecessary confrontation with the international community at a time when we are making an effort to persuade elements in the international community to reach a better deal with Iran."

With files from The Times of Israel

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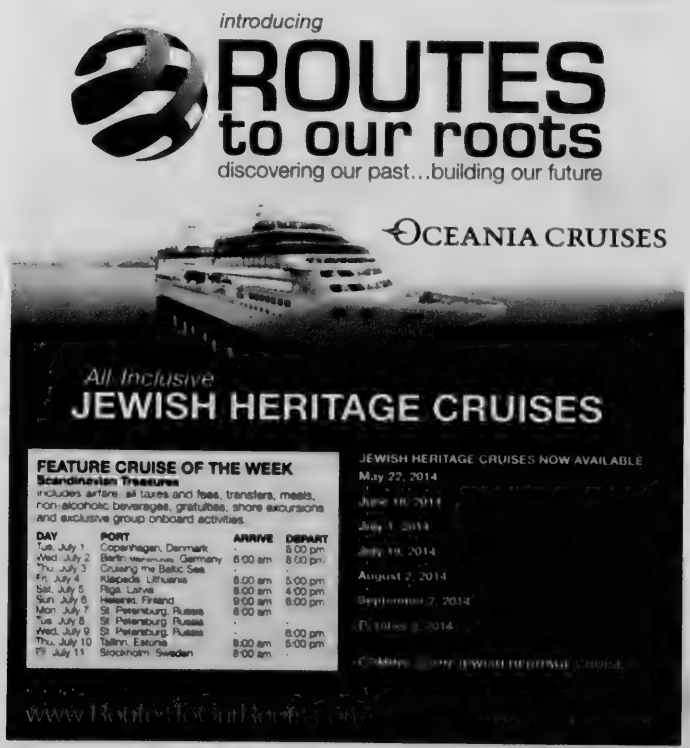
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Sat, July 5 Riga, Latvia 8:00 am 4:00 pm
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Mon, July 7 St. Petersburg, Russia 8:00 am -
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Interns edit Scholastic book without Israel

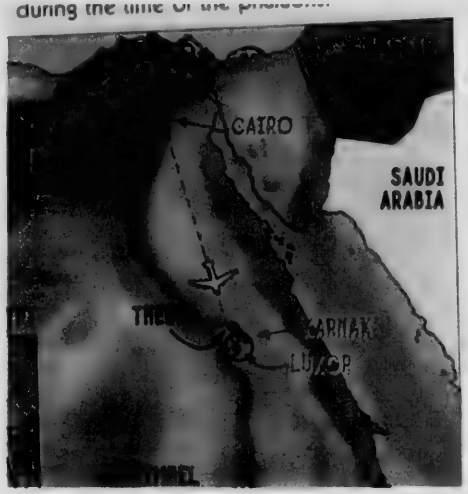
Elhanan Miller
The Times of Israel

The vast majority of Scholastic's proofreaders are paid interns with little qualifications to correct factual errors in the books they review, such as the one containing a map omitting Israel, a former production intern at Scholastic said last week.

Hours after an article first published in *The Times of Israel*, the world's largest children's book publisher expressed "regret" on its blog for erasing Israel from a map in the book *Thea Stilton and the Blue Scarab Hunt*, published in 2012. Scholastic promised to stop shipment of the book, revise the map and reprint it, but it provided no explanation on how the error came about or what it would do to prevent similar ones from taking place.

Speaking to *The Times of Israel* from New York on condition of anonymity, the former student employee – who had reviewed several maps in Scholastic books during her six-month internship – described typical Scholastic proofreaders as "bored out of their minds," with no specific knowledge of the subject matter in books they review. She estimated 75 per cent of Scholastic's proofreaders are interns, not full-time staff.

"As an intern, I haven't majored in history and I don't have any degrees in geography or mapping. They basically just trusted me to use any references at my disposal and check the map that I had been given against the Internet or reference books of any sort," she said.



The map of the Mideast does not show Israel

She said that during her time at Scholastic, a map – like any other graphic image – would be checked for factual or artistic errors together with the book's text.

Once, the intern was asked to check the accuracy of maps in a book about the Holocaust. It was she who realized, without guidance or instruction, that she must use a historic map of Europe as reference rather than a contemporary one.

"I had to be educated enough to know that you can't use a current map of Europe for that book," she said. "I don't know if every intern... is going to spend as much time as I did to make sure the images are factually correct. I happen to care enough about the topic to make sure the map is correct, but I don't know if I would have employed the same attention if it were a different situation."

Though she did not yet work at Scholastic when *Thea Stilton and the Blue Scarab Hunt* was published – it's book No. 11 in the series, copyrighted in 2009 and translated in 2012 – the intern said that as far as company policy is concerned, it must have been reviewed by at least three or four people in the United States.

"I think it's pretty safe to say that several people saw this map and let it go," she told *The Times of Israel*.

Adina Golombek, a Jerusalem resident who emigrated to Israel from Toronto last year, said she was shocked to discover Israel's absence while reading the book with her seven-year-old son.

"I wanted to show my son where we lived in the Middle East, but it didn't say Israel on the map; instead it said Jordan," Golombek told *The Times of Israel*. "I showed him the problem and drew in the border of where Israel is today."

Translated from Spanish or Italian, the Geronimo Stilton series is adapted by Scholastic's editors to an American audience. The erroneous map was almost certainly inserted in the original Italian version of the book and was overlooked by Scholastic, the intern concluded.

In a statement to *The CJN*, Kyle Good, senior vice-president of corporate communications for Scholastic said, that, "*Thea Stilton and the Blue Scarab Hunt*, a title in the Geronimo Stilton series, includes a map that inadvertently omits Israel. Scholastic is stopping shipment on this title, revising the map, and going back to reprint. We regret the error."

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Peace talks will continued despite hurdles: Abbas

The Times of Israel

The peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians will run their full course, "regardless of what happens on the ground," Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas said on Sunday.

"We are committed, and we will go to the full nine months, and then we will take the appropriate decision," Abbas told *Agence France-Presse-AFP*, the day before an official visit by French President Francois Hollande that is expected to focus on peace talks. Hollande arrived in Israel Sunday for meetings with Israeli officials.

"We have committed to continue the negotiations for nine months, regardless of what happens on the ground," Abbas told the French news agency without elaborating.

Under heavy U.S. pressure and following intense shuttle diplomacy by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Israel and the Palestinians resumed peace talks in July after a three-year hiatus, agreeing to a nine-month timeline, set to expire in March 2014. For the duration of the talks, the Palestinians agreed to suspend their efforts to gain international recognition and to not pursue Israel in the international legal arena. Israel committed to freeing 104 Palestinian prisoners who committed their crimes before the Oslo accords were signed in 1993. The second phase of that agreement was completed late last month.

The negotiations have hit some hurdles so far, including an uptick in terror attacks perpetrated by Palestinians, with the latest incident occurring just last week when a 16-year-old Palestinian youth stabbed an 18-year-old IDF soldier to death while the soldier was sleeping on a bus. Israel has also made continued announcements of planned construction in the settlements, the latest of which was swiftly scuttled last week by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The Palestinian negotiating team resigned last week, blaming continued settlement activity. Three weeks earlier, Saeb Erekat, the chief negotiator, and Mohammed Ishtayeh, had also tendered their resignation citing Israel's "lack of integrity," following Israel's announcement that it intends to demolish 20 Arab-owned buildings in east Jerusalem.

Neither resignation was formally accepted by Abbas. "The delegation to the talks handed in its resignation, which we have still not accepted," he told *AFP*, adding that the PA leadership was still deciding what to do – convince the team to return, or appoint a new one.

Earlier this month, Kerry launched an unusually bitter public attack on Israeli policies in the West Bank, and warned that if current peace talks fail, Israel could see a third intifadah amid growing international isolation. He also said that calls for boycott, divestment and sanctions would increase in such a case.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas

"The Palestinian people know that the way to peace is through negotiation. But they also know we are insisting on Palestinian constants," Abbas said, referring to Palestinian demands that an agreement be based on the 1967 borders, with east Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state, and a resolution to the Palestinian refugee problem created with the establishment of Israel in 1948.

"That is what the Palestinian people are asking us to get from the Israeli side. If we don't get that, we won't sign anything," said the PA president.

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Israeli delegation brought 100 tons of equipment, supplies

Continued from page 1

The delegation brought 100 tons of equipment and supplies.

Merin said the local officials and residents, as well as the medical staff of the local hospital, "greeted us warmly.

"We are working hand in hand with the Filipino people," he said.

Merin, a cardiac surgeon and deputy director of Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem, says the Israelis have also performed surgeries in the local hospital in concert with local doctors "to give them some of our knowledge."

Despite the death toll of more than 3,000, which is expected to climb thousands higher, and the nearly two million displaced, Merin said the wounded are not wandering the streets the way he saw in Haiti following the 2010 earthquake. He was also part of the Israeli team that travelled to Japan in the aftermath of its 2011 tsunami, and he said the Japanese infrastructure was better able to withstand a disaster.

At about 4 a.m. Sunday, a man who had been stabbed in the chest was brought to the Bogo City field hospital by friends. Doctors put in a chest drain, which Merin said was beyond the capabilities of the local hospital.

"I am not sure what would have happened if we had not been around," he said.

Mobilizing and operating the field hospital has cost Israel millions of dollars, Merin said, as well as lost manpower. The medicines and much of the equipment brought in will remain when the team members leave in about two weeks, he added.

Merin, who is volunteering, believes the IDF is able to mobilize so quickly in the wake of natural disasters because it operates as an army unit, sending an advance team that allows the unit to deploy quickly upon arrival.

One of the logistics officers left with the team for the Philippines two days after his wedding, despite being on leave from the army for the occasion.

Israelis, Merin said, are "ready to drop everything and come and assist anywhere in the world that we need to be."

His team in the Philippines, he added, is "really treating [the patients] with all their heart."

It's worth the drive to Buffalo

Danielle Kubes
Special to The CJN

The lure of cheaper prices has drawn Canadians south of the border in increasing numbers since the dollar started hovering around parity a decade ago. And there may be no better time to take advantage of those lower prices then when you have bulk Chanukah gift shopping to do.

Keith Pitts, author of *The Canadian Cross-Border Shopping Guide* and the blog, 2sidesof49, estimates you can save as much as 15 to 25 per cent on electronics and up to 100 per cent on clothes.

But in order to maximize those savings, it's essential to take holiday shopping seriously and create a plan of attack.

"Plan your cross-border shopping trip the same way you plan any other trip," Pitts says. "If you're going to go to Paris, you're not just going to go over there, get off the plane and say, 'Gee what I am going to do today.'"

First, figure out what gifts you want to buy and then research the best prices on online sites.

Then you have three options. One, do it the classic way. Drive down to the mall, get some Chinese for lunch and browse.

Or, you can do it the lazy man's way and set up a mailbox in a border city. These are cheap, easy to do online, and usually

Keith Pitts

designed specifically for Canadians. Then just address your online shopping to the mailbox, drive down, pick it up and go right back over the border.

The bonus is that you can save a bit on sales tax, since many online American retailers aren't required to charge sales tax.

With these two shopping methods, you'll still save even with the price of gas for driving down.

The final shopping option works well for snowbirds and for those who have short shopping lists: just mail your gifts back home. Gifts under $60 are not subject to duty or taxes and postal service is much cheaper than here – Pitts says it's usually only $6 or $7 to send a package.

And although it's always tempting to try to sneak in items through the border, Pitts says not to bother. That's in part because they only charge GST at the border at five per cent, and duty is variable based on where items were manufactured. It is up to the discretion of the border agent, but can be negligible.

Even with the extremely high duty charged on alcohol, major savings can still be realized (and alcohol is a great gift to stockpile for that night-before-Christmas-forgot-to-buy-the-neighbour-something emergency).

"A wine that my wife drinks is about $16 a bottle here. Down in the States, it's about $10 a bottle, but they had a sale on that when you buy one bottle you get your other bottle for a dollar," Pitts says. "So now, the bottle of wine is $5.50. On that $5.50 bottle, you pay your 30 per cent duty and taxes on it, and you're still coming in with a bottle of wine at $7.50." That's a savings of about 47 per cent.

"You need to always declare and keep your receipt with you," he says. "Even if you're paying duty on it you're still going to be saving."

Israeli chef shares memories and recipes

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

City Shul recently served up an evening of food and fun with leading Israeli celebrity chef and cookbook author Gil Hovav.

He spiced up his food demonstration with plenty of humour as he regaled the audience with family lore gleaned from his illustrious Yemenite, Sephardi and Ashkenazi background. He's the great-grandson of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, father of modern Hebrew; the grandson of journalist Itmar Ben Aviv; and the son of Moshe and Drora, who were pioneers in Israeli public radio.

This lively event, sponsored by City Shul and Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, was held at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life in support of City Shul, the new downtown Toronto Reform congregation founded by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein.

Rabbi Goldstein said when she and Toronto food writer and author Bonnie Stern lead their culinary trips to Israel, they always visit Hovav. "He's very connected to Bonnie through their shared experiences in the culinary world.

"When we found out Gil was coming to Canada, we immediately invited him to do a food demonstration for City Shul, and he immediately said yes. It was a great event."

Hovav showed the audience how to make zehoug (hot Yemenite relish). "The number of zehoug recipes in existence correlates with Yemenite households," he wrote in the recipe handout. "Each family safeguards its own recipe.

"Some recipes are made with cloves, without cardamon, with a lot of salt or with red peppers instead of green. It all depends on the Yemenite region of origin and on intricate tribal politics."

Hovav offered many stories about his Moroccan grandmother (Ben-Yehuda's daughter-in-law), who was famous for her fish recipe. "She made the best Moroccan fish in Israel." He said he has tried to replicate her recipe, but he confessed that his is not as a good as his grandmother's. "She never gave me the recipe."

His version, which can be found below, is from his only English cookbook, *Confessions of a Kitchen Rebbetzin* by Rebbetzin G. H. Halpern (Toad Publishing, 2012; distributed by Modan Publishing House Ltd., Moshav Ben Shemen, Israel).

Hovav, who has written 10 cookbooks and three novels, said the authorship of the book is a hoax, because he is clearly not a rebbetzin. He reveals his true identity in the last chapter.

In an interview with *Haaretz* last November, Hovav said that *Confessions of a Kitchen Rebbetzin* was written in admiration for the many women in Israel who cook for their large families.

This kosher cuisine cookbook – it draws on kosher recipes from a variety of culinary traditions across Israel – is only sold in Israel.

ZEHOUG (HOT YEMENITE RELISH)

Zehoug is a green, hot relish traditionally used to season other dishes or to just smear on bread with some soft white cheese.

2 bunches fresh coriander
30 hot chili peppers (yes!)
1 whole garlic bulb
1 tbsp. black pepper
1 tbsp. ground cardamon
1 tbsp. ground cumin
1 tbsp. salt

Separate the cloves of garlic from the bulb. Discard the stems of the chili peppers. Place garlic and chili peppers

Continued on page 48

Gil Hovav

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A latke is a latke is a latke…

Beverly Levitt
Special to The CJN

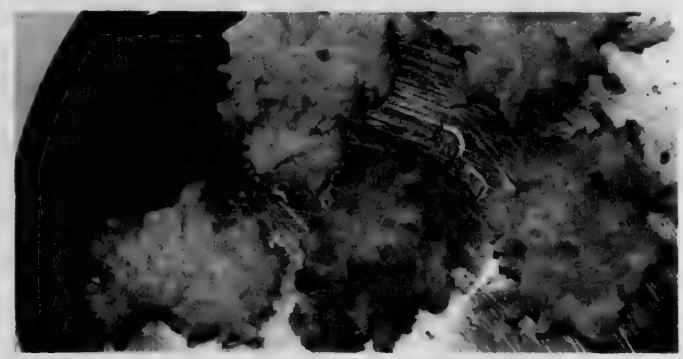
It's kind of a joke that if you ask 100 Jews the same question, you'll get 150 answers, and Chanukah fare seems the perfect topic to test that premise. Because we're lucky enough to have a holiday with a mandate to eat food fried in oil for eight days, we could conceivably serve eight different interpretations every night, right after we light the candles in the menorah.

Still puzzled by the question, how far afield from grandma's latkes folks really want to go, I asked several renowned chefs to enlighten us. The first question was, "Is it written in some tablet somewhere that latkes will be flat, dry and tasteless if we use any other potato than the sturdy, starchy russets?"

"It's all about the science," said Jeffrey Nathan, chef and owner of Abigael's kosher restaurants in Manhattan. "Russets and Yukon golds have the same high starch content, so you need less flour to bind the latke together. The less flour, the richer the potato flavour, and that's what we all want."

Nathan favours the Yukon's earthy flavour and creamy texture and, of course, there's that beautiful golden colour. But they're also considerably more expensive, so save them for intimate get-togethers or mix them with the russets, he suggests.

If you want to add different vegetables such as zucchini, cauliflower, carrots, yams or parsnips, you need to adjust the starch accordingly. Nathan recommends using 3/4 potatoes as a base and 1/4 of the other vegetables. When adding yams or parsnips, use no more than 50 per cent, as these root vegetables have almost no starch content and the latkes won't get crispy.



SWEET POTATO LATKES

From Michael McNally, chef/owner of London Grill in Philadelphia, Pa.

This batter can be made a day in advance, as sweet potatoes do not brown after they are peeled.

4 large sweet potatoes (3 lb.) peeled
1 large onion (1 lb.) halved
4 large eggs
1 cup flour
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1-1/2 cups oil (combination of canola and pure olive oil) for frying

Grate potatoes and onions on a box grater. Add eggs, flour, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Mix well. Heat oil in cast iron pan.

With a measuring cup scoop out 1/3 cup of mixture and form into pancake. Slide into hot oil, and cook 8 to 10 minutes on each side.

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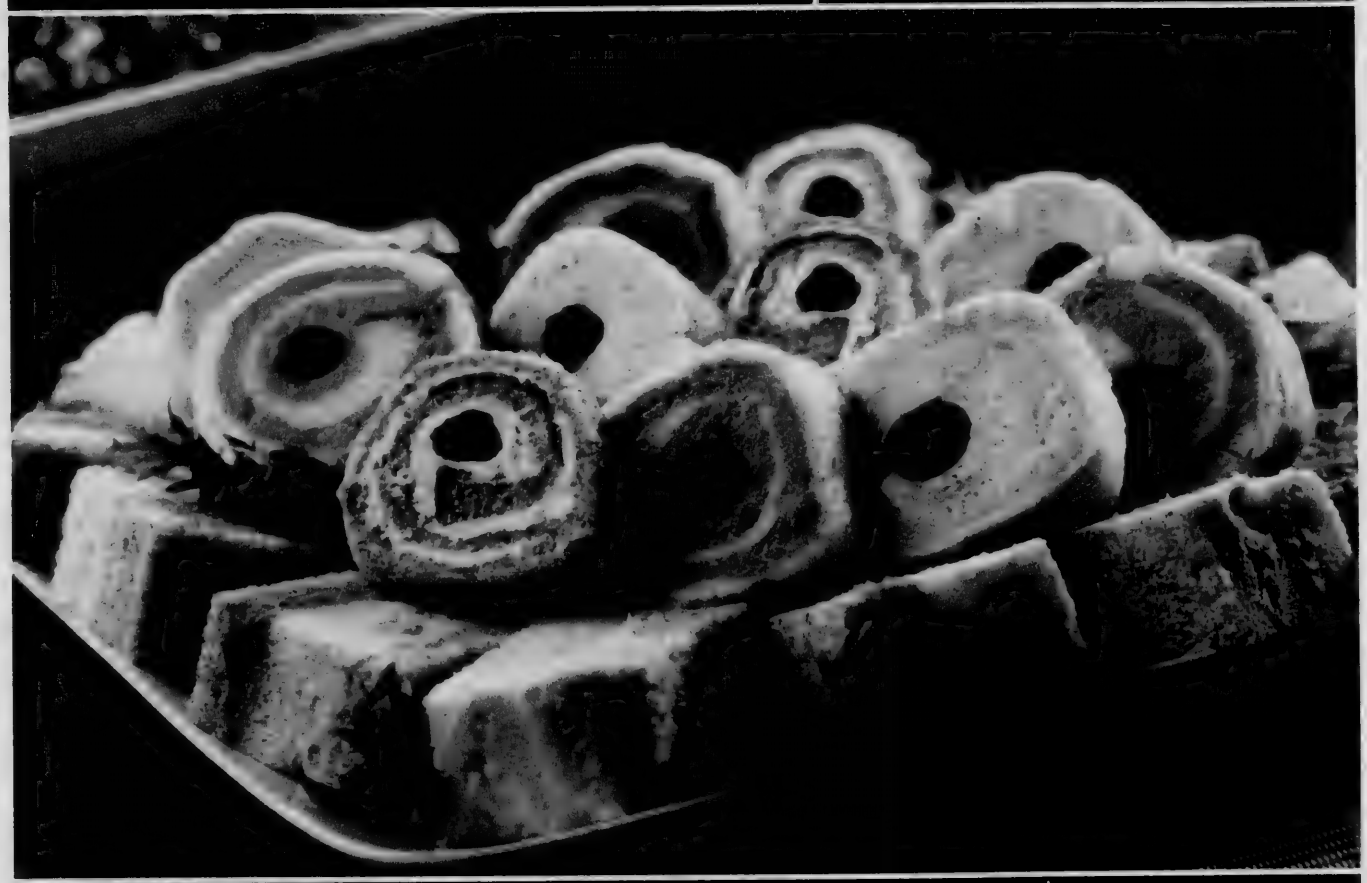

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Take comfort food up a notch

Continued from page 44

in a food processor and pulse until the mixture becomes a coarse paste. Roughly chop the coriander and add to the food processor with remaining ingredients.

Process the mixture until it becomes a glossy green paste. Fill jars or other containers with the relish and store in the fridge. This condiment has a very long shelf life (one year, according to Hovav), as long as it is kept refrigerated.

HOT MOROCCAN FISH

7 boneless, grouper fillets, 8 oz. each (halibut or cod can be substituted)
1/3 cup olive oil
1 green pepper
1 red pepper
1 yellow pepper
1 fresh hot chili pepper, red or green
1 whole garlic bulb
3 cups crushed tomatoes
1 tsp. hot paprika
1 tbsp. sweet paprika
1 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. ground turmeric
3.5 oz. tomato paste
1 cup boiling water
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 cup chopped coriander

Cut peppers into wide strips and discard seeds. Peel and roughly chop garlic cloves. Slice chili pepper thinly. In a large skillet heat olive oil on medium heat. Add peppers and garlic and fry for five minutes.

Carefully add crushed tomatoes. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring from time to time. Season sauce with salt and pepper. Gently place fish fillets skin-side down in tomato sauce.

In a small bowl, mix together water, tomato paste and spices and pour over fish. The liquid should cover the fish. If it doesn't, add more boiling water. Bring the sauce to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover, and cook for 20 minutes.

Serve fish with plenty of sauce and garnish with chopped coriander. Makes 8 servings.

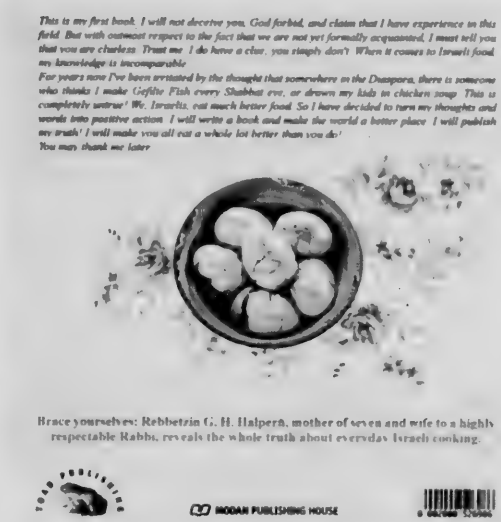
BEEF SOFRITO

2 lb. beef, cut into cubes
6 tbsp. vegetable oil
2 tbsp. sweet paprika
10 garlic cloves
2 carrots, roughly chopped
1 cup hot water
6 potatoes, peeled, cut into wedges
salt and pepper to taste

In a large pot, fry the cubes of beef in 1 to 2 tbsp. oil until browned. Add the paprika, garlic and carrots.

Add water and bring mixture to a boil. Cover pot, lower heat and simmer stew for two hours. Check intermittently to make sure the meat is covered with liquid.

After two hours, fry potatoes in oil. Add extra oil if necessary.


This is my first book. I will not deceive you, God forbid, and claim that I have experience in this field. But with outmost respect to the fact that we are not yet formally acquainted, I must tell you that you are clueless. Trust me. I do have a clue, you simply don't. When it comes to Israeli food, my knowledge is incomparable.
For years now I've been irritated by the thought that somewhere in the Diaspora, there is someone who thinks I make Gefilte Fish every Shabbat eve, or drown my kids in chicken soup. This is completely untrue! We, Israelis, eat much better food. So I have decided to turn my thoughts and words into positive action. I will write a book and make the world a better place. I will publish my truth! I will make you all eat a whole lot better than you do!
You may thank me later.
Brace yourselves: Rebbetzin G. H. Halperń, mother of seven and wife to a highly respectable Rabbi, reveals the whole truth about everyday Israeli cooking.
MODAN PUBLISHING HOUSE

Add fried potatoes to stew. Stir well so the potatoes soak in the sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Cook in covered pot for another half an hour. Makes six servings.

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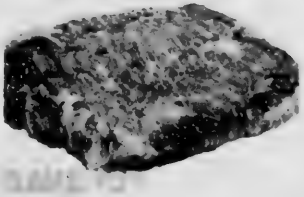

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Festival of lights: a time to share in holiday spirit

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

Every November, the temperature drops and days become dreary, but this fall, families have something to celebrate earlier than usual. Chanukah, 25 Kislev, 5774, begins Nov. 27, at sundown and ends Dec. 5.

The Jewish festival of lights signifies the re-dedication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt. During that week, Jews recall how a single flask of oil found in the Temple lasted eight days. Potato latkes fried in oil have become a Chanukah mealtime favourite. Families gather around the menorah each night to recite a blessing and light the candles.

Exchanging gifts has become synonymous with Chanukah. Parents present the children with chocolate, gelt, dreidels and other items each night. In addition, grandparents and dinner guests join in the festivities. Besides toting tokens for the children, guests often purchase presents for their hospitable hosts. Gifts run the gamut from sweets and wine to flowers and novelty items. In addition, books are available for every age and interest group.

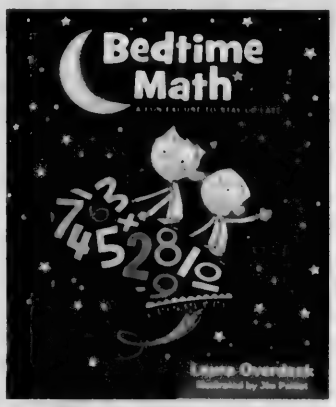
Yiddish Wisdom: Humor and Heart from the Old Country offers a compendium of timeless Yiddish proverbs and expressions for adults, whereas *Bedtime Math: A fun excuse to stay up late* features challenges for children from preschool through the elementary grades. Distributed by Raincoast Books in Canada, both titles are bound to become welcome additions to the family bookshelf.

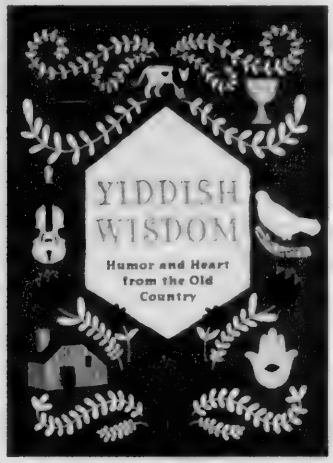
Translator Rae Meltzer and illustrator Christopher Silas Neal achieved their goal in transcending all cultures and ethnic backgrounds in *Yiddish Wisdom: Humor and Heart from the Old Country.* The delightful, pocket-size hardcover text is chock-full of proverbs and expressions that embrace the philosophy and traditions of Jewish life. In its 99 pages, readers will discover 150 folk sayings expressed in Yiddish and English. Yiddish, which includes a blend of Hebrew fragments, German and other European languages, found a receptive audience in North America and other continents.

In recent years, numerous Yiddish words have become familiar entries in English dictionaries and media outlets. Whether surfing the net or watching television, one is likely to come across words such as maven, schlep and schmooze. Similarly, everyone, regardless of nationality or background, can relate to the significance of each expression.

Here's a sampling: "You can't sit on two horses with one behind" is the translation of a Yiddish saying illustrated in the book. People eager to find an expression to clarify a point or to recollect a family favourite will find *Yiddish Wisdom* a handy tool.

Bedtime Math: A fun excuse to stay up late is the brainchild of math enthusiast Laura Overdeck. The splendid illustrations by Jim Paillot add cheer and humour to the text. While the author, a mother of three, acknowledges reading is necessary to succeed, her prime mission is mesmerizing young minds with an everlasting penchant for math. Each math problem is categorized for "wee ones, little kids and big kids." The author avoids specifying grades and "correct" age levels.



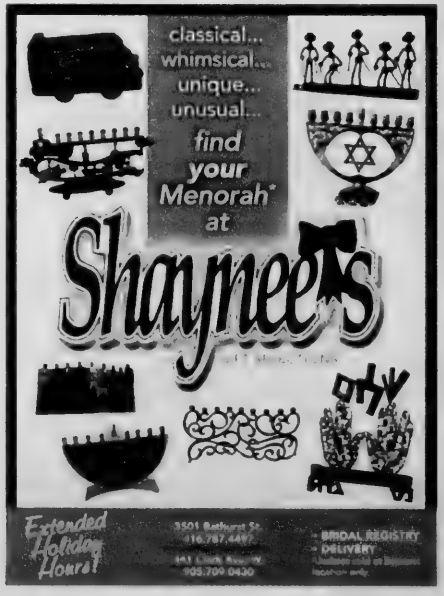


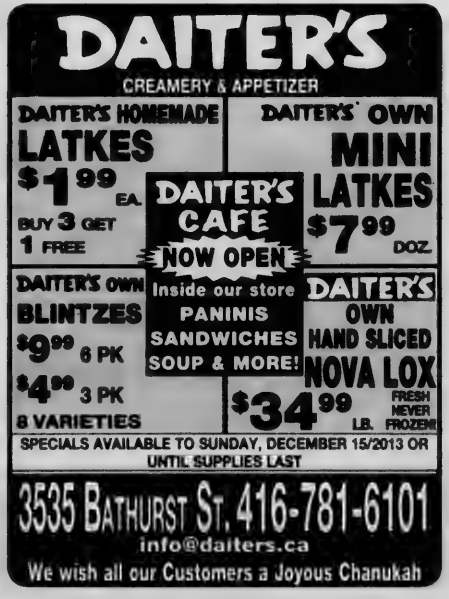
Photos courtesy of Raincoast Books in Canada.

Among the topics are food, pop culture, wild pets, extreme vehicles, sports and odd jobs. Since the author is attuned to children's interests, the situations covered in each exercise make good sense. In addition, illustrations, such as the one depicting a ketchup squeeze disaster, are amusing.

Educated at Princeton University and Wharton School of Business, Overdeck's affinity for math is shared by her husband, John. When their two-year-old started hollering for more math challenges, the couple was convinced their concept would intrigue other families. *Bedtime Math* is the result of their efforts.

Through friendly discussion, children will develop skills, Overdeck says, advising that we don't treat each exercise as a test. Bedtime math is an activity to be shared and enjoyed.





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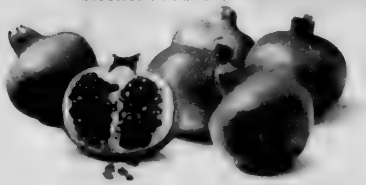

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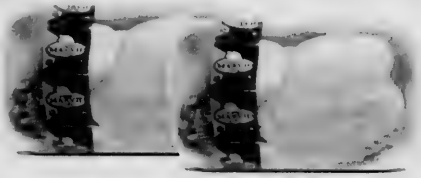

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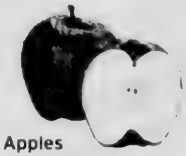

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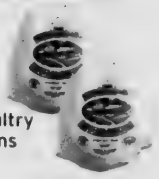

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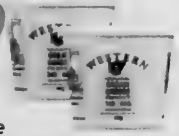

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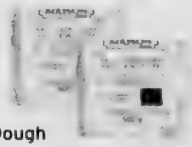

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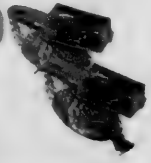

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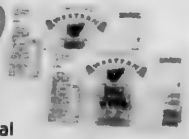

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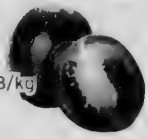

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Chanukah dreidel cookies – give them a spin

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

The dreidel is the toy we look for at Chanukah, loved by adults and children alike. Dreidels are not only great fun, they also remind us that "a great miracle happened there." Cookies made into dreidel shapes reflect the importance of sharing food and watching children play during the eight-day festival of Chanukah. These dreidel cookies won't win you any gelt, and they are not made of clay, but they will certainly bring joy to your Chanukah celebration.

CHOCOLATE DIPPED ORANGE DREIDEL COOKIES

These golden melt-in-your-mouth cookies are a traditional Chanukah treat.

1/2 cup unsalted butter
1/2 cup icing sugar
1 egg yolk
1 tsp. pure vanilla
1/4 tsp. salt
2 cups flour
zest of one orange
3 tbsp. fresh squeezed orange juice

Decoration
1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips

In a food processor, cream together the butter and sugar. Add the egg yolk and vanilla. Combine in the salt, flour and orange zest.

Add the juice and run the processor until the dough forms a ball. Gather dough together and place into a covered bowl or Ziploc bag and chill several hours or overnight. Take dough out of fridge about one hour before rolling to allow dough to come down to room temperature. Roll to 1/2-inch thickness on a board sprinkled with icing sugar. Cut out shapes with a dreidel-shaped cookie cutter and place on a parchment-covered cookie sheet. Bake at 350 for 10-12 minutes or until bottoms brown lightly.

When cookies are cool, decorate with chocolate. Melt the chocolate chips in a 2-cup Pyrex measuring cup in microwave for one minute, then stir until smooth.

Dip each cookie halfway into melted chocolate (holding the cookie below the handle of the dreidel, not on the handle as it may break). Finally, place on parchment paper until chocolate hardens.

POPPY SEED DREIDEL COOKIES

The poppy seeds, or *mohn*, add an enjoyable crispy texture to these delicious cookies.

1/4 cup unsalted butter
1/2 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 tsp. pure vanilla
2 cups flour plus up to 1 cup more
2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 cup poppy seeds

Decorations:
1 tube blue decorating icing
1 tube blue decorating gel

In a food processor, cream together the butter and the sugar. Add in the eggs and vanilla and combine well. Add in the 2 cups of flour, baking powder, salt and poppy seeds. Place mixture on a floured board and continue to add in flour a bit at a time while kneading dough until it is no longer wet. Roll out dough on a floured board to 1/2 inch thick. Cut out shapes with a dreidel cookie cutter and place on a parchment-covered cookie sheet. Bake at 375 for 12-15 minutes or until bottoms brown lightly.

Cool completely before decorating.

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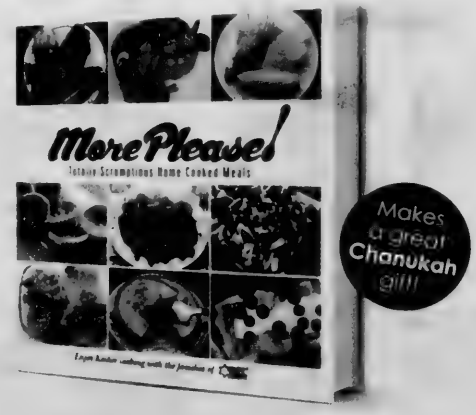

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Spice up Chanukah with new latke toppings

JNS.org

Mollie Katzen, an award-winning illustrator and designer, as well as best-selling cookbook author and popular public speaker, is back with a new round of recipes for Chanukah. With over six million books in print, Katzen is listed by the *New York Times* as one of the best-selling cookbook authors of all time and has been named by *Health Magazine* as one of "The Five Women Who Changed the Way We Eat."

Below are some of her ideas for how to freshen up your Chanukah table, without intruding on your latke loyalties. How about switching the toppings? You can always have the usual applesauce and sour cream on hand, but consider adding some intrigue and savoury twists – in addition to sneaking in vegetables, herbs, nuts, and olive oil – to the options on the menu. Add some lentil soup and a green salad, and your Chanukah celebration will be colourful and compelling.

CHIMICHURRI

Chimichurri is the "national sauce" of Argentina, and is also common in Honduras and other Latin American countries. It's a complex green paste, similar to a pesto, but containing a greater variety of herbs, and a tart taste from the presence of vinegar. Chimichurri is normally served with roasted or grilled meat or fish, but it's also delicious on cooked potatoes and vegetables, pasta, grains, and sandwiches. It's also a terrific dab of flavor for latkes, either directly on top, or as a green dollop on the sour cream.

This keeps for a week or two if stored in a tightly lidded container in the refrigerator. Just use as needed, as you would any condiment.

1 cup (packed) minced cilantro
1/4 cup (packed) minced parsley
1/4 cup minced scallions
1 tbsp. minced fresh oregano (or 1 tsp. dried oregano)
1 tsp. minced or crushed garlic
big pinch of cayenne
2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
1/4 tsp. salt
6 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

Place the cilantro, parsley, scallions, and oregano in a food processor, and mince very finely. Add the garlic, cayenne, vinegar, salt, and process to a paste, with the food processor running until everything is fully incorporated. Drizzle in the oil at the very end. Transfer to a tightly lidded container and refrigerate until use. Yield: About 2/3 cup, preparation time: 10 minutes

CHIPOTLE CREAM

Chipotle chilies are smoked dried jalapenos. They most commonly come in cans, packed in a vinegar preparation called adobo sauce. A little bit of canned chipotles-in-adobo goes a very long way, both in terms of its heat and its powerful smoky essence. In this sauce, sour cream and/or yogurt create a soothing, luxurious vehicle for the chipotle flavour.

Serve this wherever it seems appropriate, on any egg dish, with beans, rice, cornmeal preparations, or drizzled onto soups or on latkes.

1 cup sour cream or yogurt (or a combination)
1/2 to 1 tsp. canned chipotle chilies, finely minced

Place the sour cream and/or yogurt in a small bowl and whisk until smooth. Whisk in 1/2 tsp. minced chipotles, and let it sit for about 10 minutes, so the flavour can develop. Taste to see if it needs more chipotle paste, and adjust as desired. Store in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature before serving. Yield: 1 cup, preparation time: 5 minutes

RED PEPPER-WALNUT PASTE

Based on the Middle Eastern sauce called *muhammar*, this delicious paste is simultaneously pungent, slightly hot and sweet. I make it often and keep it around for many uses: as a topping for pilafs and other cooked grains, for spreading on pizza, toast, crackers, and sandwiches, and as a dip for cooked or raw vegetables. I also love it on latkes.

This keeps well for at least a week if stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator. In fact, the flavors deepen over time. For a California twist, you can use almonds in place of the walnuts.

2 heaping cups lightly toasted walnuts
2 to 3 medium cloves garlic
One 12-oz. jar roasted red peppers, drained
1 tbsp. cider vinegar
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1/4 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. honey or agave nectar
1 tsp. salt (or to taste)
black pepper and cayenne to taste

Place the walnuts and garlic cloves in a food processor and pulse until they are finely ground, but not yet a paste. Cut the peppers into chunks, and add them to the food processor, along with the vinegar, lemon juice, cumin, and honey. Process to a fairly smooth paste, then transfer to a bowl, and season with salt, pepper and cayenne. Cover tightly and store in the refrigerator. Yield: 3 to 4 cups, preparation time: 10 minutes (after the peppers are roasted.)

App helps you enjoy the holiday

Jennifer Libman
Special to The CJN

When it comes to buying Chanukah presents for your children, it's easy to purchase the latest toys, books or electronics. However, for a gift that is more unique, and one that will help them learn and develop new skills, consider Appy Chanukah. This new application, available for $1.99 on iTunes for iPad users, is for parents looking for a fun and educational way to teach their children ages two to seven about Chanukah.

"As a mother of two young children, I am always looking for learning tools to teach my kids about the Jewish holidays," said Alin Wagner-Lahmy, the creator of Appy Chanukah. "When I was looking for ideas for teaching my children about Chanukah I was searching blogs, YouTube channels, and various websites to find the resources I wanted – there wasn't one comprehensive source."

Wagner-Lahmy, who has a background in digital and social media, decided to create Appy Chanukah to provide parents and children with a holistic learning experience. She consulted with friends Tzvia Bader and Julie Silverman to design the program.

The result is an application that provides everything from songs to holiday recipes, holiday key terms and a thorough understanding of Chanukah. The activities can be enjoyed either together as a family, or by the children sitting and learning on their own.

The team hired one the top animators in Israel to design the programs. "There is a real emphasis on the animation," said Wagner-Lahmy. "Children are exposed to amazing graphics today, so we wanted to make sure our programs would hold their attention."

Some of the activities include a virtual menorah that can be lit each night, interactive lessons about the main customs of Chanukah, games teaching children to read, speak and write common Chanukah words, as well as holiday puzzles. Children can also design and paint holiday greeting cards that can be emailed to friends and family.

Another component of the application teaches children to sing popular Chanukah songs such as *Maoz Tzur* and *Mi Yemalel*. Parents are able to film their children singing and post them to YouTube or Facebook.

The application also teaches parents how to celebrate Chanukah with their children offline. The Appy Chanukah blog is regularly updated to give parents fun ideas to get creative with their children like making edible dreidels or a menorah drip mat. "We don't want parents to think we're asking them to sit their children in front of their iPad all day," Wagner-Lahmy said. "Every day there's an idea for a recipe to make together, an arts and crafts activity, or a book recommendation."

Appy Chanukah was launched in mid-October and the response has been very positive. The team is already looking forward to the release of Appy Passover in March.

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Homemade Chanukah desserts

Beverly Levitt
Special to The CJN

Every year we celebrate the first recorded war for religious freedom when the Jewish army defeated its enemies, took back its Temple, which had been defiled, and watched a tiny cask of olive oil stay lit for eight days, when it should have only lasted for one.

We hope that the no-fat proponents look the other way during Chanukah when the rest of us are relishing sufganiyot, fluffy fried doughnuts stuffed with sugary sweet fillings, Middle Eastern fried funnel cakes, fried apple fritters – any combination of flour, eggs and sugar that we can toss into a pot of bubbling, boiling oil and watch and wait as a few prosaic ingredients suddenly turn into crunchy, golden brown, melt-in-your-mouth addictive delicacies.

Although doughnuts are the most popular Chanukah dessert in the United States and Israel, where they are called sufganiyot, cookbook author Gil Marks says, "Jewish communities all over the world have their own regional version of these yeast fry cakes, which are made with yeast and shaped into round balls that become puffed when they are fried. They can also be powdered, glazed or sprinkled, but most people prefer them filled with jams for Chanukah. And these modern delicacies are prepared practically the same way today as they were 2,000 years ago."

In Germany and Poland, doughnuts were filled with plum and prune jams because these fruits were plentiful at Chanukah. A filling made of poppy seeds was also popular. Many people find Bismarks (presumably named after the first Chancellor of the German Empire) the crème de la crème of doughnuts. The small rim-shaped cakes are filled with generous helpings of custards and crèmes and often topped with chocolate or powdered sugar.

SUFGANIYOT

From Laura Frankel, author of *Jewish Cooking for All Seasons*, John Wiley & Sons

1 tbsp. dry yeast
1/3 cup sugar
3/4 cup room temperature dark beer (Guinness or Aventinus)
2-1/2 to 3 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp. salt
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/2 tsp. ground cardamom
4 egg yolks
2 tbsp. butter or canola oil
favourite preserves such as plum

Mix the yeast, 2 tbsp. of the sugar and the beer. Let sit until the yeast has proofed and is bubbly. Sift the flour and mix with the remaining sugar, salt, spices, egg yolks and the yeast mixture. Add butter or oil.

Knead the dough until it is smooth and forms a ball. Form into 2-in. balls. Place on a cookie sheet and let rise for about 30 minutes until they have doubled in size.

Heat oil to 350. Use a thermometer to make sure it stays at this temperature. If oil begins to smoke, it is too hot. Empty oil and start over.

Drop doughnuts into the oil about 5 at a time. Using chopsticks or tongs, turn to brown. When dark golden brown, remove to a plate lined with paper towels and drain excess oil.

Fill a pastry bag fitted with a small tip with the preserves. Pipe the preserves into the doughnuts and then roll the doughnuts in sugar to coat.

You may assemble the batter the day before and keep in the refrigerator in a Ziploc bag. The next morning, let it come to room temperature, roll out the balls, let them rise, and go through the steps until just before using. Makes about 24 doughnuts.

INSTANT DOUGHNUTS

Adapted from a recipe from allrecipes.com by chef/owner John Baylin of John Baylin Catering in San Diego. Baylin used lemon cake mix for this recipe.

1 18.25-ounce package cake mix such as Duncan Hines
1/2 cup flour
4 eggs
1-1/4 cups water
4 cups corn or peanut oil for frying
confectioners' sugar as needed

In the large bowl of an electric mixer combine cake mix, flour, eggs and water. On slow speed, beat batter until it is free of lumps. Heat oil in a deep pot until it reaches 375. Clip a candy thermometer to the side of the pot so you can monitor temperature throughout cooking.

Fill a soup spoon with batter and drop batter into the hot oil making sure not to overcrowd. Experiment until you find a size that you like.

Cook for approximately 5 minutes or until golden brown, flipping once so they are cooked evenly on both sides. With a slotted spoon carefully remove doughnuts from oil. Drain on paper towels. With a small sieve or sifter, dust with powdered sugar. Makes about 50 doughnuts.

APPLE FRITTERS WITH CHOCOLATE SAUCE

From chef and author Laura Frankel. She uses Saigon cinnamon, which gives a softer flavour.

3 crisp apples (such as Granny Smith), cored and cut into 1/2-in. thick rings
juice of 1 lemon
1 tbsp. cinnamon or less if you prefer
2 tbsp. sugar
For the batter
1 egg
4-1/2 oz. rice flour
6 oz. ice water
4 to 5 cups canola or other neutral flavoured oil for frying

Toss apples with the lemon juice. Stir together cinnamon and sugar; sprinkle over apples.

Whisk the egg. Add rice flour and water and lightly stir. Do not over mix.

Heat oil to 350. Dredge apple slices in batter and place, one by one, in the oil. Fry until batter is lightly browned and crunchy, about 2 minutes. Remove from oil and continue frying in batches. Cool apple slices on paper towels and sprinkle with more cinnamon and sugar if desired.

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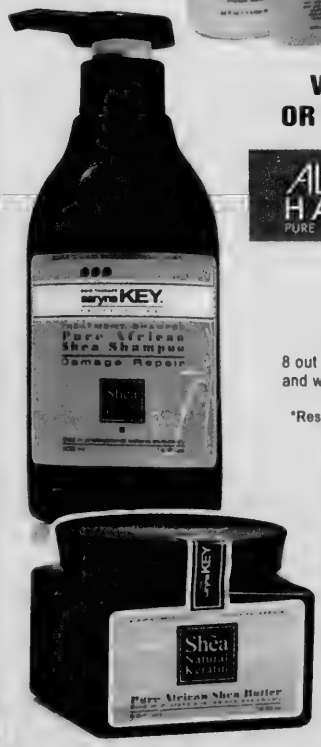

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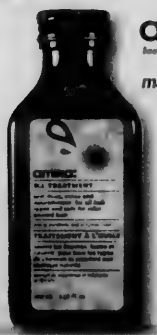

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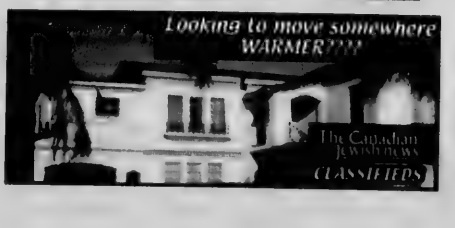

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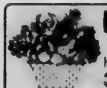

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2013 seen as transition year to 'something better'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Economics can be an amazing thing – when it's not busy being the dismal science. It can link luxury purchases in China with manufacturing in Ontario. Or capital gains taxes in China with that country's rate of divorce. Or German exports to the very currency that its leader, Angela Merkel, has been questioning for years.

Recently, CIBC's deputy chief economist Benny Tal touched on developments in Canada, the United States, China, Germany and elsewhere in presenting an analysis of the state of the world economy that was nowhere near dismal. He was addressing a breakfast meeting of the Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro in their "Mornings with Movers" series.

All of the worrisome speculation of a year ago has not been borne out by developments, he said. The Chinese economy experienced "a soft landing," and not the hard crash that was feared; the U.S. economy bounced back and is on the road to recovery; the Euro was not ditched as a world currency; and in Canada, there is still some doubt as to the health of the housing market, but it is not set to collapse as it did in the United States in 2007.

All in all, 2013 proved to be "a transition year between something bad and something better – not good, but better," Tal said.

A specialist on economic developments and their implications for North American markets, Tal said the U.S. economy, which is growing by less than two per cent in 2013, is into a period of a "sustainable recovery. No question about it."

Although there are factors that could "drag" the economy down, "we might see some improvement in the United States in 2014 led by a lower degree of fiscal drag, continued improvement in housing, a significant pent up demand in consumption and, importantly, the reintroduction of credit to the system."

Likewise, the Eurozone is recovering despite the German government's concerns a year ago about its viability and of the future of its currency, the Euro; in fact, a healthy European economy is necessary for the export-oriented German economy. In addition, "the real estate market [in Germany] is the most attractive real estate market in the universe," Tal said.

As for China, the government is changing gears away from a high growth orientation – it could expand at 9-10 per cent "if they want," – to one where economic power is shifting to the consumer.

Some 250 million young Chinese people, who have never known poverty, are showing "a propensity to consume that is higher than the U.S. teen," he said.

What's more, they're not interested in cheap junk. "They want quality and brand names," Tal said.

That meshes nicely with developments in the U.S. manufacturing sector, which took the opportunity afforded by the recent recession to restructure and employ its capital to increase productivity. The American manufacturing sector is experiencing "nothing short of a renaissance" after 45 months of growth. It is moving from labour-intensive companies to those that are capital intensive and which can produce the type of high-end goods sought by Chinese consumers, he said.

That could be good news for Canada, as Canadian firms "try to integrate itself into the supply chain created by U.S. manufacturing."

Tal also pointed to a likely – and unexpected – repercussion of the Chinese move away from production to consumption. The Chinese government has imposed a 20 per cent capital gains tax on second properties for married couples, leading to lots of work for divorce lawyers.

As for the broader economy, the Chinese move from production, which supported commodity-intensive infrastructure projects, has taken some of the wind out of the "mega-cycle in commodities."

That period is set to elapse, not collapse. Tal said he expected commodity prices to "go up in 2014 as part of a recovery, as part of a mini-cycle, not a mega-cycle." There is support for $100 oil, he continued, but not at $150 or $170 as in the past, as demand for these goods continues, but does not accelerate.

Turning to the U.S housing market, whose collapse was at the forefront of American economic troubles in recent years, Tal said banks are again willing to lend. There is lots of pent up demand and "the matrix that banks use is total delinquencies minus those that are delinquent for 180 days or more." The delinquency rate for 180 days is back at normal levels, he added.

As for the cost of borrowing, there was talk of the Fed slowly raising interest rates and "the market went crazy."

Nevertheless, Tal suggested rates could climb by 40 to 60 basis points over the next year to 18 months.

On the Canadian scene, Tal said the U.S. delay in approving the Keystone pipeline, which would bring oil from Alberta to southern U.S. refineries, has led producers to search for other options.

"They're not waiting," he said. "I see a lot of activity, in infrastructure, pipelines, rail."

Canada's economy is tied to the world market, which Tal said is recovering. That's good news as "the Canadian consumer won't be able to lift the Canadian economy.

"Being a small open economy we need the global economy to improve. With the debt level held by households so high we cannot count on the consumer, and with the expectation that the global economy will do better, exports will do better."

Canadian investors should focus on the global economy for investment opportunities. A portfolio should retain "high quality dividend stock," but "high beta [cyclical] stocks will probably do better.

"I think Canadian long-term [interest] rates will move alongside the U.S. [rates] and short-term rates will not move until late 2014 or early 2015," he said.

Seen from left are Gilad Epstein, president of Canadian Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro; Miki Nachmani, chief representative at the Toronto Representative Office of Bank Hapoalim, sponsor of the breakfast seminar; Benjamin Tal, deputy chief economist of CIBC World Markets, and Benjy Maor, director of Beit Issie's international resource development.

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Roth Unbound is a capstone to author's career

Reviewed by
Norman Ravvin

Roth Unbound
By Claudia Roth Pierpont
Farrar, Straus Giroux

In the final episodes of the most recent season of *Mad Men*, familiar characters sit in a darkened room – most of them in New York high rises – and gaze at a droning television. It's the newness of the technology still, in the '60s, a fresh intrusion into the lives of people steeped in books and newspapers, which surprises. But the subject matter is notable too: Americans stare at the disaster unfolding in Vietnam, and at the melee on Chicago streets during the 1968 Democratic national convention. The unspoken message is that the 1960s brought heavy public and political burdens to an otherwise powerful and prosperous nation.

Philip Roth's oeuvre looks increasingly like the best window back into American life after World War II. His early books were attacked for their presentation of Jewish assimilation and navel-gazing. He tried satire as his weapon in response to Richard Nixon in *Our Gang*. *Portnoy's Complaint* defined a pop cultural moment in 1969, reigning as the year's best-selling book. The Nathan Zuckerman novels pushed further afield, in their examination of American literary life, the cult of celebrity and the transformation of an immigrant community as it gained mainstream success.

More recent novels, including *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral*, are masterpieces of portraiture, as time and place, the weight of history and identity are brought into brutally precise focus.

Roth's own life is intertwined, hidden in transformed ways in many of his books, so that we feel in a strange way that we know him. A recent response I heard to the stories of Roth's youth, collected in *Goodbye Columbus*, was that the reader felt herself to be part of Roth's scenarios and his characters' lives in a unique way, no matter how they have receded in time. Something about the author's voice, his address to the reader, the topicality of his material is responsible for such a readerly reaction.

Unlike other major American writers such as Don DeLillo and Thomas Pynchon, the question of who Roth is matters to both those who like and those who viscerally dislike him. Claudia Roth Pierpont's new literary biography *Roth Unbound* is propelled and at the same time hindered by Roth's unusual familiarity. Pierpont bases her book on a long-standing friendship with him, on substantial visits she made to interview and follow him in his routines, and on her rich relationship with the books themselves.

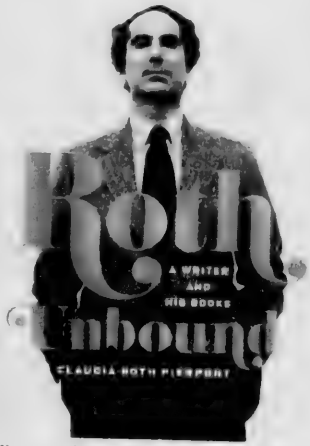
Yet, issues related to the genre of literary biography arise. Pierpont is a friend and a fan, so she is on Roth's side. This is a better position to write from than that of the biographer who is out to sink an author's reputation or to unearth headline-worthy news. But one can't help feeling, even with the books that Pierpont is willing to view as weaker efforts, the goal of *Roth Unbound* is to celebrate its subject.

Roth Unbound is a kind of capstone to Roth's career, appearing as it does after his announcement that he has had it with writing and is happy, having stopped doing the thing to which he dedicated his adult life. Pierpont places her interviews with Roth in the background of her discussion, referring to them only anecdotally, but her efforts effectively give Roth a final word on himself, an opportunity to comment on his successes and failures, both personal and creative.

Many of the things Pierpont has to tell us have appeared in other sources, and in this way, her version of Roth's life is at times a little more familiar than readers may want it to be. Aspects of his creative habits are laid out in ways that may be news to readers. Roth says he writes everything "spontaneously, with one incident providing inspiration for the next. There was no initial plan and no outline... He doesn't produce more than a page or two a day – sometimes agonizingly less – but he works his way through several drafts."

Pierpont examines the personal context and experiences informing Roth's novels. We learn a bit more than we've known about Roth's involvement in Communist-era Czechoslovakia. Beyond his work as general editor of the Penguin Writers from the Other Europe series, which brought such figures as Milan Kundera to North American readers, he undertook substantial efforts to support and ease the daily lives of Czech writers whose work was banned, or whose international royalties were routinely stolen by the Communist bureaucracy. But because *Roth Unbound* covers a lot of ground – from the late '50s till today – these fascinating aspects of a writerly life get a less attentive examination than they deserve.

In one particularly startling passage, Pierpont includes transcripts from White House tapes in which Richard Nixon and H.R. Haldeman discuss the impact of Roth's 1971 *Our Gang*:



Nixon: Roth is of course a Jew.

Haldeman: Oh yes... He's brilliant in a sick way.

Nixon: Oh, I know –

Haldeman: Everything he's written has been sick...

Nixon: I think the anti-Semitic thing, I hate to say it, but it can be very helpful to us.

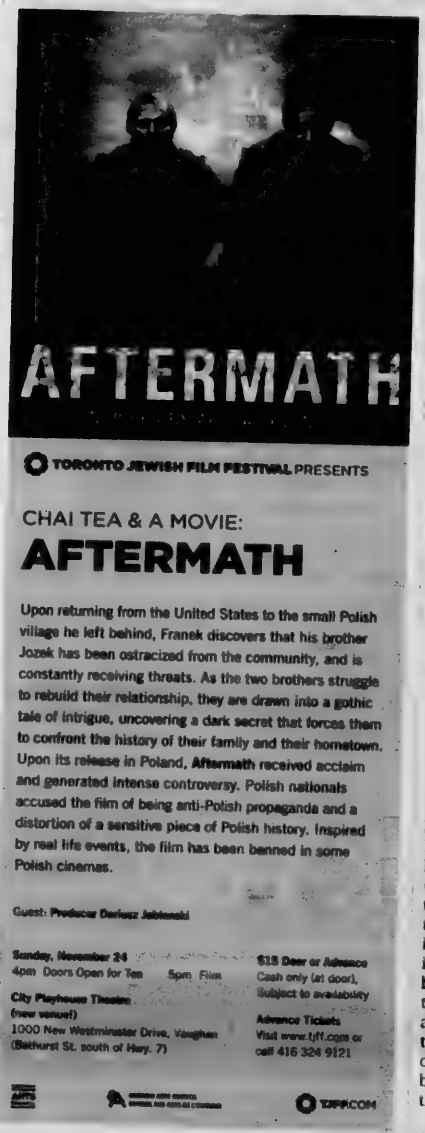
This is a short passage from a longer, grittier and grimly funny presidential back-and-forth that one might think Roth wrote himself.

Pierpont reminds us that much later in his oeuvre, in the 1997 masterpiece *American Pastoral*, Roth's fictional world "remains bound to history from its opening words: 'It was the summer of the Watergate hearings.'" Here Pierpont reflects affectingly on how Roth constructs a single scene – over 97 elegantly plotted pages at the novel's end – that sets his characters in counterpoint with the unravelling American social and political scene.

"The discussion that takes place," Pierpont tells us, "is about politics, pornography, and decency – carried on with all the urgency of argument and opinion that characterized those years, when the world seemed to be spinning away."

Here the contrast between Roth's fiction and the portrait of the American moment in *Mad Men* is glaring. The news of the day silences Don Draper as he sits with a drink in front of his droning TV. The impression one gets is that Americans did not know how to respond to the dramatic events they were watching. *Roth Unbound*, with its careful tour of four decades of fiction, brings to mind how Roth's characters talk, and talk, and talk in response to the events that envelop them.

Norman Ravvin's novels include The Joyful Child, Lola by Night and Café des Westens.


AFTERMATH
TORONTO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS
CHAI TEA & A MOVIE:
AFTERMATH
Upon returning from the United States to the small Polish village he left behind, Franek discovers that his brother Jozek has been ostracized from the community, and is constantly receiving threats. As the two brothers struggle to rebuild their relationship, they are drawn into a gothic tale of intrigue, uncovering a dark secret that forces them to confront the history of their family and their hometown. Upon its release in Poland, Aftermath received acclaim and generated intense controversy. Polish nationals accused the film of being anti-Polish propaganda and a distortion of a sensitive piece of Polish history. Inspired by real life events, the film has been banned in some Polish cinemas.
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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

MENAHEM PRESSLER, NEW ORFORD STRING QUARTET, AT KOERNER HALL

Menahem Pressler, pianist and founding member of the **Beaux Arts Trio**, celebrates his 90th birthday with a performance. Pressler is joined by the **New Orford String Quartet** in a program of **Beethoven**, **Brahms** and **Murray Schafer** (in celebration of the composer's 80th birthday). The Royal Conservatory concert takes place at Koerner Hall, Sunday, Nov. 24, 3 p.m. $35 to $75.

Also, Israeli conductor **Lior Shambadal** leads the **Royal Conservatory Orchestra** in a program of **Beethoven** and **Hindemith**, Koerner Hall, Nov. 22, 8 p.m. $25 to $55. www.performance.rcmusic.ca, 416-408-0208.

• • •

Yiddish Vinkl: Elly Gotz, who spent his teenage years in the Kovno Ghetto before being imprisoned in Dachau, came with his family to Toronto in 1964. A Yiddish maven, Gotz reads the Yiddish poems of Lithuanian-born poet **Rivka Galin** (1890-1935) and Romanian-born poet **Eliezer Shteinbarg** (1880-1932) with English translations. Yiddish Vinkl, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. Thursday, Dec. 5, 12 noon. $18 includes buffet lunch. Please RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

• • •

Names in the News: Toronto-based band **Jaffa Road** has won the World Music Group of the Year award in the Canadian Folk Music Awards, the ceremony for which took place recently in Calgary. The band, which consists of **Aviva Chernick**, **Aaron Lightstone**, **Sundar Viswanathan**, **Jeff Wilson** and **Chris Gartner**, makes its debut performance in Montreal on Nov. 21.

• • •

Film Notes

• Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents a screening of *Aftermath/Poklosie*, the 2012 film by Polish director **Wladyslaw Pasikowski**, in Polish with English subtitles. Award-winner at the 2013 Jerusalem Film Festival. $15. City Playhouse Theatre, Sunday, Nov. 24, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. www.tjff.com

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series on the films of **Robert Altman** with a session on "Biography – *Vincent and Theo*." Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Nov. 25, 7 to 9 p.m. $11.25 drop in, students $6.

• The TIFF Bell Lightbox features a 10-film spotlight on the works of American filmmakers **Joel** and **Ethan Coen**, Nov. 28 to Dec. 20. The idea is to "invite audiences to (re)familiarize themselves with the off-kilter universe of the Brothers Coen" in preparation for their newest film, *Inside Llewyn Davis*, which opens at the TIFF Bell Lightbox on Dec. 25. 350 King St. tiff.net

Aviva Chernick

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Music She Wrote – A Tribute to Canadian Women Composers features **Jacques Israellevitch**, the **Koffler Chamber Orchestra** and pianist **Christina Petrowska Quilico**. The Music Gallery, 197 John St. Sunday, Nov. 24, 7 p.m. $15, $20, $25. Advance tickets, 416-638-1881, ext. 4333, or serdem@kofflerarts.org

• **Aviva Chernick** performs songs in Judeo Spanish, Hebrew and Yiddish, accompanied by musician **Josh Engel**, at a Chanukah Musical Celebration presented by Active Seniors/BoomersMiles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Nov. 28, 1:30 p.m. $5 includes latkes and treats. Please pre-register, 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Author **Lily Poritz Miller** launches her new book, *The Newcomers*, about a South African family with Jewish roots transplanted to New England after World War II. Ben McNally Books, 366 Bay St. (south of Queen), Thursday, Nov. 28, 6 to 8 p.m.

• Teatron's production of **Chaim Potok**'s *The Chosen*, which **Aaron Posner** adapted for the stage, was originally supposed to run until Nov. 24, but it has been extended for another week. It's at the Toronto Centre for the Arts (Studio Theatre) until Dec. 1. www.teatrontheatre.com, 416-733-0545.

• • •

At the Galleries: Nearly a century after the beginning of World War I, the artistic frenzy that swept Europe in the years leading up to the conflict comes alive at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The new exhibition, *The Great Upheaval: Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Collection*, 1910-1918 features more than 60 works by 36 artists including **Kandinsky**, **Picasso**, **Modigliani**, **Matisse** and **Chagall**. Nov. 30 to March 2, 2014. www.ago.net

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Yemen Blues deserves all the attention

Jordana Divon
Special to The CJN

Something unusual was happening at Toronto's Koerner Hall.

To outside observers it might have looked like this: A mature, sophisticated audience, one that had started the evening by listening in its habitual, mild, sophisticated audience way, had suddenly risen to its feet mid-song, hands stretched over heads in a cacophony of clapping.

The architect of this raucous Royal Conservatory display was one Ravid Kahalani, a sinewy, braided, longhaired man in a shiny metallic suit who commanded the stage with such charismatic verve that almost everyone in attendance, including a few grandmother-aged participants, began to dance in their seats with enough energy to power a few windmills. A Brahms matinee performance this was not.

Kahalani is perhaps better known as the driving force behind Yemen Blues, an Israeli world music ensemble that has generated enthusiastic underground buzz since they made their debut at the Babel Med festival in Marseilles three years ago.

On Oct. 26, Kahalani and his dynamic five-piece band showed Toronto why they warrant the attention.

Though their music, a blend of original fusion sounds sung in Arabic, Hebrew and French, may not be suited to everyone's tastes, the 35-year-old front man's gifts as a live performer – the incredible energy he manages to create and the connection he builds with his audience – position him as an artist worth watching in any language.

It's no surprise, then, that the former dance student pays close attention to the more theatrical elements of his show.

"Many things that I do on stage are very thoughtful and I enjoy seeing the result of it," he explains in a pre-show interview, fresh off a 12-hour flight from Ben Gurion airport.

Ravid Kahalani is the driving force behind Yemen Blues. The son of Jewish-Yemenite parents, he cut his musical teeth on the songs and prayers of his ancestral home, but quickly found that his appetite extended far beyond familiar sounds.

"When you can control the situation and give people something, bring something out of them and they enjoy it in a special way, it's very exciting to see."

With Yemen Blues' debut album making the rounds and a second one currently in the works, the former protégé of Israeli superstar Idan Raichel appears to have finally hit his musical sweet spot.

"I wouldn't say that I found my sound because it's not only my sound even though it started from me," he says with modesty, acknowledging the contributions of his fellow band members. "[But] I took the album as my first solo project and I would say that I found myself in music when I created Yemen Blues."

Though Kahalani's natural talent made performing an inevitable career, his fascination with world music shaped him into the artist he has become.

The son of Jewish-Yemenite parents who came to Israel in order to escape political unrest, Kahalani cut his musical teeth on the songs and prayers of his ancestral home, but quickly found that his appetite extended far beyond familiar sounds.

"With time, I started to listen to blues and jazz and Bob Marley and Pink Floyd and I totally left the Yemenite music," he says, noting that he even spent time mastering Serbian Orthodox liturgical singing in his teens.

"I later met a friend who introduced me to West and North African music and this changed my life musically. I began to understand the connection between blues and Yemenite music, and Moroccan music and West African music, and all North African music, and so many other genres that came out of it like jazz and blues and funk and rock n' roll."

Instead of experimenting with one sound, he began to experiment with all of them, singing in whatever language his music demanded. In his youth, he even invented language to suit a song's particular rhythm or tenor when no existing words would do.

This sensitivity to what the melody and instrumentation demand has led industry types to label Kahalani as a fusion artist. It's a label he rejects.

"I don't think to frame music [in genres] is the right thing. I think that comes from a business place that people need to place music in categories, but these day when you see all kinds of fusion and culture music that combines many things, it's getting harder and harder [for executives] to put this music into boxes, so I don't really spend too much time thinking about it," he says.

The business end of the industry is often the necessary evil for artists who would rather be focused on creating and performing, but Kahalani isn't exactly complaining about the opportunities the industry has provided him.

At the same time, he says he doesn't feel any pressure to strive for a more mainstream sound in order to increase radio play at home in Israel.

"I don't think a musician creates music because he wants to be on the radio. He creates music because it makes him feel something. He thinks that this thing is beautiful and he loves it and thinks it works well," he says.

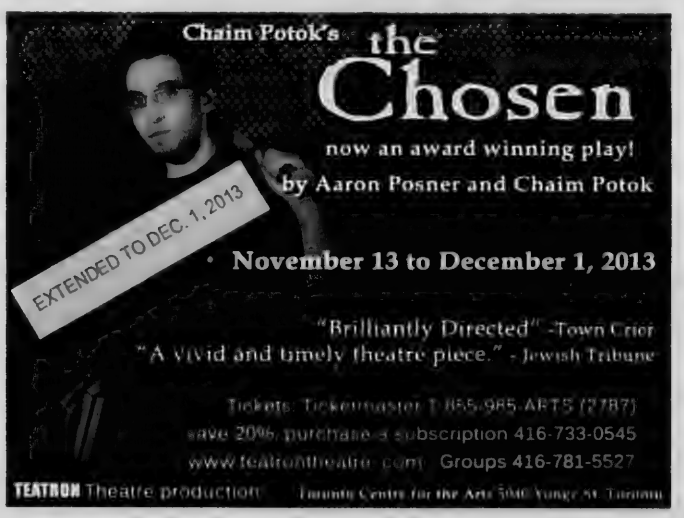
"[If anything,] my fame gives me strength to create more and feel more comfortable because it gives [me] the feeling that [I'm] good, that [I'm] bringing something that is true."

While that creative energy continues to burn, Kahalani is busy honing his onstage craft and enjoying the chance to play for international audiences on an increasingly frequent basis.

Last month's show marks Yemen Blues' third time in Canada, a country whose multicultural tapestry makes him feel at home.

"Canada is great. It feels kind of like home to play here," the jet-lagged performer concludes before heading to rest up before his big show. "People are really open and really into what they love with no borders. They very much respect the music in a professional and a spiritual way and those two things are the most important."

His love for Canada mutually affirmed, those who missed the opportunity to see him live this time shouldn't have to wait too long for another chance.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Thriller strips away hidden post-Holocaust layers

Joseph Serge
Interim Editor

The Toronto Jewish Film Festival is presenting the Toronto premiere of the award-winning, controversial movie *Aftermath* on Nov. 24.

Although it is a work of fiction, this gothic Holocaust thriller was inspired by the 1941 Jedwabne massacre in Poland and was banned in several cinemas in that country.

It takes place in 2001. Franek returns to his native Poland after living in Chicago for around 20 years, to visit his estranged younger brother, Jozek who lives alone on the family farm since his wife suddenly took the kids and left for America.

The farm is in an isolated village. Franek has to take a taxi from the airport to the train station, and then a bus to the village from which the nearest stop is a long walk through winding country roads. He arrives at the family farm late at night and is greeted by his brother wielding an axe. He immediately gets into a heated debate with Jozek, accusing his older brother of abandoning their parents and not returning for their funerals.

Shortly thereafter a rock is thrown through the windows, and we quickly learn that Jozek is not well-liked by the local villagers.

The film, tightly written and directed by Wladylsaw Pasikowski, takes a creepy, suspenseful turn, similar in tone to the 1971 (and its poor 2011 remake) *Straw Dogs*. Franek sees that his brother is harassed at every turn and beaten up by drunks in a pub. At harvest time, the harvester doesn't come to their farm as scheduled, and soon Franek himself is being followed.

Curious, Franek discovers from the one friendly soul in town, a young woman who works at the clinic, that Jozek is collecting Jewish tombstones. She tells him that during the war, the Nazis ripped the gravestones from a Jewish cemetery and used them to pave a road. After the war, a new road was placed over them, but when a flood washed the new road away about 10 years ago, the gravestones were unearthed.

Since then, Jozek has been collecting them and erecting them on his farm. The villagers are especially upset that he plans on taking the stones from around the church bell tower.

Jozek admits this to his brother, telling him he's not sure what compels him to do this, only that it seems wrong to him that people are using these gravetones to walk on or as work benches.

"There's no one left to look after their dead," he explains, revealing in the process that he has learned to read Hebrew. He meticulously cleans these gravestones, reciting the names written on them.

Franek, whose language occasionally displays ingrained anti-Semitism (he calls Jews "Yids"), thinks his brother is crazy, but, as the older brother, feels the need to protect him.

Curious that no one seems to want to talk about what happened to the village's Jews during the war, he continues digging, at one time quite literally, despite the physical threats from the villagers. He soon discovers a big secret about the village's wartime past, one that, like the gravestones, the townspeople would prefer remain buried.

Aftermath is a fast-paced, suspenseful thriller inspired by a 2001 book, *Neighbors*, in which historian Jan T. Gross revealed that it was Poles who massacred the Jews in Jedwabne and not the Nazis, as the official government account reported.

Aftermath won the Yad Vashem Chairman's Award at the 2013 Jerusalem Film Festival.

It is screening at The City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan. Doors open for tea at 4 p.m. Screening at 5. Producer Dariusz Jablonski will be in attendance and a Q & A will follow.

For advance tickets: www.tjff.com. 416-324-9121.

Józek (Maciej Stuhr), left, and Franek (Ireneusz Czop) sit in shock after unearthing their family's secret in the Polish thriller *Aftermath*.

DJ takes part in new 'democratic' approach to radio

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Getting back on the Toronto airwaves this fall after an eight-month hiatus was like riding a bike, said radio veteran Dave Bookman, who has been part of the Toronto rock radio scene since 1991.

After 21 years at 102.1 the Edge, Bookman – or Bookie, as he's known on the radio – was ready for a change. He knew a new radio station, Indie88, would be starting up this summer, and he wanted to be a part of it, so he stepped down from his position at the Edge last December.

"Without getting too technical, the Edge and all stations have a lot of restriction on what they can play and when they can play it, and then you have the whole business of broadcasting. All these factors come into what makes a playlist," he said.

Being part of a brand new station meant he could help build something new, he said. "It's an opportunity to really stretch my legs and open up my record collection and play a wide variety of types of music."

Indie88, broadcasting on 88.1, has emphasized its "democratic" approach to radio, with the listeners voting on what the station should play. Someone listening to the online live stream can upvote or downvote each song that comes on, and the station regularly sends out surveys to determine what audiences want to hear.

Bookman called it an exciting new approach that has helped resolve some of

Continued on page 66

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DJ wanted to be on radio since he was a kid

Continued from page 65

the frustration he's felt with the radio industry in the past.

"The audience wasn't given enough intelligence," he said. "The way it's set up [at Indie88] is, we're trusting each other. If we go somewhere, they're going to come with us and we're all going to figure it out together."

Bookman said he has dreamed about being on radio ever since he was a little kid in Ottawa listening to the radio at night.

"I love the fact you could lie there and listen and put the pictures in your mind," he said, describing it as a magical platform for storytelling.

That magic still comes through today. Even though the technology has evolved to the point where everyone can be his or her own personal DJ, there's still something special about listening to the radio, Bookman said.

"I think it's a little bit of wonderment. I believe people like the fact that there's somebody else creating something for them. They want to laugh and have a good time and want to discover things."

It can be hard to find good bands out of the plethora of music releases today, he said. There have never been so many bands to choose from, but with lots of bands come lots of bad music.

"The one thing about today is, it's not as hard to create something, and I'm not sure that's a good thing," he said.

Just 10 or 15 years ago, musicians had to give up everything for the chance to put their music out there. "So, when someone did something, you knew there was a certain level of dedication to their craft," he said.

Not so today. Any kid with a computer can make music, he said, and only with time will we see the fallout from technology.

Even after so many years in the industry, Bookman said it's still an exhilarating and thrilling job, but he has other ideas he hopes to try as well. He hesitated to speak about some of the projects he worked on during his eight-month hiatus, but he mentioned an online venture called "Breakfast with Bookie," where he interviews people over a coffee or meal setting.

He's also continuing his weekly Nu Music Nites at the Horseshoe Tavern, which feature up-and-coming rock bands, showcasing 30 minutes of material each – about the length of his own attention span, Bookman joked. The idea is, if you don't like the band, just wait 30 minutes and something new will come up.

Dave Bookman

No matter what medium Bookman ends up in, he hopes to continue to deliver new music and make his mark on Toronto's music journalism scene.

Dave Bookman is on the air Sunday nights from 6 to 10 p.m. on Indie88.

Kids have fun learning about holidays with books

Lauren Kramer
Special to The CJN

The Jewish holidays present a great opportunity to explain Jewish history, customs and traditions through kid-friendly literature, and this year's Chanukah books from Kar-Ben take three very different approaches to the Festival of Lights.

In *Esther's Hannukah Disaster* ($7.95), author Jane Sutton introduces Esther as a lovable gorilla who is intent on purchasing Chanukah gifts for her animal friends. Trouble is, her gift choices aren't all that thoughtful.

The massive socks don't fit her mouse friend Sarah, her zebra friend Zack admits to not liking the red sweater she gives him, Josephine the turtle can't use the jogging suit, and Oscar the elephant is not amused by his book, *100 Jokes About Elephants*. To rectify the situation, Esther invites her friends to a Chanukah party and asks them to bring their gifts and swap them for other items. This way, everyone goes home happy.

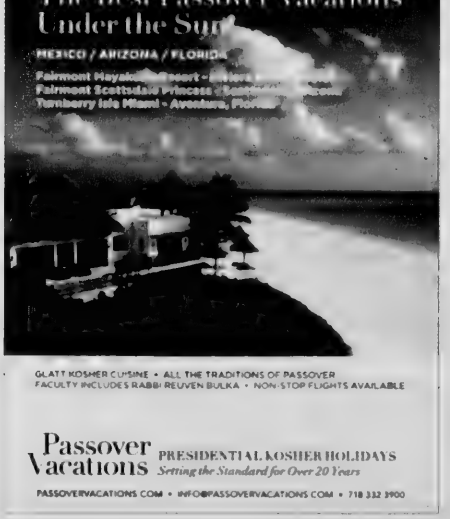
Andy Rowland's illustrations add mirth and entertainment to this Chanukah jungle tale, which highlights the importance of choosing gifts appropriate to the recipient. It does, however, place the bulk of its emphasis on Chanukah gifts rather than on less materialistic traditions associated with the holiday.

In *Sadie's Almost Marvelous Menorah* ($7.95), Sadie and her Hebrew school friends prepare for Chanukah by crafting their own menorot. They mould clay into candle-holders, paint and decorate and practise the Chanukah prayers in preparation for the first night. But before she can even light the candle Sadie's new menorah gets broken. The only surviving piece is the shammash, which gets used to light the candles on the other menorot in her home.

The *ABC Hannukah Hunt* ($7.95) is a book of rhymes and quick activities for preschoolers, offering a very brief description of the history of Chanukah interspersed with games, spot-the-difference activities and a maze. The rhyme scheme does not always work perfectly and feels forced at times, but nevertheless, there's enough in this book to hold a preschooler's attention to the end and to deliver an overall message that Chanukah is a fun holiday about great food, attractive candles, gifts, songs and visitors.

While it has nothing to do with Chanukah, *Don't Sneeze at the Wedding* (Kar-Ben, $6.95) is a delightful read for three-to-six-year-olds that describes the traditions involved in a Jewish wedding through the perspective of Anna, a flower girl at her aunt's nuptials. She loves the fancy dresses, makeup, flowers and fuss, but as she develops the first signs of a cold, she's anxious she will sneeze and interrupt the wedding. As the book references the chupah, the ketubah, the shared cup of wine, the Seven Blessings and the breaking of the glass, Anna tries to follow advice she's been given on how to prevent a sneeze from happening at the crucial moment.

On the final page, author Pamela Mayer goes into detail about what those traditions actually mean. Martha Aviles lends her extremely talented hands to the illustrations of *Don't Sneeze at the Wedding*, making this book a fun, entertaining and pictorially magnificent read for kids. It's an especially relevant one for children who have a wedding to attend but have no idea what to expect.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Message to CJN Snowbirds
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Interior designer has a flair for the dramatic

Gelman turned this bachelor pad into a stunning, sophisticated space for a young professional living in the Toronto Hunt Club in 2011.

House of Design founder Erica Gelman

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Interior designer Erica Gelman loves nothing more than an opportunity to turn a bland, boring house drowning in a sea of various shades of beige, into a posh, show-stopping dream home worthy of a magazine cover.

In fact, at just 29 years old, Gelman, who founded her business, House of Design, with her husband, Eric, in 2008, has made a successful career out of doing just that.

"I've always loved design. As a kid I used to ask my mom if we could go to open houses because I always loved walking through and seeing what they had done," said Gelman, a graduate from the International Academy of Design and Technology in Toronto.

"I'm talking back before I was even 10, back when sponge painting was the biggest thing. I remember saying to my mom 'We have to have sponge paint in our house too,'" she said, laughing.

But it wasn't until she was working as a contractor with another design firm in Toronto that she got the urge to go it alone.

"I was doing mostly commercial design and... I just knew that that wasn't going to be my creative avenue," she recalled.

Although some of her peers might be intimidated by the idea of running a business in addition to working as a designer, Gelman said that concept appealed to her.

"I've always been very business oriented," she said, adding that her family has been running its own business in the automotive industry for 20 years.

"I'm a Libra, so to me, that's always been my balance; the creative and the business aspects... I really don't feel balanced until I have both of them under control."

Another important aspect of her job is being able to understand and connect with her clients, develop a trusting relationship with them, and ultimately deliver a space they'll love.

"A lot of the times you might know that something is right for the space, and the client will say to you, 'No, that's not what I want,' and it's either because they're afraid to come out of their own comfort zone, or they can't envision it," Gelman said.

"Sometimes it becomes a really big struggle."

While the clients ultimately have the final say in how they want their space to look, "if you know that something is so right and so perfect for a space, usually the client will feel that from you," said Gelman, who describes her style as tailored and classic.

"I don't really like to stay too much on trends, I'd rather create spaces that feel timeless, and... it's just really personal."

Gelman isn't afraid to take risks and go for a dramatic look. Featured in the Spring 2013 issue of *Canadian Home Trends Magazine*, Gelman designed a dining room using a mix of texture and dark high gloss colour.

In a blog entry she wrote about designing that space, she described how she put it together.

"Lush velvets and silks create an instant air of luxury within the space... The walls are painted in a matte finish dark charcoal, and the ceiling is done in the same colour, but with a high gloss finish. Contrasted with the white mouldings, eyes are instantly drawn up, into and around the space."

Coming up with a bold, dramatic idea is one thing. Getting the client to give her the green light to go ahead with her design is quite another.

"You might have this brilliant idea walking through a space, but if it's not how the client wants to ultimately live at the end of the day – it's a matter of them being at their happiest in the environment that you created. It has to be a reflection of the homeowners," she said.

Another challenge is being completely invested in a project and confident about your design. Otherwise, it could reflect negatively in the execution.

"My confidence level has grown immensely since coming out of design school, but I knew that that I had to 'fake it until you make it,'" she said.

"Confidence level is huge, you really need to believe what you're telling people."

For those who dream of a design job, and think of it as little more than spending other people's money on glamourous home décor, Gelman warns that her career is a lot harder than it seems.

"Unless you love it 100 per cent whole-heartedly, it's a business that will really play on your emotions. Because design is really personal, and you have to be completely invested... you have to almost develop a thick skin about it as well."

The countless number of reality design shows might give viewers the wrong idea about what her job really entails.

"It's nothing like you see on TV. There is so much more organization and detailing... That's something they don't teach you [in design school]," Gelman said.

"You're taught all the principles, and you're taught elements. A lot of the times, people come out of school and they can formulate a really nice room, but to actually execute it is two totally different things."

On the other hand, Gelman said she would love an opportunity to showcase her talent on an interior design show.

"My ultimate goal is to build an entire house from the ground up, and if somebody wants to document that, I would love for that to happen. That's where my ultimate goal lies."

For more information about House of Design, visit_www.house-of-design.ca.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Nov. 25 is the deadline for the issue of Dec. 5. Dec. 2 is the deadline for the issue of Dec. 12. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 21

BROTHERHOOD SOCIAL

Adas Israel Congregation of Hamilton holds its 55th anniversary Brotherhood Social, 6 p.m. For tickets, call 905-528-0039.

HONOURING IRWIN COTLER

MP Irwin Cotler will be honoured by the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation and Beth Tzedec Congregation. Guest speaker will be **Gideon Raff,** executive producer of *Homeland*. For tickets, call 416-781-3584.

CANTORIAL MASTERPIECES

Cantor Alex Stein performs cantorial masterpieces, 7:30 p.m. at Adath Israel Congregation. $18. 416-635-5340

Saturday, Nov. 23

INTERFAITH CONCERT

Josh Nelson and **Neshama Carlebach** perform in an interfaith concert, hosted by Solel Congregation at the International Centre. For tickets, see www.solel.ca/tribute

MUSIC FOR OUT OF THE COLD

Evan Malach, Courtney Simmons and **The Varsity Jews** perform in a benefit concert for Out of the Cold, Temple Har Zion, 7:30 p.m. For tickets, email franmalach@hotmail.com

BIBLICAL WOMEN

Temple Sinai presents a 3-week series on Dinah, Tamar and Asenath, starting today, 12:30 p.m.

JEWISH SINGLES 50+

The movie *Besieged* will be shown, followed by a discussion on "How Far Would You Go for Passion?" Lodzer Synagogue, 8 p.m. $10. Call 416-636-6665.

MUSICAL MELAVEH MALKA

Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a melaveh malka choral festival, 7 p.m. $10 in advance/$15 at the door. Call 416-221-3433.

Sunday, Nov. 24

REMEMBER CAMP KVUTZA

Tobi "Pidgy" Gordon launches the book *Remembering Camp Kvutza 1944-1965*, 2 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. RSVP rememberingcampkvutza@gmail.com.

NCSY CONCERT

Shlomo and **Eitan Katz** and the **Eitz Chaim Boys Choir,** perform at the NCSY annual concert, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 7 p.m. For tickets, call 905-761-6279, ext. 232.

WOMEN'S HEALTH & HALACHAH

Medical professionals and religious educators discuss issues such as genetic screening, menopause, post-partum, infertility and aging parents at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-628-4634

Monday, Nov. 25

ARCHAELOGY OF JERUSALEM

Dan Bahat, former district archeologist of Jerusalem, gives a 3-part talk on the history of Jerusalem. Tonight, "Jerusalem in the First Temple Period," Beth Tzedec Congregation, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 26

LUNCH AND LEARN

Historian **Barbara Rusch** discusses "At the Crossroads of History and Mystery," Temple Har Zion. Dessert at noon, program starts at 12:30 p.m. $3/$6.

ON THE CHOCOLATE TRAIL

Rabbi Deborah Prinz discusses her book *On the Chocolate Trail: A Delicious Adventure Connecting Jews, Religions, History, Travel, Rituals and Recipes*, 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. Free, but RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Wednesday, Nov. 27

BRAIN HEALTH

Psychologist **Susan Vandermorris** discusses "Strategies for Remembering: Brain Health," 1:30 p.m., Wagman Centre, 55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500, ext. 2267.

Thursday, Nov. 28

WOMEN AND TORAH

Naomi Seidman discusses "Women and Torah: A Revolution in Jewish Education," 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

JIAS ANNUAL MEETING

JIAS' annual general meeting will be held at 7 p.m., Lipa Green Centre. RSVP 416-630-6481

VISIONS FOR CANADA

Liberal Leader **Justin Trudeau** speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 7 p.m. Advance registration required at RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org or 416-221-3433.

Continued on page 69

When it comes to the fate of at-risk Jews in Toronto, Israel and across the globe...

It's Your Call!

To date, UJA telethons have raised more than $3.35 million from over 4,440 gifts, in support of our community's Annual Campaign.
This would not have been possible without our incredible volunteers.
By participating in UJA Telethons, you can help change the Jewish world one gift at a time.

The community thanks you. And so do we. We ask that you volunteer for any of the following shifts:

Sunday, December 1, 2013

Monday, December 2nd and Tuesday December 3rd

Visit www.ujatelethons.com to sign up to volunteer or contact Rafi Yablonsky at: ryablonsky@ujafed.org or 416.631.5820 for more information.
Meals and refreshments will be served at all shifts | Kashruth observed

United Jewish Appeal
UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Continued from page 68

Other News

CHANUKAH FUN

Nov. 23. Come play Jewish bingo and eat latkes at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation, 6:30 p.m. For tickets, see www.bayt.ca.

Nov. 24 Judy and David hold a Chanukah concert at Isabel Bader Theatre, 3 p.m., celebrating PJ Library. For tickets, see www.pjlibraryToronto.ca $18 with discount code PJLibrary.

Singles in the Park holds a Chanukah Party (for Jewish men and women who are divorced, single or widowed over 50), Earl Bales Community Centre, Doors open at 7 p.m., $12 in advance/$15 at the door. RSVP debbygo@yahoo.com or 416-631-0005.

Chanukah Craft Party and Playtime sponsored by City Shul, Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School and Seasons Family Centre, 2:30-4:30 p.m., 655 Davenport Rd. RSVP, **Sheri** at 416-928-3537 or sheri@djds.ca

Shaar Shalom Synagogue Chanukah Party, 1-4 p.m. Games, crafts, prizes. $10/$20

Beth David Synagogue presents "Laughs, Latkes and Lattes," with Chanukah activities for kids and adults. 2-4 p.m. $10.

Temple Sinai Chanukah Party. Musical entertainment at 11 a.m.; lunch at noon; "Great Treasure Hunt" for older children at 12:45 p.m. Register by Nov. 21 at 416-487-3281 or programs@templesinai.net

Nov. 28 Menorah lighting, food and **Aristov Family Circus**, 6:30 p.m. at Mississauga Civic Centre, 300 City Centre Dr. 905-268-4432

Nov. 29 Bring your menorah to Temple Kol Ami. Services at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner. RSVP jaykowal@gmail.com

Nov. 30 Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Chanukah on ice celebration, 7:30 p.m. at Canlan Ice Sports. RSVP 416-221-3433 $5/$10.

Family Musical Chanukah Show with **Lenny Graf,** Pride of Israel Synagogue, 6 p.m. Pre-registration required. 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

Dec. 1 Chabad of Markham presents Eighth Day in concert at a Chanukah festival, 3 p.m., Thornhill Community Centre. $25. For tickets, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or www.chabad-markham.org.

Menorah lighting, crafts and music at Iroquois Ridge Community Centre, 1051 Glenashton Dr., Oakville, 4 p.m. 905-268-4432

Dec. 2 Menorah lighting, crafts and music at Hugh Foster Hall, 141 King St., Milton, 6:30 p.m. 905-268-4432

Dec. 5 Musical Chanukah Nash and Drash, with **Cantor David Edwards** and **Klara Bagley.** Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon. $12/$15. 416-633-3838.

Dec. 11 Toronto Jewish Folk Choir performs Chanukah songs, 7 p.m., Barbara Frum Library.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Teenage volunteers are needed for a teen-senior Chanukah party, Dec. 1. Email hannasafferspiro@gmail.com, or **Rachel**, 647-708-8201.

Reena is looking for a female volunteer to assist during swim time at the Holland Bloorview Pool, Mondays at 6 p.m. Volunteer does not need to be a strong swimmer, but must be comfortable in shallow water. Call **Mille Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org

VISIONS FOR CANADA

MP **Chris Alexander,** minister of citizenship and immigration, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Advance registration required. Email RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org or call 416-221-3433.

EXODUS DECODED

Adath Israel Synagogue shows the film *Exodus Decoded* with filmmaker **Simcha Jacobovici,** Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-635-5340.

SYRIAN JEWS

Judy Feld Carr discusses "The Secret Rescue of the Syrian Jews," 7:30 p.m., Beth Jacob Synagogue. $40. For tickets, call 416-638-5955.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Healthy Dating & Relationships for Teens: A 2-part workshop for teens ages 15 and older, starts Nov. 21, 5 p.m., Schwartz Reisman Centre.

Stop the Roller-coaster: A workshop for parents or professionals who want to learn more about the change in teenagers' behaviour and attitudes. Nov. 27, 7 p.m.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women who have lost a spouse and want to move forward. Nov. 28, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Circle of Care sponsors a 6-week workshop about community services, safety, financial and legal planning for seniors, Fridays, 1:30 p.m. to Dec. 13, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call **Anne Siciliano** 416-635-2900, ext. 462.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Dec. 18. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m.; Wednesdays Mah-Jong 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m. Line dancing to be announced.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Nov. 26, ROM volunteers discuss "Mesopotamia: New Exhibitions of Treasures of Sumer, Assyria and Babylon," 10 a.m.; Nov. 27, a social worker, doctor and lawyer discuss "Sex and Seniors: Everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask," 1:30 p.m.; Nov. 28, **Esther Atemo** discusses "Alzheimer's Disease," 1:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Email lisar@mnjcc.org. Nov. 28, **Aviva Chernick** and **Josh Engel** perform Chanukah music in Hebrew, Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish, 1:30 p.m. Register at 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267.

Be part of the Prosserman JCC Shalom Singers. This performing group entertains throughout the GTA. No auditions needed. Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Chanukah Intergenerational Cooking Brunch with **Rabbi Ilyse Glickman** will be held Nov. 24, 10 a.m. $15/$13

Raise money for Special Olympics Canada, Dec. 1, 9 a.m.-noon by cycling. Register at Prosserman JCC website.

Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 a.m.

Try Nia, which combines martial arts, dance and healing arts. Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Melt and stretch exercise method, Fridays. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Nov. 25, Biography: *Vincent and Theo.*

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m.to Dec. 18.

Mapping Harbord Village: Stories of a Neighbourhood, developed by the Harbord Village Residents' Association and the master of museum studies program in the faculty of information, University of Toronto, is on display in the gallery until Dec. 15. Opening reception Nov. 26 6-8 p.m.

Chanukah at the JCC: Poolside Chanukah Party, Nov. 30, 6:30 p.m.; Community Chanukah Celebration, Dec. 1, 10 a.m.; 44 in 44: 44 Jewish book titles reviewed in 44 minutes by **Belinda Keshen** and **Sharoni Sibony,** Dec. 1, 10:30 a.m.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

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Store Hours
SUNDAY 10-6
MON - FRI 9-9

FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

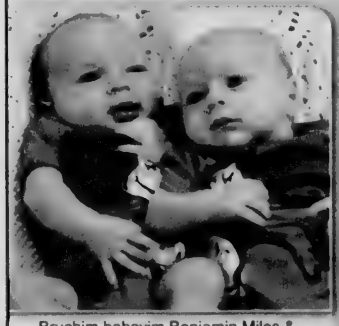
מזל טוב

Mazel tov Isaac & Mimi Abitbol on your 50th wedding anniversary. God bless you for many more years. Love, Joseph, Miguel, Emmanuel and grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Jennifer & Rodney Shapiro on the birth of their beautiful baby girl Julia! Thrilled is her big sister Jessica welcoming her home!

Happy 26th birthday to Chloe Korenblum. We love you more than words can describe! Henry, Claude and Kate, Richard and Shelah, and Traute!

We are thrilled to announce the engagement of Kelly Sennet to Mark Razmov. Mazel tov! With love from your parents, grandparents, siblings and both mishpachahs.



Bruchim habayim Benjamin Miles & Spencer Ryley. Parents: Natalie & Lorne Rapkin. Grandparents: Brenda & Rick Bornstein and Sandra & Myron Rapkin.

Mazel tov to Bill & Trudi Mondrow who celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary with their children and grandchildren on Nov. 2.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Trust is key in marriage

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Ella,

I'm sure you've heard this story a thousand times, but it's blown my whole world apart.

Maddy, a close friend of mine, informed me about my husband Jack and one of his associates getting a little too close.

Every year, Jack and Maddy's company has a three-day conference in Chicago. Apparently, after one of the evening programs, Maddy went looking for Jack and heard that he has been seen going into the hotel room of one of his female associates from the Chicago branch.

Maddy couldn't believe it – she's known Jack for so long – so she went and knocked on this woman's door.

Jack was there, they had wine glasses in their hands and although they were dressed, she was wearing a robe and he had part of his shirt open and shoes off. Maddy asked Jack if she could speak to him for a second, and Jack told her to go to bed and he would see her in the morning.

Maddy told me she didn't sleep all night and didn't know what to do with this information. It wasn't until a month after the incident that Maddy finally let it all out. Knowing how this would affect me, she struggled with what the right thing to do was.

Of course, I'm glad she told me, but part of me wishes she hadn't. I already have so much to deal with raising two young boys while working and running our home.

Have I been as attentive to Jack as I should have been? Probably not. Do I look as good as I did when we first got married 15 years ago? Definitely not. Am I angry? Madder than a bull in a rodeo.

I haven't done anything with this information. I can't confront Jack, because I don't want to hear the words from his lips. Our family will be torn apart, and keeping my head buried in the sand means everything can remain status quo.

I realize deep down that it's anything but normal, but I'm afraid to ruin our family's routine. The boys will be devastated if we separate. I have no idea how I'll manage financially. I can't do this. Why did he do this to us? I hate him for this. Can you give me any advice at all?

Broken Trust

Dear Broken Trust

Let's examine what you've told me. Jack went into a hotel room of a female associate. He was seen fully clothed – sans shoes, relaxing and having a drink. He didn't seem to panic when he saw Maddy, but instead told her he would talk to her the next day. Why are you jumping to the worst possible conclusion?

You need to have a conversation with Jack. Be honest and tell him exactly what Maddy told you, and ask him for an explanation. My guess is that he will say he was relaxing with a colleague after a long day of seminars. Can you trust that to be true?

This is where the crux of the problem is. Do you trust your husband? That's a loaded question that you must think long and hard about. Has Jack given you any reason in the past not to trust him, or are you feeling insecure because you say you're not as attentive and maybe don't look the same as you did 15 years ago? Is this your problem or Jack's?

You are already thinking about separation without so much as a word between you.

Whether Jack has had an affair is a significant question, however the more important point is that you can't discuss this with your husband of 15 years. Marriage is not always bliss. Couples need to have difficult conversations. A successful marriage is hard work and trust is the solid foundation on which you can build the rest of the relationship. If you don't have that foundation, everything you build on top will remain shaky.

It's time to seek professional help to work out your trust issues. If in fact you find that your suspicions were correct, you have a difficult road ahead of you and a life-altering decision that will affect many people besides you and Jack.

Please don't put this off for one more day. You have two children who will be affected by how you conduct yourself through this situation. Take charge of your anxiety and deal confidently with whatever the outcome is.

Knowledge is power. Get to the root of the problem, whether it's yours or his, and deal with it, preferably together.

Don't give up the battle before it even begins.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Cookbook captures culinary diversity

Elaine Cohen
Supplements Co-ordinator

The title of *Women's Philanthropy Mosaic: A cookbook celebrating Montreal's Jewish Culinary Diversity* clarifies the contents and cultural significance of this beautifully bound coffee-table tome. The dedicated volunteer contingent of women's philanthropy, an initiative of Federation CJA, began brainstorming in 2010 and launched their brainchild in April 2013. All proceeds from sales of this not-for-profit cookbook benefit vulnerable women in the community.

The top five chefs – Gail Adelson-Marcovitz, Etty Bienstock, Rhonda Leibner, Debby Newpol and Heather Paperman – gathered recently at federation headquarters to discuss the project they conceived as members of the committee of women's philanthropy. They praised more than 200 astute chefs and members of the community who worked with them to bring it to fruition. They schlepped, shopped, chopped, cooked, tasted, tested, fine-tuned and re-tested every recipe. They also played a role in the staging and photo shoots, along with photographer Jean Longpré. The photo presentations are exquisite.

Now, they are busy with marketing and distribution, delighted with the positive feedback, and have continuously received book orders from here and abroad.

Initially, the project got underway by sending a request to people on Federation CJA's mailing list. Recipients were asked to submit recipes that had been in the family for generations as well as those emanating from their countries of origin. From more than 1,000 responses, the list was whittled down to 110 winners. Bylines are not attributed to recipes because many are a fusion of winners that were adapted and re-evaluated. The chefs were careful to avoid duplication and plagiarism by discarding unsuitable submissions.

"The concept is more than a cookbook," said Adelson-Marcovitz, who presided over women's philanthropy when the project was initiated. "We wanted to expose more women in the community to what we do at CJA. Through their participation in *Mosaic*, many more now have a personal connection."

Mitzi Dobrin and Leesa Steinberg underwrote the cost of the book in tribute to their community-minded mothers, Helen Roth Steinberg and Gertrude Dover Steinberg.

Women's philanthropy achieved its multi-faceted mission by creating a tangible literary heirloom. Proceeds ($50 per book) benefit vulnerable women in the community. *Mosaic* serves as a great addition to the home, regardless of the recipients' nationality, ethnic origin, beliefs or level of cooking expertise. The 110 diverse recipes cover appetizers, vegetarian, dairy, beef, fish, poultry, salads, fruit, hot and cold soups, desserts and brunches that hail from every corner of the globe. The succinct wording of each recipe serves as a key tool, and the team deserves credit for ensuring preparation runs smoothly. The recipes conform to kashrut laws and complement Jewish customs. Moreover, they incorporate fresh herbs and wholesome ingredients. An artist handpainted each component of the stunning mosaic on the cover.

Newpol noted a Toronto connection. One of the guest chefs, Carolyn Cohen, who runs a cooking school in Toronto, conducted a series of classes using *Mosaic*. And Newpol's longstanding supper club also incorporated the book in one of their evenings. "I suggested the theme and prepared the main course and everyone prepared one of the recipes from the book, and I was very proud," she said.

Thanks to Bram Paperman, iPhone owners can download a free app through the app store, which enables them to click on their phones while shopping to see ingredients needed for each recipe. The *Women's Philanthropy Mosaic* is available online and at Linen Chest, selected boutiques and 21 locations in Montreal. Also available online and at select Linen Chest stores in Toronto. It is also available in Ottawa. For further information, go to www.womenphilanthropy-mosaic.org.

Here is a sample recipe courtesy of women's philanthropy, Federation CJA)

A HOLE IN FUN
BAKED DOUGHNUTS
FOR CHANUKAH

1 ¾ c flour • 2 tsp baking powder • ½ tsp salt • 1/4c melted butter • 1/2c white sugar • 1 egg • 3/4c milk • 1 tsp vanilla

Filling/Coating

1/2c strawberry jam • 3/4c white sugar •1/4c melted butter

Preheat oven to 375°. Grease 24 mini muffin cups; set aside; In small bowl mix together flour, baking powder, salt. In lg. bowl, whisk together melted butter, sugar, egg, milk, vanilla. Whisk dry ingredients into wet just until combined. Spoon ½ tbsp. batter into each muffin cup. Using back of spoon, make indent in batter for jam. Spoon 1 tsp. jam into each indent. Top with ½ tbsp. batter, spreading to cover jam. Bake 12-15 min. Cool until warm.

Coating: Place sugar in pie plate; place melted butter into another pie plate. Dip doughnuts into melted butter then into sugar to coat. Best enjoyed same day.

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PAPPARDELLE WITH TUNISIAN SHORT RIB RAGOUT

Slow-braised flanken, a strip of beef from the chuck end of the short ribs, was characteristic of eastern European food preparation. Inexpensive and easy to prepare, it was a favourite Jewish holiday dish. This recipe for slow-cooked short ribs takes its inspiration from this classic and adds a Tunisian flavour with the addition of figs.

3 tbsp. vegetable oil, divided
4 lb. beef short ribs, cut between the bones
2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
1 large onion, diced
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 (1-in.) piece ginger, grated
1 cinnamon stick
1 cup cubed dried figs
2 cups dry red wine
2 cups chicken broth
1/4 cup soy sauce
1 (14 oz.) can fire-roasted tomatoes
3/4 cup tomato purée
1 lb. pappardelle pasta
4 cups arugula
1/2 cup pine nuts, toasted

Preheat the oven to 350. Heat 2 tbsp. of the olive oil in an 8-quart Dutch oven. Season the ribs with the salt and pepper. Place as many ribs as will fit in the Dutch oven without overlap. Sear until browned, turning with tongs, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer the seared ribs to a plate and repeat with the remaining ribs. Pour off all but a thin layer of fat from the pan.

Add the remaining 1 tbsp. of the olive oil to the Dutch oven and sauté the onions and carrots until the onions are translucent, stirring and scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Add the garlic, ginger, cinnamon stick and figs and sauté for 2 minutes.

Add the wine and cook for an additional 5 minutes.

Transfer all the ribs and any accumulated liquid back into the Dutch oven. Add the broth, soy sauce, tomatoes and tomato purée. Bring the liquid to a simmer, cover, and place in the oven.

Cook the ribs, turning them every 40 minutes, for about 3 hours. Allow the ribs to cool, remove the meat from the bones, discard the bones, and shred the meat. Refrigerate overnight.

Take the rib ragout out of the refrigerator and remove the fat.

Cook the papparedelle according to the package instructions. Heat the rib ragout in a saucepan on medium heat, stirring gently. Add the cooked pappardelle and arugula to the ragout and toss to coat the pasta evenly. Garnish with the toasted pine nuts and serve. Yield: 8 to 10 servings

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Iran deal a 'historic mistake': Netanyahu

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, calling an interim deal with Iran on its nuclear program a "historic mistake," said Israel "has the right and the obligation to defend itself by itself against any threat."

"What was agreed to last night in Geneva is not a historic agreement, it is a historic mistake," Netanyahu said Sunday at the beginning of the regular cabinet meeting, several hours after the agreement was announced. "Today the world has become much more dangerous because the most dangerous regime in the world took a significant step to getting the most dangerous weapon in the world."

U.S. President Barack Obama reportedly called Netanyahu on Sunday to discuss the deal, under which Iran will freeze some of its nuclear activity in exchange for some sanctions relief.

The United States and five other world powers signed the deal with Iran late Saturday night.

"Iran is committed to Israel's destruction, and Israel has the right and the obligation to defend itself by itself against any threat," Netanyahu said. "Israel is not obligated by this agreement. I want to make clear we will not allow Iran to obtain military nuclear capability."

According to a White House statement, Iran will stop enriching uranium to 20 per cent, but will be able to continue enriching to five per cent. Iran will neutralize its existing stockpiles of 20 per cent enriched uranium and will not install or build any new centrifuges, except to replace damaged machines.

Five per cent is well below the enrichment level needed for weaponization. But Netanyahu has warned that allowing Iran to continue enriching uranium even at low levels brings it too close to a breakout capacity for nuclear weapons.

Continued on page 45

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says Israel is not bound by the agreement reached between Iran and six world powers. Please see more coverage on page 44. *[Haim Zach/GPO/Flash90 photo]*

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Plan limits day school tuition to 15% of income

Federation hopes to expand pilot program beyond Robbins

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

In an effort to make Jewish education more affordable for "middle income" families with three or more children, Robbins Hebrew Academy is offering a pilot program called iCAP that will limit tuition fees to 15 per cent of a family's gross income.

The program will apply to new and existing RHA families, not those transferring from other day schools. But UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, which is backing the idea, said it hopes to expand iCAP to other schools in the future.

The initiative, jointly funded by RHA, Avi Chai Foundation and the federation, will provide financial assistance starting next fall to parents with a gross income between $200,000 and $300,000 who have at least three children in the school.

"Even in that income bracket, it's very difficult if you have three or more children [in the Jewish day school system]," said RHA head of school Claire Sumerlus. "In order to try to keep those families or encourage them to come to Jewish day school and make it affordable for them, we've designed a program we think will help them."

RHA is the first and only school in the Toronto Jewish day school system to test out the program, modelled after a similar one launched at Solomon Schechter Day School of Boston in 2011.

Continued on page 30

Chanukah
Candlelighting: 4:26
Havdalah: 5:28
Greater Toronto Area

Chanukah Greetings
Section B

Israeli entrepreneur touts business in India — please see page 47

CANADA

Cartoons For Peace

MONTREAL — *Jerusalem Post* editorial cartoonist Michel Kichka will join Khalil Abu Arafeh, a cartoonist for *Al Quds*, an Arabic-language daily in Jerusalem, at *Cartooning for Peace*, an international exhibit organized by Montreal's Sephardi community. The exhibit will run Dec. 1 to 8 at Federation CJA's Cummings House as part of Les Jours pour la Paix, or "Days of Peace," produced by the Communauté sépharade unifiée du Quebec. Other cartoonists taking part are Jean Plantureux, known as Plantu, from *Le Monde* in France, and Guy Badeaux, known as Bado, of *Le Droit* of Ottawa. *Cartooning for Peace* was conceived by Plantu in 2006, and the exhibit has been touring the world ever since.

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WORLD

Killer Executed

ST. LOUIS — A white supremacist was executed in Missouri for killing a man at a St. Louis-area synagogue in October 1977. Joseph Paul Franklin, 63, was executed Nov. 20 for the sniper shooting of Gerald Gordon, who was killed outside of the Brith Sholom Kneseth Israel synagogue as he left a bar mitzvah. Franklin was convicted of seven other murders throughout the United States and claimed responsibility for 20 deaths from 1977 and 1980. Franklin also bombed a shul in Chattanooga, Tenn., in July 1977.

New Labor Head

JERUSALEM — Israel's main opposition party chose veteran MK Isaac Herzog as its new leader, replacing former head Shelly Yachimovich, who served two years as Labor's head. Herzog, 53, is a former cabinet minister, a high-profile lawyer, and the son of former Israeli president Chaim Herzog. He won 58 per cent of the vote in the leadership primary versus Yachimovich's 41 per cent. In total, 28,473 people voted, out of 60,392 registered Labor voters. Under Yachimovich, jobs and the economy were prominent on the party's agenda, an emphasis some argued came at the expense of the party's traditional policy of promoting land-for-peace deals. In elections this year, she led the party to a disappointing third-place finish with only 15 seats out of 120 in the Knesset.

New Envoy Due In Canada This Month

OTTAWA — Israel's new ambassador to Canada, Rafael Barak, a 36-year career diplomat at Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was due to arrive in Ottawa before the end of the month.

Rafael Barak

Born in Montevideo, Uruguay, and fluent in four languages – Hebrew, Spanish, French and English – Barak arrives after serving for almost three years as the ministry's director-general.

Barak succeeds Miriam Ziv, ambassador from 2008 to 2013 and officially assumes his post when he receives his official accreditation from Gov. Gen. David Johnston. His appointment was approved two months ago by a Foreign Ministry committee that hadn't met for months before that due to labour problems at the ministry.

His previous posts have included a 2000 posting as the No. 2 diplomat at Israel's embassy in Washington, D.C. Prior to that, he was deputy director-general of the Foreign Affairs Ministry and from 1993 to 1996 served as chief co-ordinator for talks with the Palestinians after the Oslo agreements were signed.

Before that, Barak served as a press attaché with Israel's mission to the European Communities in Brussels and was then deputy chef de mission at the Israeli embassy there. He has also served as first secretary at the Israeli embassy in Lima, Peru.

He immigrated to Israel in 1969 and has three children with his wife, Miriam.

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Rabbi discovers $100,000 in second-hand desk

Cash returned to grateful owner

Diane Koven
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — The world is thirsting for a good-news story and Rabbi Noah Muroff has quenched that thirst. The international media descended upon the young rabbi once word of his exciting discovery of nearly $100,000 in a second-hand desk – and his subsequent and immediate decision to return the cash to its rightful owner — "went viral" on the Internet.

Rabbi Muroff, a native of Ottawa, has been living and teaching high school in a small yeshiva in New Haven, Conn. Shortly before Rosh Hashanah, he and his wife, Esther, picked up a desk they had purchased on Craigslist and brought it home to use in his study. They ran into trouble when they tried to get the desk through the door. "It missed being able to pass through the door by a quarter of an inch," Rabbi Muroff said.

Unwilling to admit defeat, the couple decided to take the desk apart and re-assemble it on the other side of the door. After removing the drawers, they found a plastic bag containing cash – in fact, to their astonishment, the total came to $98,000.

Because the woman who sold him the desk had told Rabbi Muroff that she purchased it from Staples and assembled it herself, he knew that the money belonged to her. He and his wife called her without a moment's hesitation and arranged to return the money to her as soon as possible.

The grateful woman explained that the money had been an inheritance from her recently deceased parents, which she had

Continued on page 35

Rabbi Noah Muroff and his wife Esther with their children

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Sunni Turkey cozies up to Shia Iran

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The Nov. 19 double suicide-bombing attack on the Iranian embassy in Beirut, carried out by an Al Qaeda affiliate, "appears to be a direct result of the Syrian civil war and the fact that both Iran and Hezbollah are involved in the conflict in support of the regime in Damascus," *Ha'aretz* reported.

The attack also appears to be a sign of the growing sectarian clash between Saudi-backed Sunni and Iranian-backed Shia forces, especially those engaged in the bloody battle over Syria.

Sunni-dominant Turkey, which has absorbed 700,000 Syrian refugees fleeing the carnage, is bitterly opposed to President Bashar Assad's continued rule in Syria, but against initial expectations, Turkey has not been part of a desired, but unsuccessful, unified Sunni alliance against Iran for its support of the Assad regime.

On the surface, this state of affairs is counter-intuitive. After all, Turkey would seem to be the natural power to counter Iran's aggressive ambitions in the region including, prominently, Iran's arming of Hezbollah, its proxy force in Lebanon and now also in Syria. Thousands of Hezbollah fighters, along with Iranian Revolutionary Guard troops and Shia forces from Iraq, are all crucially involved not only in propping up Assad's Shia-offshoot Alawite forces, but also in making gains against an array of Sunni rebel fighters, some of whom are also busy fighting one another, thereby inadvertently aiding Iran's cause.

The net effect is increased pressure on Turkey, which shares borders with Syria, Iraq and Iran.

However, instead of joining Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states in supporting rebel fighters, Turkey is busy these days cozying up to Iran.

Against Saudi interests, Turkey supports both the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas in Gaza. The Nov. 9 *Economist*, which calls Recep Erdogan "Turkey's increasingly paranoid prime minister," argued that Erdogan's "strident calls for Mohamed Morsi to be returned to power have angered Egypt's new leaders and chilled the friendship with Saudi Arabia." Among other things, by blaming Israel for Morsi's overthrow, Erdogan has even alienated U.S. President Barack Obama, who had prevailed upon Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in March to apologize for the Turkish citizens killed in the 2010 Mavi Mamara incident, a gesture for which Israel received no benefit whatsoever.

Iranian leaders have recently visited Ankara, and (as this column appears) Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkey's foreign minister, is scheduled to be in Tehran, further bolstering relations recently compromised by the Syrian conflict.

In fact, both Turkey and Iran are visibly promoting their renewed friendship as an indication of their espoused commitment to reduce sectarian strife – even as Iran fuels it in Syria!

Turkey has an economic interest at stake: despite UN and other sanctions against Tehran, Turkey is Iran's biggest natural gas customer. While private gas companies in Turkey would like to draw upon gas from Israel's huge offshore finds in the Mediterranean, they are stymied by hostility to Israel from Turkey's political leadership.

Turkey's *Hurriyet* newspaper reported earlier this month that intelligence co-operation between Turkey and Iran is strong.

In the Nov. 18 issue of the *Jerusalem Report*, under the title "Turkish betrayal," veteran intelligence reporter Yossi Melman expounded on a story originally broken by the *Washington Post* in October: that Turkey (a NATO member) deliberately leaked the names to Iran of 10 Iranian spies working for Israel, spies whom Israel's Mossad operatives used to meet on Turkish soil.

Melman described this leak as "an egregious, even unprecedented, act. In fact, this is the basest act of betrayal imaginable," but it's evidence of Erdogan's personal, visceral antipathy toward Israel and that of his U.S.-educated intelligence chief Hakan Fidan, who is reportedly close to his Iranian counterparts and oversaw the leaks.

Meanwhile, in response both to Erdogan's anti-Zionism and his anti-Semitism, evident in his repeated calls that the "interest rate lobby" (i.e., Jews) was to blame for Turkey's widespread social unrest last summer, according to the *Times of Israel* a growing number of Turkey's 15,000 Jews are leaving, many joining the 80,000 Turkish Jews already living in Israel.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

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CHANUKAH LIGHTS: Jewish children light Chanukah candles as they learn about the holiday at a kindergarden in the Jewish settlement of Neve Daniel in the West Bank. *[Nati Shohat/Flash90 photo]*

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Unreasonable non-accommodation

In the 18th and 19th centuries, governments faced questions about integrating Jews, members of a minority religion, into general society. Would they be loyal citizens? Could they wear traditional clothing in public? As Canadians debate Quebec's proposed charter of values, we again ask similar questions about the limits of religious freedom and multiculturalism. Are religious distinctiveness and cultural differences good or problematic? If we draw lines, what and where should they be? As Yogi Berra once said, "It's like déjà vu all over again."

Guest Editorial

Western thought points to a progression from the particular to the universal in our quest for truth. The desire for oneness has led to equality of citizenship and universal rights. However, as Isaiah Berlin noted, the monist quest for the ideal also led to a totalism within medieval religion and modern politics that diminished diversity and brought great suffering to many. The latest manifestation of this pursuit of the universal is the proposed charter of values.

In contrast, the Bible begins with the universal Creation and then shifts to the specific saga of Abraham. Martin Buber contrasts the platonic desire for universal truth with the prophetic call for individual justice. The Torah often reminds us about the stranger, because to dignify the other is difficult. In the terminology of Emmanuel Levinas, we are called to see the *visage* of the other and to respond with moral responsibility.

If a contemporary challenge for religions is whether they can dignify difference, liberal democracies are similarly tested. Charles Taylor observes that the quest for human dignity is expressed in two ways: as the protection of basic, common human rights, the politics of equality, *or* the acknowledgement of the particularities of individuals and groups, the politics of difference. Nations committed to the politics of equality want procedures and laws to be the same for all, regardless of race or creed, while countries that emphasize the politics of difference have substantive views about what constitutes a good life.

In theological terms, the commonality of what Rabbi Jonathan Sacks calls a "covenant of fate" leads to the secular concept of equal citizenship, a commitment to act with fairness, while the distinctiveness of a covenant of faith generates a particular perspective about what constitutes the good life. Taylor thinks English Canada generally focuses on equality and individual rights, accepting cultural diversity as a *private* decision, but ignoring issues of *group* cultural survival. In contrast, French Canada affirms *individual* human rights and respects diversity, while allowing for collective *national* goals.

In Canada, we enshrine *both* expressions of human dignity. It is, therefore, quite contrary that Quebec, which demands distinctiveness for French culture, should legislate against minority expression of religious identity. The proposed charter of values would enshrine unreasonable non-accommodation.

In Canada, we should continue to seek both the protection of universal rights and the reasonable accommodation of individuals and groups. We must recognize and respect distinctiveness, so long as it does not harm or cause significant hardship to others. Quebec should seek to cultivate difference, even as it affirms the cultural values that enable it to remain a distinct society. The proposed charter of values is not the way to go.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl

Dry Bones

EUROPE HAS NO PROBLEM WITH IMPORTING
GOODS MADE IN CHINESE PRISONS, BANGLADESH SWEAT SHOPS, OR OIL FROM OPPRESSIVE ISLAMIST DICTATORSHIPS...
BUT JEWS BUILDING HOMES IN THEIR ANCIENT JEWISH HOMELAND
REALLY GETS THEM UPSET!!
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Harper honours not deserved

On Dec. 1, the Jewish National Fund will be holding an event to raise funds for the Stephen J. Harper Hula Valley Bird Sanctuary Visitor and Education Centre in Israel. The facility itself sounds like a wonderful place to visit and an important and safe refuge for migrating birds. Yet it is ironic that a prime minister who is responsible for making it more difficult for families to find protection in Canada would have this facility named for him.

Consider, in 2012, the Stephen Harper Conservative government significantly altered more than a half century of progressive policy regarding Canada's treatment of refugees. Included among the changes:

- New rules that discriminate between individuals based on their country of origin and how they arrived in Canada;
- Measures creating serious challenges in the refugee determination process, which could lead in some cases to the deportation of individuals to their home countries and a real risk of persecution or worse;
- Unreasonable limits on certain humanitarian protections;
- Drastic cuts to health care coverage for refugees (including ill children and pregnant women).

How Canada treats the most vulnerable among us – particularly those fleeing violence, war, and persecution – is of particular concern to the Jewish community. Because of our own history, we share a special bond with refugees. The federal government's current policies, and its resulting treatment of the Roma people in particular, are inconsistent with Canada's postwar tradition of compassion and tolerance. Policies regarding the treatment of people seeking refuge should be guided by humanitarian values, not crass political calculations.

We recently helped form the Jewish Refugee Action Network (www.jran.ca) to advocate for a reversal of the government's agenda on refugees. Our concerns are shared by legal experts, settlement workers, and health professionals from many faith and cultural communities. A key element of our work will be educating Canadians, including within the Jewish community, about the harmful effects of the government's policies towards refugees.

We hope that the prime minister will reflect on these concerns and engage in a dialogue with us to rectify this injustice.

Steering Committee members on behalf of the Jewish Refugee Action Network:
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Michele Landsberg – Honorary Co-Chair
Rabbi Arthur Bielfeld – Founder
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Dr. Philip Berger
Bernie M. Farber
Mary Jo Leddy
Maureen Silcoff

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz

Charter incites anti-Semitism

I am outraged and extremely concerned about the proposed charter of Quebec values and how this could potentially impact the Jewish community, and other religious communities, in Quebec and across Canada.

I feel that Bill 60 is shocking, given our country's history of freedom of religion. Anti-Semitism and xenophobia will always exist, but when a government, such as the government of Quebec, not only condones but incites these activities, the acceptability of giving voice to these virulent thoughts, increases exponentially.

This charter has the potential to take away jobs for Jews and for other religious communities, force Jewish and children of other religious communities out of public schools, and discriminate against businesses of Jews and other religious communities.

Where does it stop? What religious freedoms and freedoms in general, are next on the chopping block? Have we learned nothing from history?

Saying that this charter affirms "secularism" is misleading because Christian people and Christian traditions are not affected.

As far as I am concerned, if this is what Quebecers want, then let them separate from Canada and be their own country. Then Canada can impose sanctions on them for violating human rights.

I call on all Canadians across the country to vigorously protest this potential violation of religious tolerance and human rights in our precious country.

Susan Goldberg
Toronto

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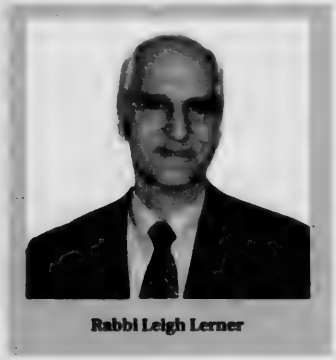
A Jewish view on euthanasia and assisted suicide

Rabbi Leigh Lerner

Quebec is the first province to propose allowing a dying patient with an incurable disease "at an advanced state of irreversible decline" and suffering "unbearable physical and psychological pain" to decide their own moment of death. What does Jewish tradition say about euthanasia?



Rabbi Leigh Lerner

1. Human life and divine grandeur

Jewish ethicist J. David Bleich thinks of humanity as a symphony orchestra. We all have parts to play, even if only resting, and even if we've played all our notes. When the drummer finishes her task, does she leave the symphony? No. Her presence enhances the majesty of the orchestra before the audience, which, in our comparison, is God. Thus human life itself praises God's greatness.

2. Humanity as God's chattel

Judaism maintains that God has a prior right or interest in our bodies. We do not own ourselves and cannot do whatever we wish with our bodies. This viewpoint understands humanity as God's chattel, an unpleasant thought for autonomous moderns, but it reflects our tradition that "the soul is Yours and the body, too."

3. Moral effect on health-care providers

Jewish law forbids a negativist policy about life. A positive relationship with a physician may only be possible when the patient believes that doctors will do their utmost and not abandon the patient as beyond hope.

4. Quality of life issues

Quality of life decisions are subjective. Some people live every painful day with positivity, while others in less pain want to end their lives. Of those requesting euthanasia in Holland, five per cent list physical pain as their reason, and typically, when that pain is controlled, they

Quality of life issues

change their mind. Loss of autonomy is the major reason the Dutch choose euthanasia, and this concern, too, can be met. Also, can a patient put trust in a physician who must weigh the quality of life to be preserved?

5. Conflict of interest issues (*Nogeah badavar*)

Since the province provides medical care, suicide relieves it of a financial burden: the expensive last days of the dying. Because the state gains financially by an early end of life, it has a conflict of interest. Will the suicide law degrade the nature of Quebec's commitment to quality end-of-life care because suicide is a cheaper solution than pain management?

6. Emulation of Divine love

Judaism sees human life as a demonstration of God's love. God loves us without requiring that we have a utilitarian value. Just as we love ourselves

Emulation of Divine Love

for our mere existence, not because of some reason, so God loves humanity in a unique way, unmotivated by any consideration. When caring for others sick unto death and in great pain, we express our endeavour to make our love like God's love.

7. Halachic problems for Orthodox Jews

Halachah, traditional Jewish law, opposes suicide. Orthodox Jews who committed suicide used to have no eulogy, with their burial in the cemetery's farthest corner. Some rabbis decided that a person who commits suicide is temporarily insane and died of their disease, and is, therefore, entitled to normal burial.

Suppose a Jew asks for assisted suicide. An ethical board or supervising physician oversees the decision whether to act or not. They only consent if the individual is of sound mind. However, a suicide adjudged mentally competent is not insane. Traditional cemeteries may

A vehicle for mitzvah

revert to the old, embarrassing practices. Many non-traditional Jews hold plots in Orthodox cemeteries that would be unusable for assisted suicides. Their families may face a sudden, sad, unforeseen problem in making final arrangements.

8. A vehicle for mitzvah

Jewish tradition posits that a person can become an instrument for the expression of something worthwhile. It's a Jewish tradition that after someone asks for a charitable donation, when we give, we thank the asker. Jewish tradition views the one who requests tzedakah as providing the giver with an opportunity to fulfil a commandment, a mitzvah.

So it is with the terminally ill. They provide opportunities to fulfil many commandments, and thus to express the way that humanity is unique in this world. At the same time, by doing a mitzvah, we express our relationship to Torah and to God, thus affirming our values. Assisting in a suicide amounts to depriving the giver of the opportunity, hardly a Jewish way of acting.

9. Human life as a *bonum per se*.

Human life is a good in and of itself. Sheer human existence is endowed with moral value.

Human life as a *bonum per se*

Is human life an instrumental good or a good in and of itself? If human life is only an instrumental good, then it follows that life becomes worthless when it no longer leads to some higher good. If human life is only an instrument toward some greater good, when that good can no longer be attained, then life has no value, so why not destroy it, plain and simple?

Further, if human life must be utilized to achieve some higher good, then it is necessary to state what that higher good shall be. Who among us is ready to do so, and who would want any government to legislate that fact?

Jews believe that life is good in itself. We respect each human being as a child of God and do not snuff out the life that God has given.

10. Suicide and assisted suicide.

Jewish tradition, therefore, tells us not to assist in suicides. We are fortunate to have palliative care resources in Montreal and should enhance them, rather than turning to assisted suicide.

Jewish tradition does not demand ever more sophisticated treatments for a life clearly ending. We can let an illness take its course and control its pain. Jewish tradition wants a health-care ethic that promotes life and relieves suffering. Let's debate how to cure day-long waits at emergency rooms, delayed surgery, doctor shortages, and more. These, not euthanasia, are the real medical issues in Quebec.

Rabbi Leigh Lerner is rabbi emeritus of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Westmount, Que.

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He said, she said: the travesty of the agunah

Sara R. Horowitz
in Toronto

I'm not easily shocked, but I admit to being shocked by the current and much-publicized case of a young American woman denied a Jewish divorce by her husband. The basic scenario is too sadly common to have shock value: a marriage dissolves, but after a civil divorce, the man refuses to provide a *get*, (a Jewish bill of divorcement), and the woman remains halachically married.

The husband does not withhold a *get* from his wife (or ex-wife, under American law) because he cannot bear to let her go. Rather, he uses his control of the *get* as the ultimate negotiating weapon, denying it until she meet his financial and custodial demands – claims that have already been adjudicated, but not to his satisfaction. What has brought this case into the public realm is the (ex-)wife's unusual decision not to silently put life on hold, but to hire a publicist in order to pressure her (ex-)husband to free her.

Millions now know some version of the inner workings of a marriage of two people they've never met. Details of the couple's courtship, marriage and its dissolution appear in the international press and on the web: her version in her own voice and through relatives and friends, and bits and pieces of his version through relatives and supporters. I won't rehearse the details here, because my purpose is neither to dish dirt nor to evaluate a couple's marital journey. At the end of the day, the details don't matter here.

The crux of the matter is the unscrupulous use of Halachah – the wielding of the demands of Jewish law to render one party all-powerful and the other powerless. I and others have written before on these pages and elsewhere about the tragedy and travesty of women caught by the inequity of the halachic divorce. The ability to control, in near-absolute terms, the marital status of his wife places a nuclear weapon in a husband's hands. For women who care about this – and, ironically, the more attached a woman is to Jewish practice and community, the more this can ruin her life – this nuclear weapon trumps all other aspects of divorce negotiation and adjudication, potentially outweighing even the views of civil or religious courts.

Here is the utter separation between Halachah and ethics. Regardless of the justness of the husband's demands, or the level of anger that fuels his behaviour, the nuclear weapon is his alone to deploy.

Still, while deplorable, there is nothing shocking about this story. What stunned me were trending responses in cyberspace – yeshivish websites, comments to news articles, religious blogs – that side not merely with this particular man or divorcing men generally, but with the very use of the *get* as a tactical tool.

If these postings are to be credited – and they exist in sufficient numbers to indicate they represent a significant opinion – there is at least some chunk of the Jewish community that regards the *get* as a legitimate means to forcibly gain one's way: if Halachah is so constructed as to give you power, use it. Some even see this tactic as theologically sanctioned – what HaShem must want. I would consider this a "fringe" opinion, representing a few bitter or misogynistic outliers, except that I come upon some version of it so frequently.

Yet the rabbinic regulation of divorce procedures was not aimed at giving a man unbridled control over his wife, as though she were chattel. The Talmud's ample discussion of *gittin* (divorce contracts) traces a move to eliminate the fuzziness in a divorcing woman's status, removing possibilities for her *get* to be invalidated or rescinded retroactively or at whim, leaving her in limbo. If ethics and empathy motivated our ancestral sages, should it not have some currency now?

• • •

In what I have written above, I have refrained from naming the parties in order to focus on an issue that transcends an individual couple. But I recognized that publicly naming a *get* withholder is one of the few means of persuasion available to women, and I do so here: Avrohom Meir Weiss of Staten Island, N.Y., and Lakewood, N.J.

Jews should talk to Muslims

Rabbi Dow Marmur
in Toronto

The reason for the recent marked increase in anti-Semitic incidents in Europe is usually ascribed to the growth of the Muslim population there. For example, Sweden – where I grew up and where I lived among Holocaust survivors who were helped to a new life by the then Swedish government – has gained international notoriety because of the re-emergence of overt anti-Semitism there. Radicalized Muslim immigrants are said to be the primary cause.

Through the ages Christians and pagans needed neither Muslims nor the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians to voice and act on their hatred of Jews and Judaism. Some spokespeople of ostensibly peace-loving contemporary Christianity are still trying to express their disdain with the pretext of only opposing government policies in the Jewish state, not the Jewish People or the Jewish faith. Of late, a growing number don't even seem to bother to cite this lame excuse.

At the same time, many responsible Christian leaders are making valiant efforts to mend fences with the Jewish people. The pronouncements and actions by Pope Francis aptly illustrate this wholesome trend. Fruitful interfaith encounters between Jews and Christians have become important elements of religious life.

In recent years, despite political complexities and growing religious extremism, similar efforts to bring about Muslim-Jewish relations are beginning to bear fruit. Unlike Christians, Muslims are more likely start at the grassroots level, perhaps in the hope of thus influencing their often-reluctant leaders.

I've witnessed some of it myself. For example, last April I attended the annual international interfaith conference in Doha, Qatar, where the emphasis seems to have been more on local encounters than on generalities. Though cynics will always find ways to suspect and debunk such initiatives, the results are often very beneficial.

I've also experienced promising encounters with Muslims in Canada. Thus I spoke recently at a conference on world religions in Guelph, Ont., sponsored by the Ahmadiyah sect of Islam. Participants included the local rabbi. Some Jewish delegates came from the United States.

A couple of weeks later, I spoke, together with an imam and a Christian academic, about Muhammad. The occasion was a symposium hosted by the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary in Waterloo, Ont. Local Jews and Muslims attended and participated.

Recently I was invited to address a congregation at a Friday service at the Noor Islamic Centre in Toronto. Bearing in mind the Arab-Israeli conflict, I suggested to the Muslim worshippers that it's not for us here to fight the battles there. Our purpose should be to promote peaceful coexistence, mutual respect and fruitful interaction between adherents of all faiths as a way of sharing God's teachings, all for the good of Canada.

Interfaith organizations where exponents of Islam and Judaism meet and exchange ideas exist in many countries. In Canada, the Association of Jews and Muslims has been at the forefront. In Israel, the Interreligious Co-ordinating Council has developed a network for Jews, Christians and Muslims to meet and learn from each other in an effort to help shape a society that transcends wars and enmity.

It's a welcome antidote to the mutual demonization that takes place in many settings around the world and is often fuelled by unscrupulous clerics and politicians. They misleadingly depict the Jews in Israel as colonizers who had come to displace the indigenous Arab population. In defensive responses to the wild accusations, members of our own community often succumb to pointing to Muslim extremism. Some even erroneously maintain that terrorists are the most authentic exponents of contemporary Islam.

Jews had lived under Muslim rule since the beginning of Islam. On the whole they've fared better than in Christian countries. Jewish literature, Jewish thought and even Jewish law have been greatly influenced by the great medieval teachers of Islam. Much of what some today consider to be normative Judaism is the result of the interaction.

It's as equal citizens in a free and democratic Canada that we seek to encounter the Muslims of our time, not by focusing on extremist and lethal manifestations of their faith – or ours - but by the mainstream teachings of both.

The late Krister Stendahl, former dean of Harvard Divinity School and bishop of Stockholm, arguably the most significant exponents of contemporary interfaith dialogue, has taught us always to compare our best with their best, not our best with their worst. It's the golden rule of interfaith dialogue.

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Reform, Orthodox Jews in U.S. met similar challenges

Conservatism can learn from others: historian

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Conservative Jewry faces great challenges, but it can learn from other North American Jewish movements that faced similar threats and emerged stronger, says a leading U.S. Jewish historian.

Conservative Jewry is too important to disappear and can provide a spiritual home to the many Jews who don't currently have one, Jonathan Sarna, a professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University and chief historian of the new National Museum of American Jewish History, told an audience at Beth Torah Synagogue Nov. 17.

"[Conservative Jewry] has been one of the greatest sources of scholarship in American Jewish life," Sarna said, adding, "We need to create new ways to reach [unaffiliated Jews], and Conservatives should lead the way. Without a strong centre, North American Judaism runs the risk of dividing into two camps and two Judaisms. We need a strong centre committed to compromise for the sake of Jewish unity. A huge opportunity awaits the Conservative movement. It has to seize it and run."

Sarna's lecture was sponsored by the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues and co-sponsored by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The evening was moderated by former *CJN* editor Mordechai Ben-Dat.

Fifty years ago, Sarna said, the Conservative movement was the largest of the three Jewish denominations, representing 42 per cent of U.S. Jews.

Today, according to the recent Pew survey on U.S. Jewry, it comprises only 18 per cent of U.S. Jews, and only 11 per cent of those ages 18 to 29, he said.

He recalled that in 1963, the movement's flagship Jewish Theological Seminary – where his father, Nahum, taught – held a memorial service when U.S. president John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

"This service was seen as the official Jewish community service. To a child like me, in 1963, it felt like the Conservative movement was the centre of Jewish life," Sarna said.

The Pew survey found that Reform is now the largest denomination in America.

"In the United States, [Conservativism] is half [the size] of the Reform movement, and a little larger than Orthodoxy. [At age 55], its median age is higher than any other religious movement. Conservative Jewish households have fewer children than Orthodox or Reform. Conservative households have .3 children [compared to 1.7] in Orthodox homes."

Jonathan Sarna

These numbers don't bode well for the Conservative movement, he said, and "too many believe that its moment has passed. They have expressed to me a deep fear of Conservative survival."

Few people realize, however, that these changes are neither new or unparalleled, he said. "Reform and Orthodoxy faced similar [situations] at the beginning of the [20th] century and have had their strength renewed."

Reform, which was big in the 1870s, had its challenges in the early 1900s, he said. "By World War I [there was a traditionalist revival], and [it] shattered Reform hopes."

By 1918, the Conservative movement was ascendant and it looked like Reform would decline, because its tenets ran counter to the beliefs of many eastern European Jewish immigrants.

"Too many found it church-like and too English," Sarna said

In 1926, he said, Reform rabbis decided the movement was in need of revitalization. "Reform [had to] be reformed, and today it is the largest movement."

The way it revived itself can be a lesson for any movement, Sarna said. "It saw the handwriting on the wall, and it heeded its critics.

"Once-discarded rituals were brought back, and it changed its women's and youth movement to make it more alluring. It moved to strengthen its Jewish institutions, and it opted to become a tent, embracing a wide range of practices and ideologies. It agreed to accept differences as precious."

Diversity was once the goal of the Conservative movement, he said, but since 1968, it has narrowed, as products of the Conservative movement left rather than find space within the movement.

"Reconstructionists departed, and in Canada, several synagogues departed. Recently, non-denominational minyans have attracted young Jews."

Religions need to widen their circle, he said, "and in [the past] 50 years, the Conservative circle has narrowed."

Orthodoxy also faced a grave crisis in the 20th century, but it defied prophets of doom, "just as I hope Conservatives will today," he said.

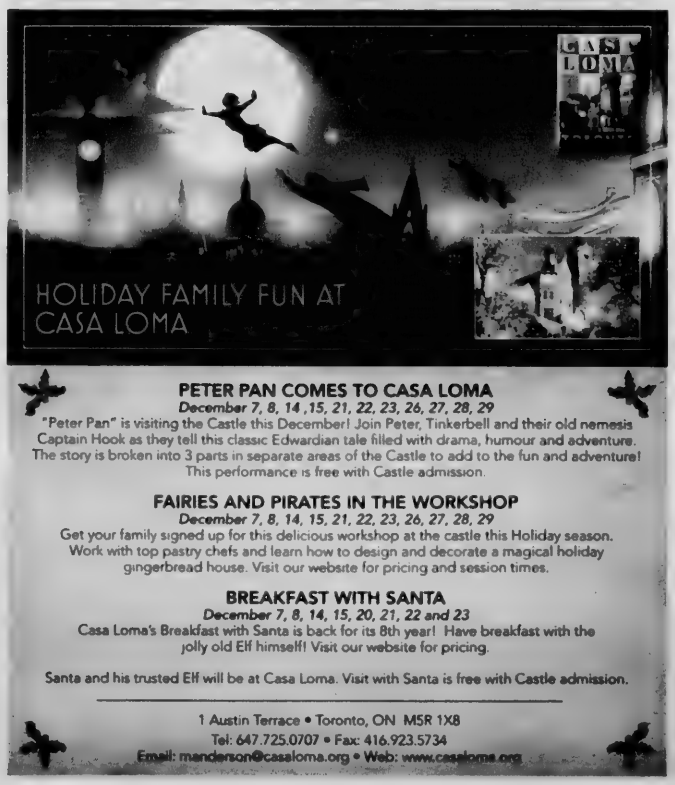
"We can learn from Orthodoxy. It shaped its survival through its birthrate, and through its investment in schools.

"The Orthodox [movement] did what no investment counsellor would ever [recommend]: it bet the house on day schools. Education is its rank and file, and it became the backbone of revitalization."

If the Conservative movement wants to win over the next generation, it has to invest in education, and not only in elementary and high school. Half of the 18-to-29-year-olds don't identify as Conservative, and whoever captures that market will determine the future of American Jewish life.

Conservatives can learn a lot from Orthodox structure, he said. "Orthodoxy embraces an enormous spectrum. It is not controlled from the top down, but through disparate groups, which cloak themselves in Orthodoxy.

"I think when historians look back, they will say that this big tent is the key ingredient in Orthodox growth."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MATH WHIZZES: In a recent worldwide math competition, Associated Hebrew Schools' students Justin Schwartz, in Grade 4, right, placed second and Ami Gorodzinsky, in Grade 3, placed fourth in Ontario out of 2,704 participants. The Caribou Mathematics Competition is an online contest run through Brock University and held six times throughout the school year.

B'nai Brith, federation sign 'historic' deal

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and B'nai Brith Canada met at a late-afternoon reception at the Lipa Green Centre Nov. 19 to sign what they called a "historic" agreement to strengthen ties and work together.

Few details were given about the new deal, nor was the document made public, but it was stressed at the reception that the two organizations would be creating new working relationships.

Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of the federation, said later in an email interview that the two groups have been working on the agreement for a number of months, with the goal of finalizing it before the end of 2013.

"The agreement speaks to closer ties between the organizations, particularly in the area of capital fundraising for seniors' housing, while at the same time respecting the individual autonomy, history and contribution of each organization," Sokolsky said.

"Both organizations have committed to consult with the other on issues of community concern, but leadership, of course, remains separate and independent."

Frank Dimant, CEO B'nai Brith Canada, said in an email interview that although informal talks began about two years ago, serious negotiations started this year.

The agreement calls for each organization to maintain its own advocacy entities and to continue with its own leadership and philosophy, he said.

Dimant said the critical component calls for a "very well co-ordinated fundraising effort whereby specially designated staff will work together to ensure very specific objectives such as naming opportunities for B'nai Brith facilities and the fufilment of the commitment by B'nai Brith to create the Stephen Harper Human Rights Centre, as well as B'nai Brith's very public support for the UJA campaigns and projects."

It's anticipated that new programs and projects will be reviewed and perhaps embarked upon collectively by the organizations, he added.

He said the federation will also be more visible in the *Jewish Tribune*, B'nai Brith's newspaper, "through advertising and communications."

The agreement appears to signal an end to public sniping between B'nai Brith and Canada's other major Jewish advocacy network.

Over the summer, B'nai Brith was criticial of a visit by Gilad Schalit, which was sponsored by the Jewish National Fund and endorsed by the federation-linked Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA). B'nai Brith's newspaper, the *Jewish Tribune*, published a story intimating that Schalit was a poor soldier and not deserving of hero status.

B'nai Brith's paper also ran a story earlier in the year that was critical of CIJA's Size Doesn't Matter PR campaign, saying its use of sexual imagery to promote Israel is inappropriate.

Dimant said the new agreement will strengthen both B'nai Brith and the federation because "in public there will be no recriminations, one against the other, although each may voice their own independent views relating to advocacy and issues affecting the Jewish community with respect towards one another."

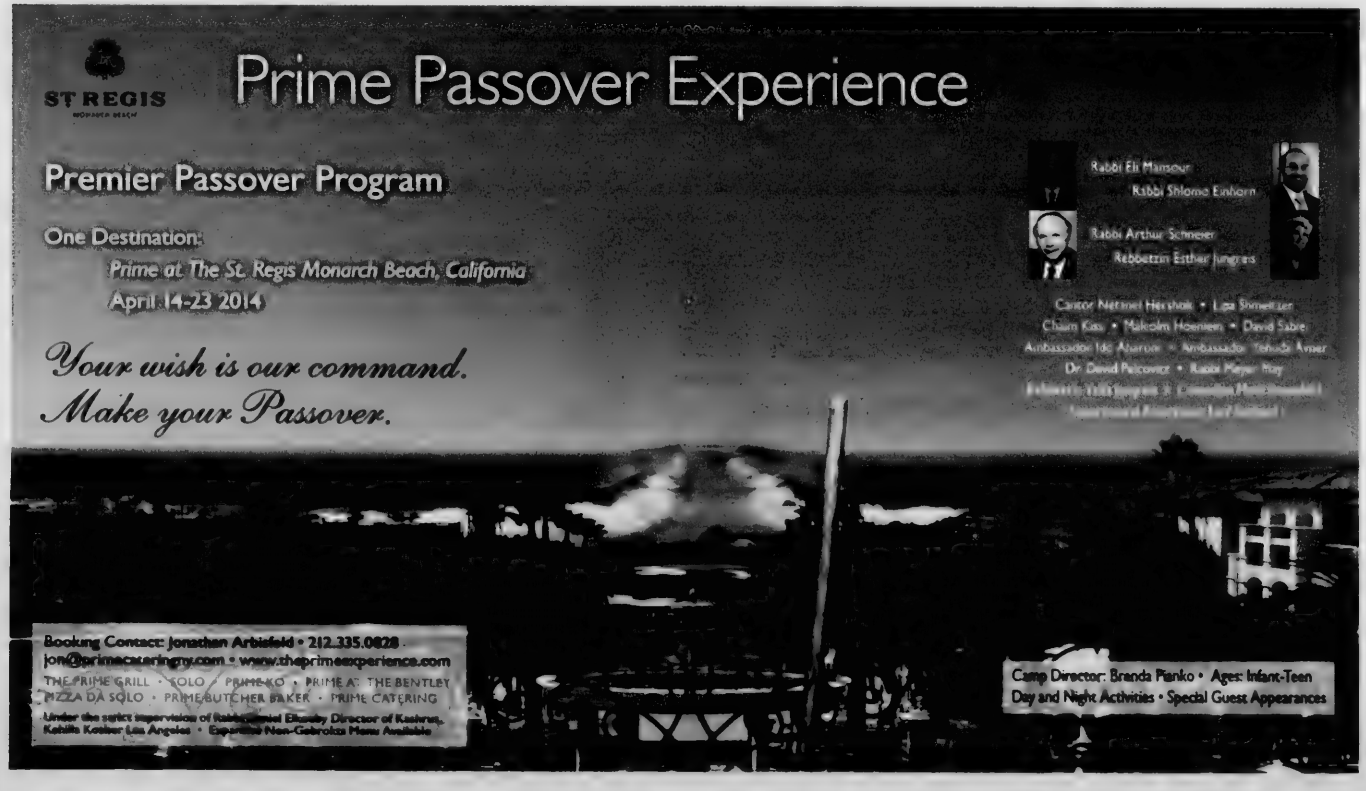
Rabbi Daniel Korobkin, spiritual leader of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto, spoke at the signing event and said "there are times when the moon and sun and stars all align. This is a win-win situation for both organizations.

"The two great brands [are coming together], and no one is giving up who they are. They will work together to be better."

Eric Bissell, B'nai Brith's national president, called the agreement "a milestone in the Jewish community. B'nai Brith makes a difference in people's lives. [It] fights anti-Semitism and [provides] social service programs."

He added: "This historic [agreement] captures the voice of the grassroots of the community. [It allows for] full autonomy, but joint effort. It means [we have a] stronger community while maintaining our own institutions."

Eric Bissell, left, president, B'nai Brith Canada and Morris Perlis, chair-elect of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, shake hands after signing the agreement. [*Carolyn Blackman photo*]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Rev. Meshoe leading fight against BDS movement

South African MP refutes Israeli apartheid lie

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Rev. Kenneth Meshoe, a black South African who lived under his country's oppressive apartheid regime until 1994, was in Toronto last week to speak out against those who make the "improper and wrong" claim that Israel is an apartheid state.

Rev. Meshoe, president of the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), a political party based on biblical principles that has three seats in South Africa's Parliament, was the keynote speaker at two events sponsored by Israel advocacy group StandWithUs Canada: one at Beth Sholom Synagogue and another at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto.

Speaking with *The CJN* in advance of his lectures, Rev. Meshoe, who is on leave as a South African MP, said he planned to talk about the "seven acts of Parliament that formed the basis of apartheid. And I argue that without those acts of Parliament, there is no apartheid.

"It is improper and wrong and for anyone to make the suggestion that Israeli is an apartheid state when there is no such acts of Parliament in Israel, no segregation based on race."

In May, the *San Francisco Examiner* published an opinion piece by Rev. Meshoe that he wrote in reaction to anti-Israel ads approved by the city.

He wrote that under the South African apartheid system, he couldn't vote, travel freely throughout his country or hold government office.

"The races were strictly segregated at sports arenas, public restrooms, schools and on public transportation," he added.

But in Israel, which he has visited a number of times, Israeli citizens of all races and religions "mingle freely in public places, universities, restaurants, voting stations and public transportation. All people have the right to vote. The Arab minority has political parties, serves in the Israeli parliament (Knesset) and holds positions in government ministries, the police force and the security services."

Meryle Kates, executive director of StandWithUs Canada, and Rev. Kenneth Meshoe

He said the term Israeli apartheid "trivializes the word apartheid, minimizing and belittling the magnitude of the racism and suffering endured by South Africans of colour."

As a political leader, Rev. Meshoe is leading the fight against the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS), which was endorsed in 2012 by the ruling African National Congress.

Rev. Meshoe said the government's decision to boycott Israeli goods and technology puts politics before the health of its own citizens. For example, earlier this year, 30 South African men were killed by infections brought on by botched circumcisions performed during traditional initiation rites.

"In their culture, when a young man enters into manhood, there are some rituals that are done that include circumcision. At times, it is done by people who are not properly trained," he said.

He said that when South Africa's department of health approved the use of PrePex, an Israeli-made, World Health Organization-approved circumcising device that's a cheap and safe alternative to the controversial Malaysian-made Tara KLamp, leaders of the BDS movement urged the government to reverse the decision.

"We are saying that these are lives that the government is trying to save. And we have people who don't care about the lives of their people. They're saying, 'We don't care how many people are going to die… Because it comes from Israel, it should not be used,'" he said.

"We want to… ensure that BDS does not deny the people of Africa. Africa has millions of people who are drinking polluted water. And Israel has the technology to purify their water. But the politicians don't care how many people get diseases, how many people die from the polluted water.

"We also have a huge problem of drought," he said, adding that during his visit to Chicago where he also spoke before arriving in Toronto, he learned about Israel's Netafim technology – a drip irrigation system that uses very little water to hydrate crops.

"The government should allow us to have access to this system, this technology that can help."

Rev. Meshoe also commented on his country's deputy foreign minister, who openly advised South Africans last year not to travel to Israel.

"I believe one of the reasons they don't want us to go is because they are scared people will see the truth. I know a number of people who did go to Israel with the mindset of Israel being an apartheid state, but when they went to Israel, they came back changed.

"I have challenged members of Parliament and people I know who are anti-Israel, and I have said, 'I will sponsor your ticket. Let us go to Israel and you will show me where there is apartheid, and I will show where there is not.' But they don't want to accept the challenge. In their heart of hearts they know that it is not the case."

Rev. Meshoe accused BDS promoters of "deceiving people by using the apartheid allegation, and they are not giving people the opportunity to benefit from the technology that comes out of Israel."

In response to the BDS campaign, Rev. Meshoe founded a non-governmental organization called Deisi – an acronym for "Defend Embrace Invest Support Israel."

"This is mainly going to be a student movement. We want to take students from our country to Israel to see that there is no apartheid in Israel."

He said by 2015, he wants to send a team of South African students to North American universities that host Israeli Apartheid Week in order to enlighten students about what apartheid really is.

Rev. Meshoe believes that if black South Africans were given the same rights in South Africa as those that exist in Israel today, "there would never have been an armed struggle. (Anti-apartheid revolutionary and former South African President) Nelson Mandela would not have gone to prison. Everything he fought for is already available in Israel."

Rev. Meshoe's message for Jewish communities in North America and abroad, who oppose the BDS campaign against Israel, is "to join StandWithUs in being more outspoken and maybe even aggressive in coming out against the BDS campaign, because the BDS campaign is robbing those who are suffering in other parts of the world from benefitting from the technology that comes out of Israel."

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Haifa mayor seeks to expand high-tech industry

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Newly re-elected Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav was in Toronto last week on a mission to entice entrepreneurs, community leaders and politicians to invest in the rapid development of Haifa's high-tech industry.

Yahav, who secured a third term in office in October, having won 50 per cent of the votes, said he has ambitions to develop Haifa's high-tech centre to resemble San Francisco's Silicon Valley, and he wants Toronto's help.

"I want to try to set up a support group, which we want to lean on," Yahav said in an interview with *The CJN*. "I offered them to be a full part of the development of Haifa and to be full partners to invest and to help."

Haifa mayor Yona Yahav, left, with Toronto councillor James Pasternak

During his three-day trip to the city, accompanied by Haifa Foundation executive director Cobie Brosh and Canadian Committee For The Haifa Foundation executive director Lisa Gardner Plant, Yahav's family in Toronto, Irena and Avi Greenspoon, hosted a dessert reception in his honour at their Thornhill, Ont., home last week.

Yahav also met with a number of Toronto city councillors to discuss economic and cultural development opportunities between the two cities.

"Haifa is known throughout the world as a city of business, culture and innovation. Speaking with Mayor Yahav, it quickly became clear that there is enormous potential for investment between our two cities," Coun. James Pasternak said. "I look forward to working together in the future on cultural and economic initiatives."

Established in 2008, Haifa is home to Hi-Center, which is an accelerator for late-stage startups. Last year, Top Start-Up was established as an accelerator for new start-ups. Top Center, Hi-Centre's sponsor, is an incubator that currently hosts about 20 companies, Yahav said.

Yahav said the startup he is most excited about is Lexiphone, a Hi-Center alum, that got a $2-million investment from a Toronto-based technology incubator called Intertainment Media Inc.

"Lexiphone, the first company that became ripe, is a cellular company that... allows you to talk to someone in China in English and he will hear it in Chinese, and he will speak to you in Chinese and you will hear it in English," he said.

Through Haifa's high-tech accelerators and incubators, the number of inventions of medical devices and technologies that come out of the city is on the rise.

Haifa's future looks a lot brighter than it did the last time Yahav spoke with *The CJN* in 2006, during the Second Lebanon War.

"The economy is in a hole, most of the businesses are closed. And people are instructed to stay behind walls because the rockets that are being shot at us contain thousands of bullets [shrapnel], which are being scattered around in a radius of kilometres," Yahav said in 2006.

But Haifa recovered quickly, he said, thanks to the rapid reconstruction effort and financial help from the Israeli government.

Today, the population in this growing city is about 300,000 – up from 270,000 in 2006.

"The unemployment rate went down to four per cent, which is the lowest unemployment rate in Israel. You have to bear in mind that when I started in 2003, we started with an unemployment rate of 12 per cent," Yahav said.

"We're in the midst of a very rapid development in the city... We changed the whole setup of the city with regard to the infrastructure... We are now considered the most modern city in Israel these days."

But Yahav isn't content to rest on the laurels of his city's high-tech sector.

"The second thing we're doing is turning the entire downtown Haifa into a university campus. This is the only project of its kind in the world because this is a city renewal through high education."

Yahav said he is also working with his government to expand the Port of Haifa, the largest of Israel's three major international seaports, to accommodate shipments from China and India. The 4-billion-shekel (almost $1.2-billion Cdn) expansion is scheduled to be completed in 2018.

"Through that, the whole economy of the city will change. Once it happens we should be able to carry out our huge project on the waterfront of Haifa," Yahav said.

"Once we succeed in building the waterfront of Haifa, this will attract about two million or more tourists to Haifa and this will finalize our aim to turn Haifa, which is the most beautiful city in Israel, into a tourist site."

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Teens learn about hunger on trip to Detroit

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Five Canadian teens spent three days learning about hunger as part of an 85-person BBYO trip to southeastern Michigan.

The theme of the BBYO Stand UP summit was encompassed in its title, "Hunger is not a Game: A Teen Issue Summit on Hunger Awareness and Advocacy." From Nov. 10 to 12, participants travelled to volunteer and learn in the city of Detroit, which filed for bankruptcy earlier this year.

Vaughan Secondary School student Dylan Nowogrodski has gone on BBYO trips before, including one last year to help people suffering after Hurricane Sandy. But despite what he's learned about poverty and suffering in the past, this trip was an eye-opener.

"I found it really astonishing that 48 million people in the United States are food insecure," Nowogrodski said. "That's more than the population of our country."

According to the World Health Organization, food security is "when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life."

A July report from the University of Toronto concluded that in 2011, 3.9 million Canadians faced some level of food insecurity, with the biggest concentration found in the north.

The teens took part in simulations in which they could experience the challenges of making ends meet. For example, the local United Way ran a workshop in which each student was given a character and a budget, and they had to determine how they would allocate their funds over the course of a month.

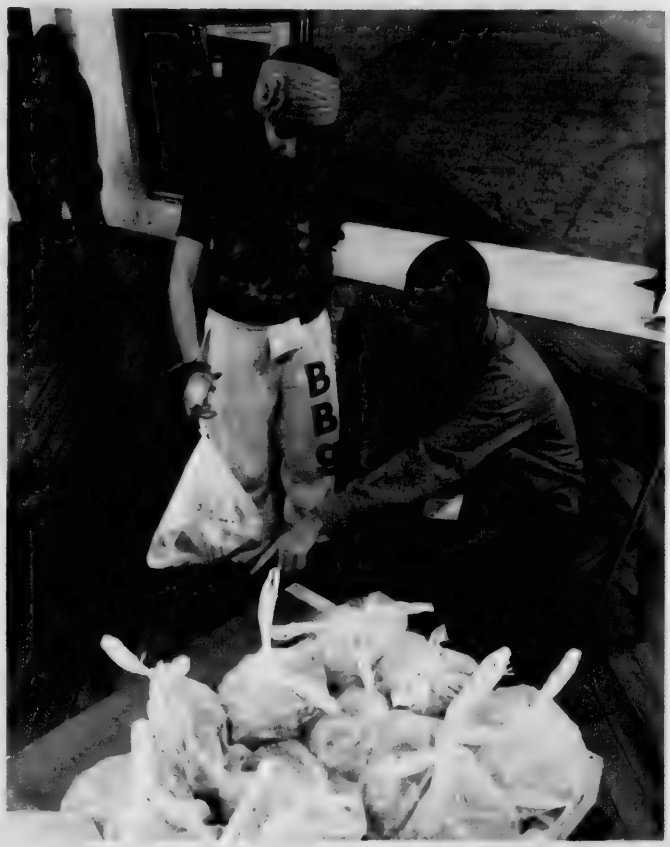
Nowogrodski, for example, was given the role of a grandfather. He said it was challenging enough to make ends meet, but then organizers threw him a curveball – his character was mugged for $100 – and he had to find a way to make it through the month.

Ben Sterlin, a student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, said this simulation was one of the highlights of the trip.

"It was really eye-opening because I don't pay any of the bills in my family – my parents do. When I did the simulation, it really showed me how much work parents have to go through, and how not easy it is to pay these bills," he said. "It really made me more grateful for the fact that my parents go through the work to pay these bills, and now I'm more appreciative of that."

What made the trip so effective was that it featured workshops and volunteer work rather than lectures, he said.

For example, he spent time at the Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan packaging snack bags filled with granola bars and cookies for kids to eat after school.



Toronto students Amanda Freedman and Ben Sterlin pack snack packages at a food bank. Teens packaged more than 20,000 pounds of food in total.

In total, teens participating in the summit donated 400 pounds of food to Detroit food banks, and they packaged more than 20,000 pounds of food to distribute to food insecure families.

Nowogrodski said he found it interesting to learn that food banks don't just focus on the homeless.

"It's not only homeless people who are hungry," he said, adding that your neighbour could be facing food insecurity and you might not know it.

"Just because someone looks like they're living an easy life and look like they're doing well doesn't mean they are," he said.

Although the trip focused only on the United States, Sterlin said he's able to take what he learned from the trip and apply it to Canada. He said he was planning to help food-insecure people locally by holding a screening of *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire.*

"We're partnering with the Daily Bread [Food Bank] and Mazon Canada," he said. "We're asking people to come in and bring cans of non-perishable food items, and 10 per cent of the proceeds we get from the tickets are going to Mazon."

He also plans to run a local campaign based on one he discovered on the trip. American students were sending letters to U.S. President Barack Obama on paper plates, expressing their feelings about hunger issues in the country.

Sterlin said he hopes to do the same here, but send the letters to Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

He said it's so important that people understand that hunger is not just an issue in developing countries in places such as Africa.

"Hunger is actually really prevalent in our society, and it hits way closer to home a lot more than many people think, which is why us teens and community leaders need to become advocates for this really pressing issue," he said.

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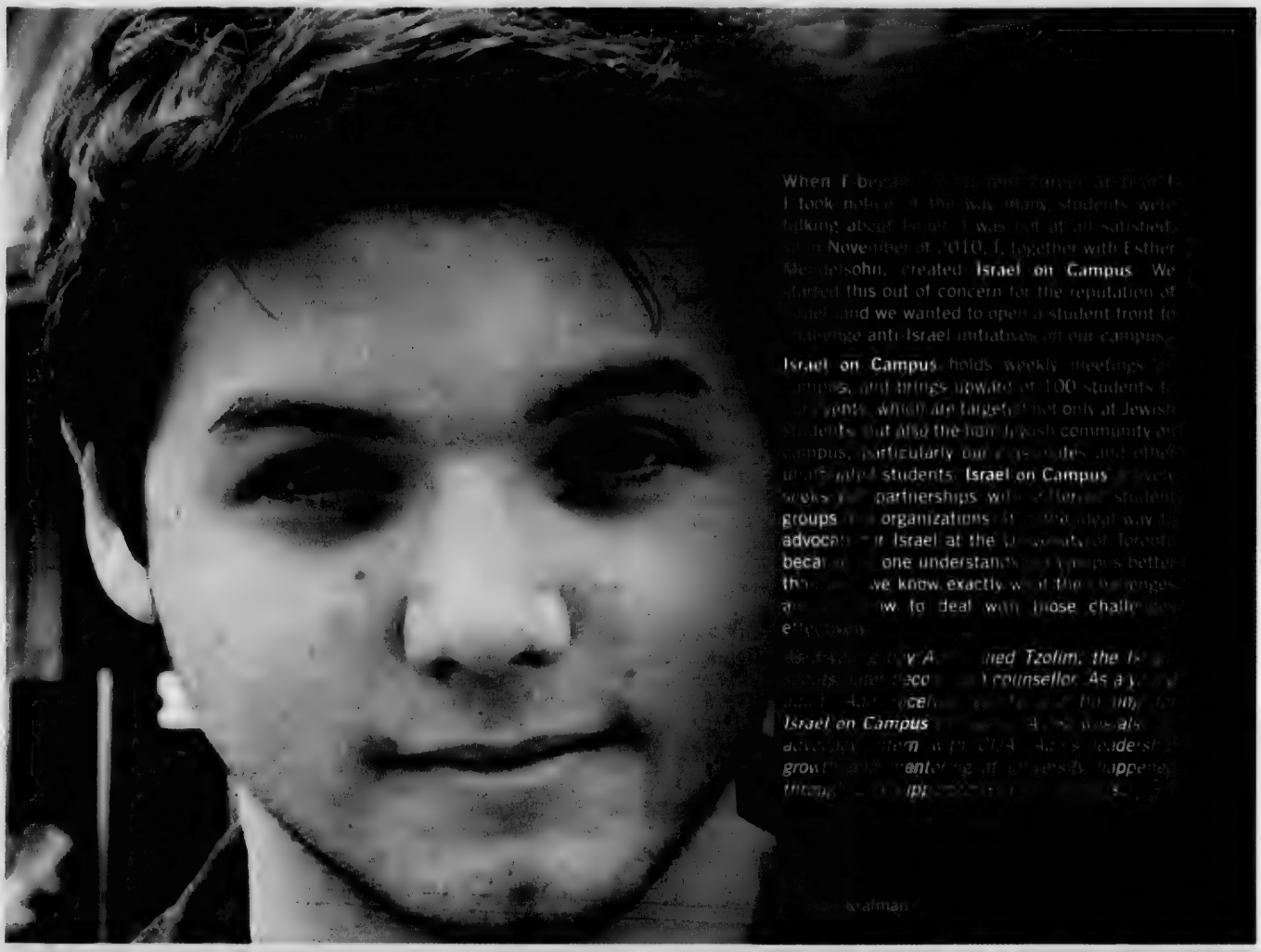
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Out of the Cold holds Chanukah party

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

This week's Chanukah party sponsored by Temple Har Zion's Out of the Cold program on Nov. 27 is a model of co-operation.

Har Zion, a Reform congregation is providing the venue and the soup, Shaar Shalom Synagogue, which is Conservative, is providing the meals, and the Orthodox synagogue Beth Avraham Yoseph is providing the latkes.

"Everyone is involved. It is co-operation at its best," said Steve Borlak, a former co-ordinator of Har Zion's Out of the Cold program, which runs Wednesday nights during the winter.

Borlak, who was part of the group that spearheaded Har Zion's participation, said that although he has stepped down as co-ordinator, he still helps out. "I love this program. It's in my blood."

It started at Har Zion, he said, because of the efforts of Mosaic Interfaith, an umbrella organization in York Region that promotes understanding, education and dialogue among different religions.

"About 17 years ago, the group wanted to have a meaningful expression of their views, and they were taken by the Out of the Cold program. It spread from there," Borlak said.

Unlike similar programs in the City of Toronto, he said, guests can't get to the temple easily by public transportation, so volunteers pick them up at the Finch subway station at about 4:30 p.m. and shuttle them in.

"We wait for them inside the station, and meet them with a coffee or hot chocolate and an energy bar," said Borlak, whose wife, Marie, prepares the drinks. "When they arrive at the temple, they're treated to a first-class meal."

Guests can also consult with a nurse, take part in an art program, bingo or a movie, and choose some clothing.

"Some guests stay the night, and others who are not homeless, go home. When their evening is over, they're shuttled back to the subway. The guests who sleep over have breakfast before they go, and they take away a bagged lunch."

The program does have Jewish guests, Borlak said, although he can't recall a Jewish guest spending the night.

"For Chanukah, we always invite a Jewish guest to light the candles."

Nobody running the program is judgmental, he said.

"It's just meant to get guests out of the cold, and feed and clothe them. It's a boost to their self-esteem, because some are never treated as guests," Borlak said.

"We get to know all of them. Some live on the fringe, and come for a good meal and some socialization. There is very little turnover. When a new guest comes, we know right away."

Borlak said he realizes that this is a Band-Aid response to the problem of homelessness, but he noted that some guests who have improved their situation have come back to say thank you.

Even after being involved with the program for almost 17 years, he said he still gets excited about it.

"By the Tuesday evening before, I start to feel the energy."

Temple Har Zion volunteers Linda Slavner, left, and Ruth Altman prepare dinner for the temple's Wednesday night Out of the Cold program.

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BAYCREST'S MR. HOCKEY: Gordie Howe, "Mr. Hockey," left, makes the acquaintance of Stan Feldman at Baycrest recently. Along with Mark Gryfe, Feldman was one of 10 individuals inducted into the Baycrest Pro-Am Hockey Hall of Fame. Steven Forberg, Alex Jurshevski, Irv Kleiner and Steven Little were inducted in the player category after each raising more than $100,000. Wendel Clark, Curtis Joseph, Mike Krushelnyski and Kevin Maguire were inducted in the NHL Alumni category. Established in 2006, the Baycrest Pro-Am Hockey Hall of Fame honours those who helped raise funds for the Scotiabank Pro-Am for Alzheimer's hockey tournament. To date, more than $23 million has been raised for Alzheimer's research at Baycrest. *[Roger Hallett photo]*

CHANUKAH DRIVE

LEFT: VIVA Thornhill Woods Retirement Community, in conjunction with seniors social group WEL (Women Enjoying Life) and Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS), has been collecting new, unwrapped toys to donate as holiday gifts for families in need. Last week, the gifts were presented to JIAS in the lobby of VIVA Thornhill Woods. Pictured, from left, are VIVA Thornhill Woods community relations co-ordinator Wendy Teperman, WEL president Shirley Katz, VIVA Thornhill Woods community relations manager, Reesa Soto, and JIAS' Lisa Nerman and Joanna Sasson Morrison.

GIFT BRIGADE

RIGHT: Grade 6 girls at Netivot HaTorah Day School spearheaded Netivot's annual Chai Lifeline Toy Drive. More than 150 gifts were donated to help bring joy to the lives of young Jewish patients during the Chanukah season.

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Four Seasons founder anchors Shaarei Shomayim renovation drive

Shul honours Sharp for $1M donation

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

On Dec. 3, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation will celebrate the success of its year-long capital campaign – called "Retire Rebuild Renew" – at a gala dinner with keynote speaker Isadore (Issy) Sharp.

Isadore and Rosalie Sharp and family have donated $1 million to the campaign, which has exceeded its original $1.5-million goal and raised close to $4 million, allowing it to undertake a major renovation. At the dinner, the main sanctuary will be dedicated in memory of Isadore's parents, Max and Lil Sharp.

Isadore Sharp, founder and chairman of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, and his wife, Rosalie, are prominent Canadian philanthropists who have received numerous awards for their contributions to the community.

"The Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue has always been an important part of my parents' life," he said. "They were instrumental in helping the synagogue to grow from the first basement-only building on St. Clair Avenue to become one of the largest Orthodox synagogues in North America. It is a privilege to have this opportunity to honour them in such a meaningful way."

The modern Orthodox shul was established in 1928 at 563 Christie St. It moved to 840 St. Clair Ave. W. in 1937 and acquired its present location at 470 Glencairn Ave. in 1966.

Michael Goldrich, co-chair of the campaign along with David Mansel, said the drive, whose full name is "Retire our Debt, Rebuild our Building and Renew our Commitment," has received almost $4 million so far, and the shul's 750 member families are still coming forward to participate.

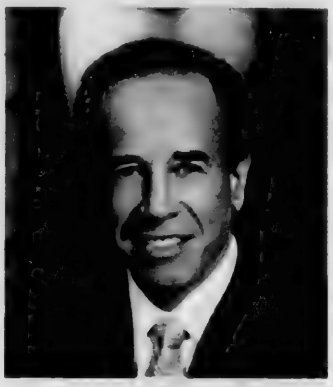
The original $1.5-million goal aimed to help pay off a debt incurred for repairs to the shul's lower level after a flood in 2010 caused by a burst city pipe, as well as repairs to the roof and a new heating and air conditioning system, said shul president Benny Osher.

But thanks to the Sharps and shul congregants, the synagogue hit its orginal target after only six months, so "we got more ambitious," Osher said.

"The flood was a blessing in disguise," he said, because it led to much-needed renovations to the lower level, such as new office space, a new beit midrash/chapel, a new wing of classrooms for the southern campus of Netivot HaTorah Day School and a reconfigured social hall.

But the extra money allowed the shul to go even further.

"This has been a phenomenal campaign, and we are overwhelmed with the generosity of our members and friends. Not only have we raised enough money and pledges to cover the debt from previous renovations, but we can now move forward with other important renovations to our sanctuary, lobby and exterior," he said.



Isadore (Issy) Sharp

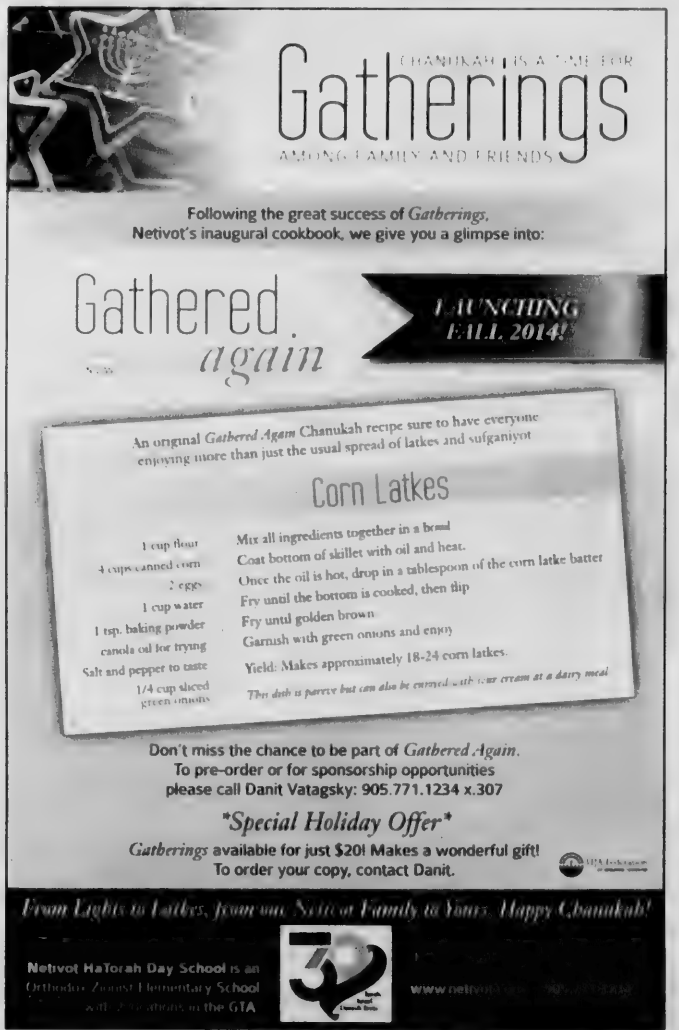
"When complete, our shul will be a beautifully renovated space for our members and for the wider Jewish community for generations to come," he added.

"The Shaarei Shomayim family has rallied together to achieve something very special and very lasting," Goldrich said.

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, who played a prominent role in the campaign, said, "We are the inheritors of a great tradition at Shaarei Shomayim, both in terms of the spiritual and physical legacy that has been left to us.

"We are grateful to God for the opportunity to extend this legacy to those who will follow our lead."

For more information, visit www.shomayim.org.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New Bnei Akiva head aims to revitalize campuses

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The new head of Bnei Akiva Schools – Yeshivat Or Chaim for boys and Ulpanat Orot for girls – says he's working hard to rebrand the two campuses.

"I'm trying to revitalize the schools and bring in a new energy," said Rabbi Seth Grauer, a native of New York City.

Most recently he was assistant principal for Yeshiva University High School for Girls and associate rabbi at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue, where one of his congregants was author Eli Wiesel.

In Rabbi Grauer's application to Bnei Akiva, Wiesel provided the search committee with a glowing reference.

Rabbi Seth Grauer

"I spoke with him often, and he became a type of mentor in terms of decision making, goal setting and priorities," the rabbi said."

Grauer, 35, who is married with three children, told *The CJN* that as part of the restructuring he has become head of both schools.

"Administration is now campus specific, because I recognized that it was inefficient to have staff who travel back and forth between schools. It doesn't lead to an effective academic environment."

Although this is his first year at the school, he was hired in December 2012 and worked behind the scenes.

"I told the board in January that the administrative structure is not sustainable," he said.

Grauer's teaching career started almost by accident. "I was in rabbinical school in New York, and at night I was taking courses for law school. To finish my rabbinical ordination I had to take part in a work study, and I met someone who told me he needed someone to teach an 11th-grade Talmud class once a week.

"I loved it, and at the end of the year the school offered me a job. I was supposed to start work at a law firm but I stayed at school."

He eventually went on to become assistant principal, but never stopped teaching.

"I'm continuing that policy here. All administrators have to teach. If they don't get into the classroom, they lose the pulse of the school," he said. "The classroom motivates you to think of new ideas, and be innovative. You can't be an effective administrator if you're not a teacher."

Grauer said Bnei Akiva Schools give students a top-rate education. "Classes are challenging and engaging, and about 99 per cent of the students go on to university. The vast majority spend time in Israel when they graduate."

He said that he's trying to encourage teachers to become mentors to their students.

"A formal Judaic studies curriculum is based on best practices and making intelligent decisions. We raise our standards of instruction through mentoring. I'm very excited about it."

As a born-and-raised New Yorker, he said that coming to Toronto has been a big change, "but in a positive way. There is a wonderful community here, and I'm proud to be part of it."

Toronto educator honoured

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A Toronto woman has been named one of five recipients of the Pomegranate Prize, an award designed to recognize and encourage educators who have been working for less than 10 years.

Risa Alyson Cooper, executive director of Shoresh Jewish Environmental Programs, was the only Canadian among this year's group of winners. Although she's not a teacher in the traditional sense, she has spent years working as an environmental educator both in Connecticut and in her native Toronto.

Risa Alyson Cooper with a pattypan squash

The prize is bestowed annually by the Covenant Foundation, which aims to recognize the diversity of strengths in North American Jewish education. Created in 2011, the award comes with $15,000 distributed over three years to help fuel the winners' projects.

"Our goal with this prize is to provide the means for these already remarkable educators to further develop their skills and interests, and have the chance to get to know others who, like themselves, are bringing fresh new ideas and abundant energy to the field of Jewish education," Keating Crown, a member of the foundation's founding family, said at the awards ceremony in Chicago on Oct. 28.

Cooper wasn't able to attend the ceremony, since she had given birth a month earlier.

Through Shoresh, Cooper, 32, has created the Shoresh Kavanah Garden at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan.

The garden is home to more than 100 kinds of organic vegetables, fruits, herbs and wildflowers. There's also a compost demonstration site, a rainwater catchment system, a Havdalah spice garden, raised wheelchair-accessible garden beds, a greenhouse, and an outdoor kitchen and bicycle-powered blender.

Signs in Hebrew, English and Russian allow people from a variety of backgrounds to learn about the garden

Continued on page 21

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Shanghai Holocaust survivor inspires children

Marvin Glassman
Special To The CJN

Lily Toufar Lash of Toronto was one of 20,000 Jews who fled Europe in 1938 to find refuge and safety in Shanghai, China, but not for a life without its own horrors.

Toufar joined author Kathy Kacer during Holocaust Education Week to speak to some 50 young students at the Spadina children's library about Toufar's personal experience in Shanghai, which Kacer described in her new book *Shanghai Escape*.

Toufar, only four at the time, and her family escaped from Vienna on the night of Kristallnacht in 1938, fleeing to Shanghai, where they lived until 1948. She and her family immigrated to Toronto that year and have remained ever since.

"At first, things were not bad for Lily, as Shanghai represented freedom, even though Japan was in control of Shanghai. But, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 when America declared war, the Japanese army rounded up the Jewish refugees (called stateless refugees) to a ghetto in Hongkew," Kacer told the children.

"The Hongkew ghetto had deplorable conditions, Hongkew was overcrowded, many of the Jewish refugees were starving, and most were not able to leave the ghetto to work without a daily pass from the Japanese."

"My family was so lucky to have escaped Europe," Toufar said, "because I soon learned that other families were not as lucky. I feel so privileged to live in Canada, where everyone is free to practise religion."

Shanghai Escape is the latest of Kacer's children's books about Holocaust survivors. The author met Toufar through a mutual friend, and wanted to share her story to draw attention to the plight of the Jewish refugees in Shanghai.

"I wanted to share the innocence and confusion of a young girl's perspective on what happened in Shanghai. Children read and learn more about history when it's told from the vantage of a child. Most of the children attending the talk knew little about Japan and how they were involved with the Nazis," Kacer said.

Shanghai Escape describes some of the experiences of young Lily, her parents and extended family that put their lives in danger while they were forced to stay in Hongkew. The incidents include a dramatic account of Lily's mother being violently beaten by a Japanese official for failing to show a pass allowing her to go to work outside the ghetto.

The book has mystery and drama, as the reader is unsure of the fate of Lily and her family. A recurring passage has Lily's father stating, "We will always be together, Lily, no matter what," which comforted the child, no matter how uncertain and dangerous the years in Shanghai were.

Although Japan did not send Jews to concentration camps as the Nazis did, there was speculation in the book that the Japanese were planning to send the Jews in Hongkew to prison camps if the war had not ended in 1945.

When the Toufars immigrated to Toronto in 1948, Lily's extended family owned a grocery store on Eglinton Avenue before buying a farm in Richmond Hill, north of the city.

In 1958, Lily met and married Jimmy Lash, who survived the Holocaust in the Lodz ghetto of Poland and the Auschwitz concentration camp. They live in Toronto and have two children and two grandchildren.

Kacer and Toufar will talk about *Shanghai Escape* again on Dec. 5, 6:30 p.m., at the Kiever Shul, 25 Bellevue Ave. For more information, call 416-593-9702 or go to www.kathykacer.ca

Kacer and Toufar will also be speaking about the book Dec. 4 at the Kiever Shul.

Corrections/Clarifications

In the article, "Cookbook captures culinary diversity, (*CJN*, Nov. 21,) the link to the cookbook should have been www.mosaiccookbook.com.

•••

Re: The article "JUMP gets larger home" (*The CJN*, Nov. 21), Shlomo Buzaglo chose to leave the organization.

Cooper called a visionary

Continued from page 20

Harlene Appelman, executive director of the foundation, said the panel of judges selected Cooper for the prize because she shows such promise so early in her career.

"She's a pioneer. She's a visionary," Appelman said. "She's accomplished a lot in a short time."

Appelman said she hopes that the five winners will be able to rely on each other for support and new ideas that will improve Jewish education in North America. There will be webinars throughout the year, and the winners will come together for a meeting in New Jersey in February.

Cooper said she found out she had won the prize on the first day of her maternity leave.

"I was completely floored, and just so humbled and grateful," she said. "It was a sweet way to transition out of Shoresh."

Shoresh means, "root" in Hebrew, which Cooper said is perfect in describing the group's projects.

"Shoresh is helping community members get back to their Jewish roots," she said. "The idea is that through interacting with our land with the earth, we're able to access and understand a part of our Jewish heritage."

She said it's a blessing when she's able to teach someone and watch them have an "aha" moment.

"What I love about being a educator is helping to create points of connections… whether it's offering them an opportunity to connect with a kind of tree or a particular Jewish text or even other community members," she said. "I feel these other kinds of Jewish connections deepen our understanding of not just ourselves, but our community around us."

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Group suspected of child abuse

Extremist Jewish sect flees Quebec

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — About 280 members of a cult-like Jewish sect left their enclave in Ste. Agathe des Monts, Que., overnight Nov. 17-18 for Ontario, reportedly fleeing because they were under investigation by the Youth Protection Department.

Citing Sûreté du Québec (SQ) sources, *La Presse* reported that the Lev Tahor (Hebrew for pure heart) group, consisting of about 40 families and led by self-styled chassidic Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, left in a convoy of cars and buses.

Their departure was observed by the SQ, but its officers did not intervene, according to *La Presse* sources.

They went to a motel in Chatham-Kent, near Detroit. At the end of last week, police there had been in touch with Quebec authorities.

Numerous allegations of neglect and abuse of children, as well as women, have been made over the years, but no charges were ever laid. The women wear headscarves and long dark cloaks.

There have been accounts that Rabbi Helbrans exerts tyrannical control over his followers.

They left behind the houses and institutions they had built in Ste. Agathe since Rabbi Helbrans established the group in the Laurentian town more than 10 years ago.

The Israeli-born Rabbi Helbrans (also known as Elbarnes) was convicted of kidnapping in 1994 in New York for holding a boy at his yeshiva for two years. Facing deportation to Israel upon his release from prison, he fled to Canada.

Despite being a convicted felon, he was granted refugee status in 2004, after he claimed to be in danger if he was sent back to Israel because of his extreme anti-Zionist views.

Although the group was insular, its members did occasionally burn the Israeli flag in public.

The Times of Israel on Nov. 20 quoted Oded Twik, an Israeli whose sister and eight children had lived with Lev Tahor for the past eight years, as saying the group feared the authorities were about to remove children because of an impending youth protection case.

Twik said she urged Canadian authorities to remove all of the children – 137, according to her information – from the group.

She said the group hoped to go to Iran. Another website, FailedMessiah.com, citing an unnamed source, said the group wants to go to Sudan or any country that would not extradite them to Canada or Israel.

The Times of Israel reported that dozens of family members and supporters held a demonstration outside the Canadian embassy in Tel Aviv on Oct. 14 to raise awareness of the danger they believe their relatives are in by staying with Lev Tahor.

Lev Tahor also has a branch in Beit Shemesh, Israel. Last year, two teenaged girls from that community were sent back to Israel when they arrived at Trudeau airport in Montreal, apparently on their way to visit the Ste. Agathe community. Immigration officials were complying with an Israeli court order issued after the girls' grandmother petitioned it out of fear for their welfare. Lev Tahor had apparently been planning to decamp for some time. On its website (levtahor.ca) is a lengthy message written in poor English and dated Feb. 17, 2013, that they had left for a place within "driving distance of several hours from Quebec." (Most of the website content is in Hebrew.)

"The reason that the community left Quebec is the education decrees in Quebec… Some of our people were called to court because of the education decrees, and they were faced to a fact: 'If you would not surrender to the education decrees, we would take your children from you.'"

This may be a reference to the province's prescribed curriculum, as well as other laws obligating children to attend school and that those schools be licensed and the teachers certified.

The message denies that any child protection laws were violated, as was "said again and again for years and years against the community."

"The community invited the local social services to examine, to discuss and to investigate each and every person in the community, adults and children. This is to show again that the blood libels that are said by liars on the community have no connection to reality."

A garbled update dated Nov. 21, 2013, reads: "The children of the people that were called to court today due to the decrees of education, informed the social service, in the country where they live, that they do not want, to go to trial today at all, because they are afraid that they will be taken from their parents against their parents' will and against their will."

A plea is made for donations to help with the group's move and setting up of a new enclave, "not to mention the recent legal expenses stemming ultimately also from the struggle for education."

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Jewish community helps to rebuild Haiti

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Former governor general Michaëlle Jean is lending her support to a joint project of the Montreal Jewish and Haitian communities to develop sustainable agriculture in Haiti.

Jean, who is now special envoy to that Caribbean island for UNESCO, thanked the Kanpe Foundation and the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University (CFHU) for their initiative at the project's Nov. 14 launch at the Montreal Science Centre.

The organizations hope to raise $1 million for the 10-year, two-phase project. The first phase is to send experts from the Hebrew University's agricultural department to Haiti to train people there in how to improve farming techniques in the most ecological way.

The second phase will provide scholarships for Haitians to study at Hebrew University's Rodney H. Smith faculty of agriculture, food and environment, which since 1986 has run an international program for students from developing countries.

Kanpe (Creole for "stand up") is a Montreal-based organization that seeks to end the cycle of poverty by equipping Haitians with the skills and means that lead to economic independence.

Jean recalled that the Jewish presence in Haiti goes back to 1830 when Jews started finding refuge there from pogroms in the Middle East and later Europe. She noted that the Haitian government, unlike most others in the world, issued visas to those fleeing Nazi persecution in the 1930s.

The community grew to 300 families, before eventually dispersing by the 1960s.

Growing up in Haiti, Jean said she was well aware of the community through its commerce and institutions, such as a synagogue and two cemeteries.

It's a relationship she is happy to see flourishing once again, something positive that has come out of catastrophe: the earthquake in January 2010.

She thanked Israel for rushing to the aid of Haitians and setting up the first field hospital after the devastation.

"My grandmother and mother taught me that education is the key to freedom, the freedom to make better choices," said Jean, who is also University of Ottawa chancellor.

Jean hopes for a true partnership among Haitians, Israelis and Canadians in helping to rebuild the country, with Haitians not only on the receiving end, but able to share their knowledge as well.

In December, she plans to meet with representatives of the Université Roi Henri Christophe in the northern part of the country to gain their co-operation in the project.

"Haiti wants to learn, but it also has a lot to offer," she said.

Jean believes this project will encourage Haitians to stay in their country after they have completed studies abroad. Unfortunately, she said, too many educated elsewhere don't come back.

The earthquake brought the Montreal Jewish and Haitian communities (the latter numbers about 120,000) closer, and raised awareness of their historic ties.

Simon Bensimon, executive director of the CFHU, Montreal chapter, had the idea of extending the generosity the Jewish community had shown to earthquake relief over the longer term.

Hebrew University's agricultural faculty was working in Africa, Asia and Central America, but a connection with Haiti back in the 1980s had lapsed, he said.

The project took shape after Dominique Anglade, Kanpe co-founder, who Bensimon had known when he worked at Concordia University, came on board. Her parents, both political activists, died in the earthquake.

The evening, called Terroir: Two Communities, Three Countries, One Goal, was hosted by television and radio host Isabelle Racicot, whose father was Haitian. She visited Israel last year.

Former governor general Michaëlle Jean chats with Joel Lion, right, and Justin Viard, consuls general, respectively, of Israel and Haiti. *[Janice Arnold photo]*

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Israel an 'eye-opener' for university rector

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Université de Montréal rector Guy Breton says he learned more in Israel than he did during a similar academic mission to China.

The superpower is eclipsed by the tiny Jewish state, in his view, when it comes to the dynamism of its universities.

When Breton became rector in 2010 he vowed to expand the UdeM's already extensive ties with hundreds of academic institutions around the world. Three countries were in his sights: China, Brazil – as the economic leader of Latin America – and Israel.

In October, he led an intensive 10-day trip to Israel, the first UdeM mission to the country, visiting all seven major universities. The 10 delegates included vice-rector for international relations Hélène David and professors and researchers from departments as diverse as pharmacy, biology, political science, music and medicine. Breton is a former vice-dean of medicine.

Breton said he received no opposition to making Israel a priority, but plenty of questions as to why. Today, he feels vindicated.

"It was an incredible eye-opener," he said of the mission. "We have a folkloric image of Israel. If you are not close to it, you do not understand the reality. Much more is going on there than we think."

Breton makes clear he is not interested in entering into political disputes, and has no patience with boycotts. His first job is to educate people, and he is convinced a greater connection with Israel will help him do that.

"I want students to be better trained. Period. Don't bother me with politics," he said.

When he speaks of dynamism, Breton means Israeli academics' ability to "think outside the box; they try to find a solution to a problem, that not only is good for Israel, but could be exportable, that could help others.

"This is what we should be doing everywhere."

Breton was impressed with the universities' technology transfer companies, which seek markets for products and ideas coming out of research.

Israel is far ahead of Canadian universities in this regard, he said. He terms it "snobbish" to rigidly hold to the view that the academic and the commercial should not mix.

"If a I find a good molecule, a better way to teach math, why shouldn't it be made available to society?" Breton wonders.

That does not mean industry should direct what research a university conducts, he added, acknowledging the legitimate concern that research that doesn't lead to the marketplace may be shunned if universities get too cozy with business.

As long as the direction comes from the university, and not the company, this fear is exaggerated, he believes.

The UdeM is the second largest university in Canada in terms of enrolment, and its annual research budget of $525 million is surpassed only by the University of Toronto and University of British Columbia.

The UdeM visitors learned that Israeli universities are not "swimming in money" from donations from Jewish communities abroad as they had perceived.

The revenue from commercialization is a significant source of revenue, Breton found out, something cash-strapped universities here could use.

Breton stressed that the UdeM, which was founded 135 years ago to educate the French-Canadian elite, has throughout its history been open to everyone. There were never quotas on Jewish students as there were, notably, at McGill University, and many Jews were able to enter the professions because they were admitted by the UdeM.

Université de Montréal rector Guy Breton with identified friend in Jerusalem

One of Breton's pet projects today is to find a way to persuade chassidic Jews – his neighbours in Outremont – to study at the UdeM.

"We have a long, long history of positive relations with the Jewish community," said Breton, but he felt that contact had been allowed to lapse in recent years. Therefore, he more than welcomed the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs' offer to help organize the Israel mission.

He was also glad that Rosalind and Morris Goodman, who graduated in pharmacy from the UdeM 60 years ago and is a major benefactor of his alma mater, accompanied the group, providing them with an insider's perspective on life in Israel.

The UdeM had some earlier connections to Israeli universities, notably Hebrew University of Jerusalem, but they had never been formalized. Now, memorandums of general agreement have been reached with Technion and the University of Haifa, and there are discussions for collaboration with the five other universities.

The delegation made a brief visit to Ramallah on the West Bank, at the suggestion of their CIJA escort Myriam Azogui-Halbwax. Because there was a university strike, the Montrealers met with two representatives of Birzeit and Al-Quds universities at the Canadian delegation, rather than on campus.

Breton found they were not at the level of the Israeli universities, and no future partnership is envisioned, although the UdeM may help them, perhaps in the field of medicine.

Personally, Breton said he found the trip emotional; although not "a religious fanatic," it was moving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

He was also gratified to see how peacefully, Jews, Muslims and the various Christian denominations live together in Jerusalem.

Breton was impressed with how much Israel has accomplished in its 65-year history, and its "capacity to change."

"The Israel of 2013 is not the Israel of 1993 or even 2003," he said.

Israeli university students, compared to their Quebec counterparts, are more mature – in years because of their military service – but also in outlook.

"They do not want to waste time. They are keen to learn well and fast, and to have a good life."

One of the first fruits of the new relationship will be a concert organized by the music faculties of UdeM and Tel Aviv University next fall in Montreal. It will be conducted by the Israeli Yoav Talmi, who was artistic director of the Orchestre symphonique de Québec from 1998-2011 and is now music director of the Israel Chamber Orchestra.

Canadian, Israeli defence ministers meet

CJN Staff

OTTAWA — Defence Minister Rob Nicholson and his Israeli counterpart, Moshe Ya'alon, met Nov. 22 for the first time to discuss how to enhance co-operation and build on a growing defence relationship between Canada and Israel.

"I am proud to say that Canada and Israel enjoy close military relations at all levels," Nicholson said.

"The strong ties between Canada and Israel are based on our shared values, including democracy and the rule of law. Our co-operation in terms of defence is continually improving, and I am confident that we will find avenues to expand our defence relations even further in the near future."

Nicholson and Ya'alon also discussed the Principal Memorandum of Understanding signed by Canada and Israel in January 2011, which laid a foundation for Canadian-Israeli defence co-operation in counter-terrorism, training, search and rescue, intelligence, command and control and the sharing of new technologies.

Since being signed, it has shaped and added momentum to the development of the two countries' defence relationship, and is the basis of future co-operation between their two militaries, the federal government said in a statement.

While in Canada, Ya'alon joined Nicholson in Halifax for the fifth annual Halifax International Security Forum, which took place from Nov. 22 to 24.

While there, Ya'alon also met with U.S. Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel, who was also attending the conference.

Defence Minister Bob Nicholson, centre, with U.S. Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel, right, and Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon at the International Security Forum in Halifax *[Israel Sun photo]*

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Guard your tongue

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash
B. A. (Hon), LL B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 32 years

According to Rabbi Israel Meyer Hakohen, also know as the Chofetz Chaim, one of the greatest Torah sages of all time, God requires caution in speech even more than in sight or hearing because speech can determine life and death: *"Life and death are in the hands of the tongue"* (Mishlei 18:21). The Torah's dim view of slander or gossip (even if true) is that evil words not only lead to evil deeds, but character assassination is in itself murder, albeit murder of someone's name and reputation.

Prior to the murder of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, many Rabbis in Canada denounced the language of animosity and warned of catastrophic results if the name-calling within the Jewish people, from every political stripe, did not stop. Several weeks before the assassination, Orthodox Rabbi Baruch Taub of Toronto — the founding rabbi and Rabbi Emeritus of Canada's largest orthodox congregation — publically admonished his kehilla and Jews everywhere to debate their differences with civility and kindness, and denounced the slanderous portrayal of Jewish leaders of both the right and left, whether in Israel or in the diaspora. He specifically warned that if the bad language continued, Jewish history would repeat itself.

Causeless hatred among Jews not only accounted for the destruction of our ancient Temple but was the basis of the in-fighting from Herod's time thorough the schisms of misnagdim vs. chassidic Jews and the lack of serious dialogue between Zionists, Socialists (Bund) and observant Jews in the period between World War I and II. All Jews ultimately paid the price for such slanderous behaviour.

When unified, the Jewish people, with God's help, can create amazing wonders against all natural odds; witness the Six Day war ("and on the seventh He rested") and the survival of the Talmud and our people after so much persecution, the raid on the Entebbe airport, the Exodus of Russian and Ethiopian Jews, the freeing of Syrian Jewry.

When we raise our disagreements to the level of slanderous name-calling, we invite our own destruction. As the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, how can we now face the few remaining survivors or, if deceased, our relatives in the next world when, after Auschwitz, a Jew can even think of using heinous language against another Jew, whether from the left or right, whether with or without a kipa on his head? Did over six million really die for nothing? Do we still refuse to learn?

At the very least, we who were spared the Holocaust must carefully consider every word before it leaves our mouths, not only in political debate, but — let's be honest — within our immediate families. I have seen more Jewish divorces than I would care to count result from an in-law who refused to withhold scornful criticism from their married child about the child's spouse; too many insensitive souls who insult their wives/husbands or belittle their children with hurtful language; too much gossip. The courts are crowded with the consequences of missed opportunities to withhold one's tongue and act with tact.

And I'm the only one who profits.

Master Cork was one of the greatest and wisest Judicial officers in Ontario's history. He made countless family law rulings over several years and was obliged to read innumerable affidavits where parents, with their lawyer's assistance, detailed terrible allegations of child abuse and neglect against each other. Almost every time I appeared in front of him in open court with other lawyers, he would beg counsel to have their clients cease making such claims if they were exaggerated, as they often were (and are today). Why? In his experience, the children would become aware of these written diatribes, if not at the time, then as adults, many years later. The hurt and pain such statements then caused had catastrophic consequences.

So the next time you are tempted to call your spouse an idiot or tell your child that he's stupid or complain about your elderly parent's eccentric behaviour, remember what happened to Rabin. Remember it in your home; remember it in the synagogue; remember it when you light your Chanukah candles. And yes, remember it even when separating from your spouse. Let its lesson not be lost on you. Murderous language leads to discord and, on rare occasions, murder itself. If you catch yourself and learn to guard your tongue, then such exemplary conduct will be part of Rabin's true memorial: the preservation of your Jewish family and ultimately, the Jewish community.

On behalf of my family, and all of us at Garfin Zeidenberg, I wish you and your family a *freylich* Chanukah.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at: ***416-642-5410 • C 416-886-0359 • jsyrtash@gzlegal.com*** *Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; and www.garfinzeidenberg.com.*

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Quebec city faces similar challenges

Israeli envoy seeks ties with Rimouski

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Following a two-day visit to Rimouski, Israel's consul general in Montreal, Joel Lion, said he sees the potential for co-operation between his country and the lower St. Lawrence city.

"Rimouski's international strength in maritime research is of interest to Israel, and a source of potential collaboration at the academic and industrial levels," he said.

Israel, which is situated between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, faces many similar challenges that Rimouski is dealing with, especially those related to the environment, he said.

Consul General Joel Lion

Rimouski, a city of about 47,000, is home to the Institut Maritime du Québec (IMQ) and several ocean sciences research centres.

Lion met with many of Rimouski's political, economic, academic and cultural leaders, and toured its research facilities.

He was the guest of honour at a luncheon hosted by the Société de promotion économique de Rimouski (SOPER), where he gave a presentation on Israel's economy. Among those present was Mayor Eric Forest and Guy Caron, MP for Rimouski-Neigette-Témiscouata-Les Basques, as well as local business people.

SOPER director Raynald Bourassa welcomed the opportunity to show the diplomat his region's economic opportunities.

Lion's visit was part of a series he has made to the province's regions, with which he hopes to create greater ties. He has previously been to Rouyn-Noranda, Alma and Chicoutimi.

"My hope is that the Quebec government will organize economic missions to Israel from the various regions of Quebec," he said, with the framework of the economic co-operation agreements in place.

He invited the area's business people to visit Israel to meet with their counterparts.

Lion also met with the rector of the Université du Québec à Rimouski, Jean-Pierre Ouellet, and toured laboratories at the Institut des sciences de la mer de Rimouski and the IMQ.

Lion's visit culminated with a cocktail featuring Israeli wines and local gastronomy. The municipal officials and industry representatives were introduced to Israel's vibrant cultural scene.

"Israelis and Quebecers have many common values," Lion told the local media, "not only in the industrial and commercial sectors, but also on the side of the arts and culture.

"Innovation is just one of Israel's strengths."

Rimouski has a rich cultural life as well, organizing an annual jazz festival and book salon, as well as being the site of a music conservatory.

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Jewish jurists says it is discriminatory

Holocaust centre warns charter fans prejudice

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC) has come out against Quebec's proposed secularism charter, saying it will encourage prejudice against religious practice.

In a Nov. 14 letter to Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville, MHMC president Helen Malkin and executive director Alice Herscovitch say Bill 60 "legitimizes discrimination and will entrench ignorance of minority religious practice and communities through lack of exposure, and negate their contribution to Quebec society. It will push difference out of the socially acceptable public sphere."

The discussion surrounding the charter "generates... fear and questioning" among the many Holocaust survivors still living in Montreal, who are particularly sensitive to signs of prejudice and discrimination.

"Is this our place? Will stigma and the unwillingness to respect signs of religious belief cause new prejudice against minorities? Will it act to counter the integration which has already taken place?" they ask.

Malkin and Herscovitch say the charter has "already had a distressing impact on some Muslim women."

They warn of the "incremental nature of discrimination and the development of stigmatization of groups," saying "this charter is one such step."

On the same day, Premier Pauline Marois demanded that Liberal house leader Jean-Marc Fournier apologize for something he said in the National Assembly about the duty to learn from history.

Fournier repeated an anecdote he heard Rabbi Reuben Poupko relate during the Jewish community's commemoration on Nov. 10 of the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht, intended to illustrate how important religious symbols are to Jews.

The story is about a man who lost his kippah, when he was accosted by German soldiers during World War II.

"He wanted to pick it up, but a soldier was stopping him," Fournier said. "He did it anyway. That day, between the kippah and life, he chose the kippah."

Marois asked Fournier to apologize for his "completely inappropriate comments that leave the impression that there could be a similarity between the horrible events of the Holocaust, of Kristallnacht, and the charter of secularism project."

Fournier later told the media he was not comparing what the Nazis did with the Parti Québécois' plan. What he was trying to convey was that, "for some people, their symbol has a meaning that those who do not wear it cannot understand to the same degree."

Meanwhile, the Lord Reading Law Society, a 65-year-old association of Jewish lawyers and judges, says the Parti Québécois' proposed secularism charter compromises fundamental freedoms enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the Canadian and Quebec rights charters.

In a Nov. 19 statement, the society says it is "disheartened and dismayed" that the Quebec government with Bill 60 is proposing limits on the freedoms of conscience, expression and religion, "although no harm to society has been shown that would justify any such limitations."

The separation of religion and state and the equality between women and men are already part of the law, the society points out.

The bill would discriminate against people who are required by their religion to wear certain attire, excluding them from the public service, including the judiciary, the society says.

Judges, who would be among the employees subject to the law, do not "represent" the state, the society maintains.

"A judge represents the 'rule of law.' If a judge 'represented' the state rather than the law, no judge could adjudicate cases involving the government because of conflict of interest," it states.

"How does what a judge, a police officer, a health professional or any other public servant wears diminish their impartiality or ability any more than the colour of their skin, their nationality, their language, their sex or any other ground upon which the law prohibits discrimination?"

Furthermore, the society thinks that the present debate "provides, to those who would be so inclined, false reasons and a cover to attack their neighbours."

The society applauded Quebec Human Rights Commission chair Jacques Frémont and Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre for their "acerbic" criticism of the charter.

The society notes that its statement was adopted by its board of directors without the participation of any member of the judiciary or a quasi-judicial tribunal.

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Rabbi protests charter with 'Quebec kippah'

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Rabbi Yisroel Bernath, director of Chabad of NDG, has come up with an imaginative way of peacefully protesting Bill 60, the proposed charter of Quebec values: "the Quebec kippah."

The cap is festooned with the province's blue-and-white Fleur-de-lis flags.

"It's selling really well," said Rabbi Bernath. Available at qkippa.com, they cost $10 each. Handmade in Quebec, a limited run of 400 is available, each individually numbered.

Rabbi Schachar Orenstein of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue is one of the enthusiastic customers, and has made a point of wearing one on his visits to hospitals.

"I bought 60 and distributed them to my congregation. Many doctors at the Jewish [General Hospital] are wearing them. If I had the budget, I would purchase for the entire hospital staff," he emailed.

"I like to think of it as the Marois protest kippah and would like to see if the government will force people to take off the Quebec kippah."

Another Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Dovid Weinbaum, is putting up a spiritual resistance to the charter.

The program director of Living Legacy said the "Share the Light for Religious Freedom" campaign coinciding with Chanukah is meant to dispel the "gloom and despondency" the bill is creating among people of all faiths.

A law that "seeks to curb religious freedom adds to the darkness" in the world, he said.

"The festival commemorates the victory of the Jews over the Greeks," he explained. "While the Greeks were happy for the Jews to live in Israel, they did not want them to practise their religion –sound familiar?"

The organization is encouraging everyone to perform a mitzvah, no matter how small, in the belief that such collective action may generate "a glorious floodlight that will show Quebec as a beacon of religious tolerance in an increasingly dark world."

A number of community and civic leaders, Jewish and non-Jewish, have been invited to lead the way by declaring they will do a good deed, including Anthony Housefather and William Steinberg. The mayors, respectively, of Côte St. Luc and Hampstead appear in a video that is to be posted on YouTube.

The campaign is being run in conjunction with the YM-YWHA, where Living Legacy sets up its Chanukah Wonderland installation for children each year.

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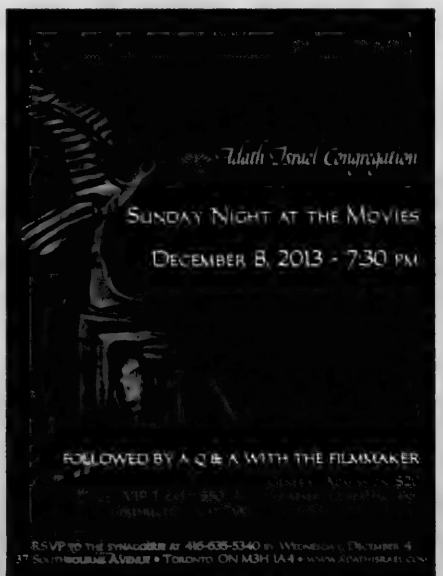

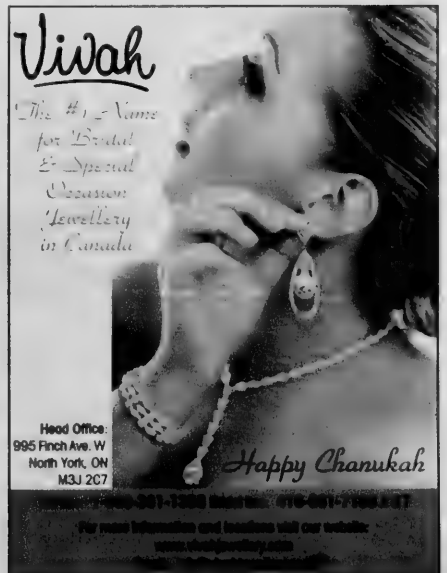

Charest lauds JGH as great Quebec institution

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Jean Charest has bolstered the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) in its stance against Quebec's proposed secularism charter.

The former Liberal premier and his wife Michèle Dionne were the honorees at the JGH's annual fundraising gala, held Nov. 19 at the Arsenal in Griffintown.

"The JGH represents what we love about Montreal, Quebec and Canada. Differences are a part of who we are," he said. "Contrary to those who think we should erase those differences, they are something to be celebrated."

They were welcome words at a time when the JGH is not only taking the risk of openly challenging the Parti Québécois government, but is having to justify its Jewish character in some quarters.

The JGH board said earlier this month it will not seek any exemption foreseen in Bill 60 that would allow it a "transition period" to comply with the law, because it believes prohibiting its employees from wearing religious attire is discriminatory.

The JGH was also unnerved by Internet comments made by the PQ candidate in the Dec. 9 byelection in Viau that flippantly endorsed removing the word "Jewish" from its name and banning circumcision there.

Tania Longpré has since explained that it was an off-hand remark that doesn't represent her views, but never unequivocally retracted them.

Charest said he and his wife did not hesitate when former JGH president Steven Cummings invited them to be the event's honorees.

Charest said the JGH provides the highest level of care to everyone, and is "a great institution of Quebec that plays an important role in our society."

He experienced that first-hand when his father-in-law, Philippe Dionne, was a patient at JGH during his final illness, for which the family is very grateful. He died at the JGH after a long illness at age 90 in July 2011.

Michèle Dionne spoke movingly of how well her father, a surgeon who practised for many years in Sherbrooke, was treated by doctors, staff and volunteers, first in the cancer department and then in palliative care.

Another former premier, the PQ's Lucien Bouchard, was also among the 600 guests. His former wife, Audrey Best, was a cancer patient at the JGH, where she died in January 2011.

The JGH also received support from one of Quebec's emblematic institutions, the Mouvement Desjardins, the largest association of credit unions in North America.

Desjardins gave a $1-million donation, making it the lead sponsor of the evening.

At the presentation of a cheque for $1 million to the Jewish General Hospital by the Mouvement Desjardins are, from left, JGH president Richard Dubovsky, physician-in-chief Ernesto Schiffrin, JGH Foundation president Howard Dermer, Desjardins vice-president Stéphane Achard, former Quebec premier Jean Charest, JGH executive director Lawrence Rosenberg, and Lady Davis Institute director Roderick McInnes.

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RHA aims to lure non-day school families

Continued from page 1

"We've been hearing community comments about the need to encourage, support and incentivize and enable families to say, 'I can afford a Jewish education and that the cost of education won't deter me,'" said Ed Segalowitz, executive director of federation's Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education.

Ed Segalowitz

"If you make between $200,000 and $300,000, and you think, 'By the time my third kid comes along, it'll be too much...' If you knew that it was going to be capped at 15 per cent, you'd think, 'Maybe I can do it.'"

RHA currently has a student body of about 380. Tuition varies from year to year: fees for full-day junior and senior kindergarten are $13,785; grades 1 to 5 cost $15,325, and grades 6 to 8 is $15,475.

Parents with three children at RHA who are paying full tuition pay about $45,000 a year, a cost that might deter middle income families.

But under the iCAP program, payments for a family that brings in $250,000 a year could be reduced to about $32,000 a year once the 15 per cent cap is applied.

Sumerlus said that when considering the cost, parents should also factor in an annual federal tax deduction worth about 50 per cent of tuition, which, combined with the cap, means families "benefit a fair bit."

However, if parents are considering leaving a Toronto Jewish day school to take advantage of the RHA program, Sumerlus and Segalowitz said they wouldn't be eligible.

"We're not poaching from other schools. If families are already enrolled at another Jewish day school, they can't come here. This is for new families," Sumerlus said.

"This project is to entice families who have not yet entered the Jewish day school system, or those who may be interested in switching from public school to Hebrew school," Segalowitz added.

But Segalowitz anticipates that other Jewish schools will follow suit and offer the iCAP program in the near future.

"Our plan is to expand beyond RHA," he said.

Arnie Zar-Kessler, head of school at the Solomon Schechter Day School of Boston, where the iCAP program was born, said that the cost of subsidizing three-child families at her school resulted in "a larger-than-usual across-the-board tuition increase."

Both Segalowitz and Sumerlus insisted that won't be the case at RHA.

"For the families that are already in the school, for the next three years, Avi Chai, Federation and RHA are sharing the cost of the implied lost revenue that comes from those families that are already in the school," Segalowitz said.

Sumerlus said that there are between six to 12 families with three or more children currently enrolled at RHA that might be eligible for the program next year, depending on their income.

She said RHA is not yet able to determine how iCAP will affect the families' tuition fees or the school's cash flow.

"The idea is that the new families will come and they will generate new revenue. Those new revenues will be sufficient to cover the cost of educating the children [at a reduced tuition fee]," Segalowitz said.

"We feel that we can draw more families in who wouldn't otherwise come, and the sheer volume makes a difference. One washes out the other," Sumerlus added.

Segalowitz said the iCAP program will also not affect federation's existing tuition assistance program, which provides financial relief to families that make less than $200,000 a year.

He said federation plans to establish a separate fund for the iCAP initiative.

"We want to get the research first, understand what the actual costs are, and then, when we figure it out, we'll be able to speak to donors to support this effort," Segalowitz said.

"So all the funds available to people through the financial assistance program is still available for families of lower income levels.

"We've been listening to the community's concern and we've been trying to think about what we can do. We're experimenting," Segalowitz said.

"We believe in doing whatever we can to make our community and program available to people. We're trying something innovative and hoping it will work," Sumerlus added.

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Baycrest

report to the

Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life

Holocaust exhibit extended due to popular demand

Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life, Baycrest's unique photography exhibit featuring 180 Holocaust survivor photographs of Baycrest residents and program participants, has been extended to the spring due to an overwhelming response from the public.

The exhibition, which features the striking black and white photography of Elliot Sylman, child of a Holocaust survivor, features portraits of participants in Baycrest's Café Europa program as well as residents at the Terraces of Baycrest and the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged.

"More than 500 people have been through the exhibition since its opening on Nov. 3, as part of Neuberger Holocaust Education Week 2013," says exhibit co-organizer Bianca Stern, Executive Director of Culture, Arts and Innovation at Baycrest. "The response from our participants, their families and the Jewish community has been overwhelming. We've also welcomed school, educational, and multifaith groups from across the GTA."

The title of the exhibit refers to the collection of Judaica from the Jewish Museum in Prague, which toured selections from the more than 200,000 objects, books, artistic artifacts and printed material collected by the Nazis from Jewish communities across Europe during the Second World War. It was an anti-homage to Jewish life in what the Third Reich had intended as a "Museum of an Extinct Race."

The Baycrest exhibit, *Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life*, reveals not the symbols and objects of Jewish life, but the actual survivors who carried their culture with them on their backs and in their hearts to a new world in North America. Here, despite the trauma they endured, the families they lost and their fears in starting anew, they went on to establish legacies of their own.

"It really has become a collaborative Baycrest community project," says co-organizer Corinne Rusch-Drutz, Director of Digital & Donor Communications at the Baycrest Foundation. "It draws on all areas of Baycrest expertise, the experiences of residents and program participants, and creates a significant and powerful shared narrative. It also speaks to the engagement of our donor community that understands the importance of supporting specialized programs like Café Europa." *(story continued on page two)*

Photo's courtesy of Eliot Syman

My Virtual Dream ranks in top five at Scotiabank Nuit Blanche 2013

"Think of it as artistic groupthink in the name of science." – Toronto Star

On Oct. 5, 2013, Baycrest and the University of Toronto showed the world the exciting possibilities of combining science, technology and art in a way that could revolutionize the study and understanding of the human brain.

Photo courtesy of David Pisarek

The *My Virtual Dream* installation at the Scotiabank Nuit Blanche drew more than 1,600 spectators during a 12-hour period, showcasing the incredible power of The Virtual Brain technology being developed at Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute.

Using brain-computer interfaces (BCIs) linked to The Virtual Brain, participants were able to synchronize their brain waves and create stunning dreamscapes of visuals and sound inside a 60-foot dome at the corner of College and University. Over the course of the evening, nearly 600 participants had the opportunity to try the headsets and their brain data will now help further develop The Virtual Brain - made possible through founding donors Dr. Max and Gianna Glassman.

The Virtual Brain simulates how the brain functions under various normal conditions, how it changes with the aging process and how it responds to damage from trauma or disease. In the future, The Virtual Brain can be used to test experimental brain therapies on a computer before being tested on patients. This is another wonderful example of how Baycrest is improving care for older adults by placing research and patient care on a holistic continuum that also includes art, culture and innovative technology.

To learn more about *My Virtual Dream*, visit www.myvirtualdream.ca or follow the installation on twitter: @myvirtualdream.

Straight talk - *A message from the Baycrest Foundation's Interim President*

Since taking up the helm at the Baycrest Foundation I've had an opportunity to personally spend time with many of our donors. In having these conversations, a couple of themes have emerged that I thought would be interesting to share. I'm struck by both the passion and commitment in the way people speak about Baycrest. It's clear in the language people use to describe their relationship with us that they feel deeply and personally about Baycrest. And I'm touched by the forward thinking and longevity that many of our donors express through their giving.

In the past few months we have celebrated a number of donors who through their gifts have created a meaningful and lasting difference: Fran Sonshine for her longstanding commitment to Baycrest, the Shore and Gorman families for their commitment to education and employee excellence, the Freeman family for their support of the Day Centre, Joseph Gottdenker and his many contributions to our programs and events, and the Justein family for their lasting contribution to culture and heritage. We will soon celebrate all of our 2013 endowment holders and Sam Ruth Legacy members. Each time I speak with donors, I am struck that the common denominator in our discussion is the legacy they wish to leave to Baycrest by furthering our ability to continue to support and nurture the community.

As you will read in the stories that follow, our donors tell us that supporting Baycrest conveys strong cultural values, the importance of meeting community needs and a shared goal for the future. It's quite exciting to be energized by a group of like-minded visionaries who see the possibilities for healthcare as we see them and create special connections between philanthropy, innovation and growth.

I'm inspired by the exchanges I've had since taking on this new role – and appreciate the many constructive suggestions. But all of these discussions share a connection to the place Baycrest holds in so many hearts – including my own. Stay connected. I encourage you to reach out and let me know your thoughts. Email me directly at gfoster@baycrest.org, visit our website or find us on your favourite social media channel. I look forward to hearing from you.

Garry Foster
Interim President, Baycrest Foundation

Stay connected! Visit Baycrest.org

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Precious Legacy *continued from page one*

With the largest cohort of Holocaust survivors in Canada, Baycrest offers a range of programs for survivors and their families including drop-ins, specialized services for child survivors and second-generation support groups. Baycrest also produces a series of unique publications focused on caregiving for survivors.

"Holocaust education and commemoration is a central focus for the Azrieli Foundation," says Dr. Naomi Azrieli on behalf of the Foundation, which supports a wide range of initiatives in the Jewish community and which recently donated $150,000 in support of Café Europa. "Through our Memoirs program, we have had the privilege of working closely with many Holocaust survivors who now call Canada home. It is our pleasure to support the many survivors who participate in the Café Europa program."

As photographer Elliot Sylman notes: "This special collection of black and white photographs tells an important story. Though I've been photographing survivors across the country since I was 14, this is the first time I've been able to take so many portraits at once. It's a powerful experience. Our time to create this kind of exhibit is running out as survivors age and it's been great to work with Baycrest on this project."

Precious Legacy: A Celebration of Life is generously co-sponsored by Marilyn and Stephen Sinclair, and the WordCheck Translation team in honour of Honey and Barry Sherman for their outstanding leadership and commitment to Holocaust education.

The exhibit can be viewed at Baycrest's Bathurst Street entrance and will be on display until Jewish Heritage Month in May. Entry is free. It can also be viewed online in its entirety, along with curatorial information and artistic statements at **baycrest.org/preciouslegacy** or on Pinterest by searching Baycrest.

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Barrie2Baycrest bike ride raises $1.1 million

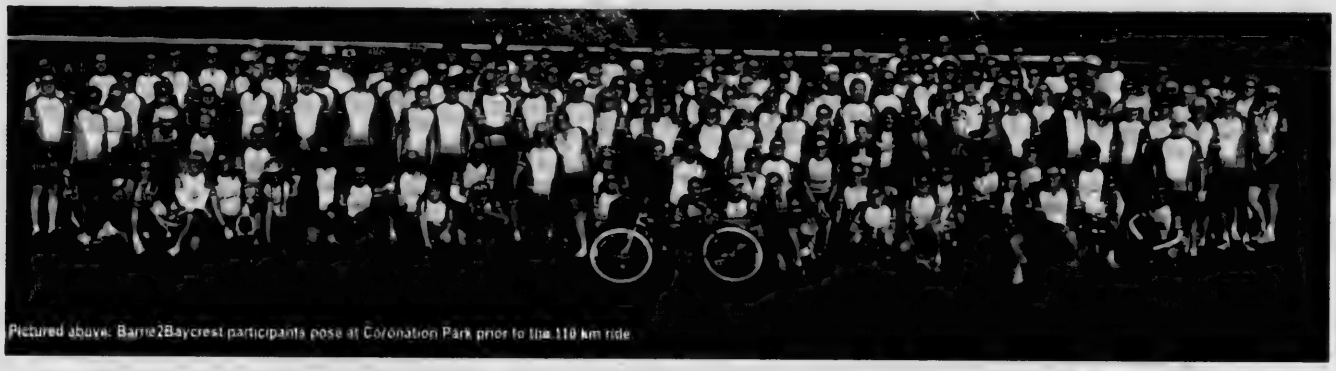
On Sunday Sept. 8, more than 160 cyclists hit the road in an effort to raise critical funds for Baycrest. The Barrie2Baycrest (B2B) *Chai* Ride, which spans more than 110 kilometres, took participants from Barrie's Coronation Park to Baycrest's 22-acre campus in midtown Toronto.

Now in its 18th year, the B2B *Chai* (the Hebrew word for life) Ride has raised more than $10 million for health and fitness programs at Baycrest, with 2013 as one of the ride's most successful years ever.

"When it comes to aging well, fitness is key," says Garry Foster, Interim President of the Baycrest Foundation and supporter of the B2B 2013.

Each rider was charged with raising a minimum of $2,500. Those who raised $10,000 or more were entered into the prestigious "Stan's Club," which honours founding member Stan Feldman who retired as B2B event organizer following this year's ride.

Post ride, participants had the chance to meet residents of Baycrest's long-term care and retirement homes at a finish line barbeque. After the event, a gala dinner celebrated a year's worth of training, fundraising and dedication to Baycrest.



Pictured above: Barrie2Baycrest participants pose at Coronation Park prior to the 110 km ride.

Special thanks to Ruth Schacter

The Baycrest Foundation wishes to thank the late Ms. Ruth Schacter for her generous legacy gift of $1.5 million.

Ms. Schacter was a staunch believer in Baycrest's mission and her donation history dates back to 1977. She is survived by her niece, Andrea Wayne von-Königslöw, nephew David Wayne and goddaughter Karen Hirschfeld. Ms. von-Königslöw said her Aunt Ruth's last gift to Baycrest is emblematic of how she always took the time to stand up and fight for those in need of support. Her gift will help our clients, their families and our healthcare professionals to change what it means to age.

Ruth Schacter

Nancy Posluns

Memory Link volunteer: On board from the beginning

Nancy Posluns has a unique perspective on Baycrest's valuable teaching program for people with severely impaired memory. She is the only volunteer who has been on the Memory Link team since its inception and has witnessed from Day 1 how the "amazing" program has utilized technology to help individuals adapt and function in society.

"People who never thought that they would be able to be independent – people who lived with family members for years – reached the point where they could go out on their own," she marvels. "They would still have memory issues, but they knew how to deal with them."

Posluns began volunteering at Baycrest in the WA Café more than 25 years ago, but realized that her background in psychometric testing could be useful elsewhere. She was matched up with Dr. Brian Richards, whom she describes as "a visionary."

"I was really so privileged to have the opportunity to help him work on the development of the program and to watch his dream become more than a reality. It has changed people's lives."

In the early days, clients used a timer to remind themselves to check a notebook for appointments and tasks. Later, Palm Pilots and ultimately smartphones were incorporated. Dr. Eva Svoboda, a neuropsychologist and clinician lead at Memory Link, says Posluns "has tremendous insight and wisdom pertaining to the psychosocial experience of amnesia" and the team is fortunate to have her.

Posluns has played a variety of roles, but is mainly involved now with support groups. "We simply could not have made the advancements we have without her effort, input, and financial support," says Dr. Richards, who recently retired.

He adds, "Nancy conveys an unquestioning respect for the strengths and intelligence that each Memory Link client brings, despite their severe memory impairment."

Posluns says that volunteering has "done a lot more for me than it has for anybody else. It's been a way to be active at this stage of my life, which is not always so easy. It's kept me well."

History on display at Baycrest's Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum

Ever wish you could step back in time and see what Jewish life was like before you could shop for Passover seder plates online or reference a bible chapter through the iTorah app?

The Morris and Sally Justein Heritage Museum at Baycrest displays Jewish artifacts for clients and visitors to enjoy as a link to our community's history. The museum is a place for people of all ages to discover the beauty of Judaic heritage. Its permanent Judaica collection - numbering more than 900 items, with some dating back more than a century - preserves these treasures for generations to come, and has been enjoyed and admired by thousands of visitors for more than 40 years.

Through a generous endowment by Morris Justein and the Justein family in 2006, the museum was refurbished and its educational activities augmented through the hiring of a new museum coordinator, giving visitors informed glimpses into the past. Exhibits change on a yearly basis. Each is carefully researched and creatively designed by the museum coordinator in collaboration with a museum committee of dedicated and hardworking volunteers.

"Endowing the museum meant a lot to me," Morris Justein says. "I hope people visit it and see the heritage that brings a little bit of *Yiddishkeit* back in their lives; to see how our people lived back in the old days."

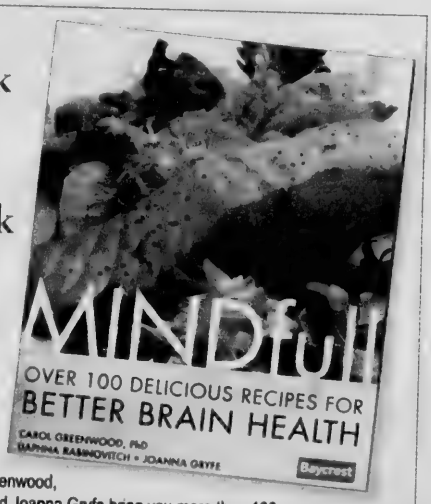
Bianca Stern, Executive Director, Department of Culture, Arts & Innovation, calls the museum a "small gem" on Baycrest's campus. "As a hub of cultural learning it delves into topics that stimulate the brain, challenging our elders to increase their knowledge and share their wisdom. Through its exhibits it maintains an ongoing dialogue and connection to both the Jewish community and the non-Jewish community, bridging areas we all have in common."

On display for 2013-14 is the *Origins of Judaic Symbols: Artifacts from our Collection 40th Anniversary.*

Event celebrates Fran Sonshine's legacy and support

Fran and Edward Sonshine join Baycrest Foundation Interim President, Garry Foster and William Reichman, President and CEO of Baycrest, in the ribbon cutting for the rededication of the Fran Sonshine Wing, honouring her longtime commitment to Baycrest. The August event featured a private screening of the award-winning film, *Follow Me: The Yoni Netanyahu Story*, with special guests Mark Manson, the film's executive producer and DJ Schneeweiss, Israel's Consul General to Toronto and Western Canada.

Mindfull cookbook now in trade paperback



What you eat and when you eat, can help protect your brain against inflammation, prevent disease and promote the growth of new brain cells. Drawing on the latest Baycrest research, Dr. Carol Greenwood, Daphna Rabinovitch and Joanna Gryfe bring you more than 100 brain-healthy recipes, covering eating from morning to night including afternoon brain boosters and on-the-go snacks. Contributors include renowned Canadian chefs Mark McEwan and Michael Smith among others.

Available wherever books are sold.
Get your complimentary recipe at baycrest.org/mindfull

Contact Us! *The Baycrest Foundation Report to the Community* is published quarterly to celebrate donors and the impact of their philanthropy on aging and brain health. Please address your comments or ideas to the editor at: Baycrest Foundation, 3560 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON M6A 2E1 • 416-785-2500 x 2011 • donations@baycrest.org • Editor: Corinne Rusch-Drutz • Graphic Specialist: Shari Nepom • Contributors: Amanda Davis, Shaina Davis, Cristina Costa, Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf, Nader Masoudi, Anne-Marie Tobin
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Rabbi's parents proud of their son

Continued from page 3

put in the drawer in the midst of her emotional distress. When she didn't see the money in the drawer, she assumed she had simply misplaced it and would find it elsewhere in her home.

The rabbi's parents, Faigy and Zachary Muroff, are extremely proud of their son, though not surprised by his actions.

"He didn't want to tell anyone about this, but was encouraged to go public to present a positive image of Judaism and for tikkun olam," said Faigy. "We feel so blessed that he was given the opportunity to do this."

The repercussions of Rabbi Muroff's actions have been – and continue to be – far reaching. "To me, the most important thing about the story is the unbelievable impact this story is having on people around the world. People are talking about it everywhere," Zachary said.

Besides being interviewed and featured on Fox TV, BBC, most major Canadian and U.S. networks, on radio and in print and especially on the Internet, Rabbi Muroff is the topic of conversation in schools and among friends and neighbours.

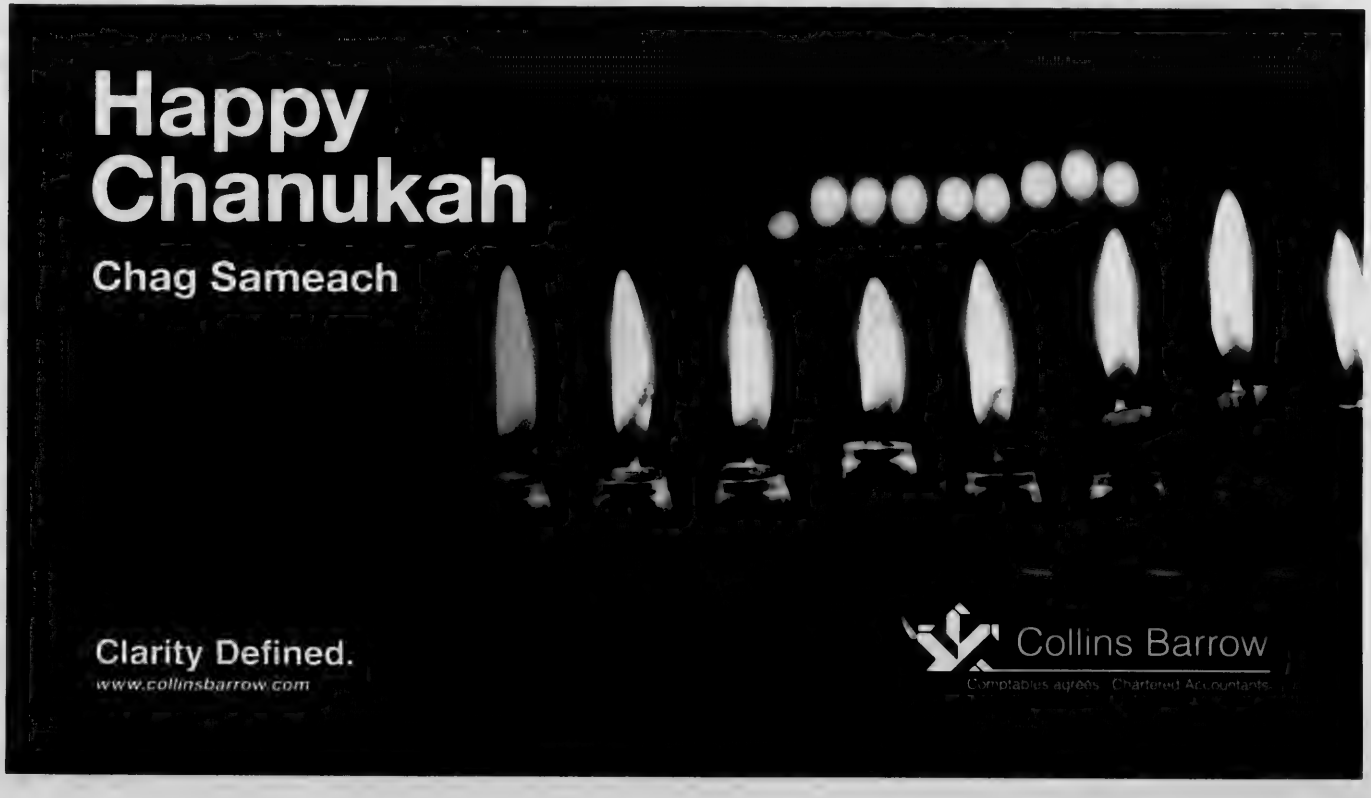
"We have had calls from Hillel Academy teachers in Ottawa saying that they remember Noah and his ever-ready smile, and that they are using his story as a discussion point in their classes," Faigy said.

The former student of Hillel Academy, Yitzhak Rabin High School and Ottawa Torah Institute (OTI) credits his upbringing for his values.

"I am so appreciative of my upbringing in Ottawa, from my parents and from my rabbis... and grateful for the opportunity I have been given," Rabbi Muroff said.

On a lighter note, representatives of Staples, grateful for the publicity, have approached Rabbi Muroff and offered to provide him with supplies for his new desk. As well, he will be receiving a year's supply of tea from a company called Honest Tea, which felt his actions perfectly illustrate its brand.

Rabbi Noah Muroff credits his upbringing for his values.



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THOMAS (MINUK) ALI

Postal historian wins SIP award

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — Collect postal history and you learn not just how mail has travelled in years past, but also how people lived and functioned.

Just ask Ed Kroft, a stamp collector and historian of postal history from Israel who was recently awarded the 2013 Leslie Reggel Memorial Award by the Society of Israel Philatelists for his outstanding contributions to Israel philately.

Kroft is a Vancouver tax lawyer and ardent collector of postal history who started collecting stamps at the tender age of 10.

"My teacher at Associated Hebrew Day Schools in Toronto, Ed Deutsch, would bring his stamp collection to school to show us, and he focused on the stamps of Israel," he recalls. "We formed a stamp club at school and later, I worked at a stamp store to put myself through university."

Stamp collecting has changed significantly over the years, as many people have moved from soaking stamps off the paper they were used on to collecting postal history and learning to understand the postmarks and information on the envelopes that contain those stamps.

"Postal history tells a story about how mail has travelled, which requires you to learn about the area, the population, how to read postmarks and envelopes," he explains. "The beauty of collecting postal history as opposed to collecting stamps is that you're collecting different pieces of mail and trying to describe the history of the postal services."

Ed Kroft

In a room filled with bookshelves containing the vast collection he's amassed, Kroft has binders containing mail that originated in Israel, but was destined for many different corners of the world, from New Zealand and Australia to South Africa, Argentina, the Caribbean Islands, Brazil and Chile.

"As a Jew, I care about this because it's interesting to see where Jews were at that time," he says. "This collection gives me connections to Jewish culture and identity, Jewish history, geography, events, places, buildings and customs. This is part of our heritage, and we can't let this history disappear."

Kroft's collection of mail from the Holy Land dates from the 1870s to present day. From one binder, he pulls out an envelope inscribed by Revisionist Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky to one of his relatives in 1918, and another written to Jabotinsky by his mother.

There's an envelope written by Capt. Joseph Trumpeldor and another by Sir Moses Montefiore. While the letters are often no longer in those envelopes, the envelopes offer evidence about the passage of mail, he says.

The Society of Israel Philatelists is a non-profit dedicated to studying and promoting Israel philately, with members all over the world. Kroft joined the SIP in the mid-1970s and has been an active member ever since, currently serving as its president.

"My collection of Holy Land philately has helped me make many friends around the world who have common interests," he says. "It's taught me a lot about Judaism and brought to life things I learned when I was much younger."

His collections include the history of Rishon LeZion from settlement through statehood, 1882 to1948, a history of prisoners of war in 1948-1949, and the history of the Carmel Wine Company, among others. Each one tells a story through postal history, a story about which Kroft is passionate, eager to learn more about and committed to teaching others.

"I'm honoured to win the award," he says. "The people who preceded me were extremely knowledgeable and great collectors."

For now he is intent on keeping the future of the SIP bright by spreading information about its members and their work and hoping to attract new collectors to its ranks. The Toronto chapter of SIP, which meets twice a month at the Antibes Community Centre, is actively looking to grow its ranks. To attend a meeting, call Morty Wagman at 416-879-4298.

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The partners and staff at Shimmerman Penn thank Hy for his unwavering commitment to the Firm and our clients, and we wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement.
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Economist predicts rising prices south of the border

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Although he's an accomplished economist who's widely recognized for the accuracy of his prognostications, David Rosenberg played the part of a lecturer in Economics 101 last week.

He started with employing a graph you might find in any text, displaying aggregate supply and demand curves. The point at which they meet is... Class? Anyone? Bueller? "The price," he explained.

And while for years in the 1980s and '90s, thanks to an elastic supply curve, price was stable despite rising demand, that is changing, he suggested.

Breaking from the kind of conventional wisdom you'll find on the front covers of magazines that warn of potential deflation, or lower prices, Rosenberg suggested that an inelastic supply curve, which won't react to increased demand, means prices – of labour to start with –are set to go up.

There's a pent up demand for labour in the United States, despite record high joblessness, he noted.

Rosenberg, chief economist and strategist at Gluskin Sheff + Associates, provided his analysis of the economic landscape at a session held during last week's

David Rosenberg

Taking Care of Business program. The event is a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto get-together, which featured keynote addresses from business leaders W. Brett Wilson, Seymour Schulich and Ken Tanenbaum, as well as seminars in a variety of fields.

Examining conditions south of the border, Rosenberg said, "This goes down as by far the weakest recovery, despite all the stimulus." GDP growth stands at only 1.6-1.7 per cent per year. "For this stage of the cycle, it's substandard growth.

"The corporate sector is struggling from not enough clarity in terms of policy."

The Affordable Care Act – popularly known as Obamacare – is more than 2,000 pages long; the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act checks in at 800 pages; there's been no budget passed for five years and small business complains about government regulation.

"If you're a business, how do you plan for the future when the guys in Washington can't do that?" he asked.

Looking at the labour participation rate, which stands around 63 per cent, Rosenberg said "it's important to assess why people are leaving the labour force in droves."

Currently, "90 million [people] reside outside the traditional labour force." That's up from 80 million.

There are 140 million people at work, another 10 million looking for a job. But 90 million are in limbo. "That's like a country." Are they all living downstairs watching *Breaking Bad*? he quipped.

A new socio-economic situation is developing, Rosenberg said. People are being subsidized to not work. Federal disability benefits have grown at five times the population growth. A record number receive food stamps. You can spend 99 weeks on unemployment insurance.

"That would make a guy from Newfoundland blush," he said.

In 39 states you can make more on benefits that you could working as an administrative assistant; in 11 states, your income on assistance is higher than that of a teacher.

While many have taken themselves out of the labour force, demand for workers has gone up. Companies can't find skilled labour, so the number of firings has dropped to record low levels. Companies compensate for the lack of workers by asking current employees to work more. After a time, people get fed up and look for other jobs, at which point, employers raise their wages. With salaries going up, prices follow as companies try to retain their profit margins. Referring back to the supply/demand curve, Rosenberg suggested that as labour supply continues to constrict while demand increases, the prices – wages – will go up. And as consumers are more likely to spend than corporations, the result will be a "wonderful multiplying effect on the economy," he said.

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Census data raises questions in Winnipeg

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The 2011 census, also known as the National Household Survey (NHS), has raised more questions than it answers concerning the size of Winnipeg's Jewish community.

While the community leaders had been working on the assumption that the population is about 16,500, the 2011 NHS, released last spring, recorded just 10,735 Winnipeg respondents who identified themselves as Jewish by religion – compared to 12,045 in 2001 – and 12,000 Winnipeggers who identified themselves as Jewish by ethnicity, down from 14,440 in 2001.

Faye Rosenberg Cohen *(Myron Love photo)*

Now, after several months of having the NHS data reviewed by a demographer, the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's board recently had a look at a preliminary analysis of the numbers and what they imply for the community.

"In 2009, we asked the demographer who analyzed the 2001 census figures to project what 2011 would look like," said Faye Rosenberg Cohen, the federation's planning and community engagement director.

"His estimate then was 16,500. We asked him to analyze the new NHS numbers, factoring in a rough estimate of Jewish seniors in nursing homes (who weren't counted in the census) and Israeli immigrants who don't list a religion in the surveys. Our figure comes out to about 15,000."

In her report, Rosenberg Cohen noted the voluntary aspect of the most recent NHS. "We can't have any data on people who didn't reply," she said.

While more data may be available from Statistics Canada later on, she notes, the 2011 NHS did confirm some trends that the federation was already tracking and raises some questions that may require further investigation.

First, looking at the Israeli immigrant community here, which includes many Russian Israelis, Rosenberg Cohen confirmed that the NHS figures are close to the number of Israeli arrivals here that have been numbered among Jewish Child and Family Service clients in recent years.

"The Israeli responses to the NHS regarding religion and ethnicity reflect intermarriage and a lower level of religious identification that would be common among some Jews from the former Soviet Union," she said.

"Preliminary analysis indicates that 57 percent of Israelis who came to Winnipeg identified themselves as Jewish. But, in our community, all of the Israelis here who are served by our agencies are considered part of our community. Many of them send their children to our Jewish schools, come out to our programs, attend holiday dinners and are more visibly active in the community than some of their Winnipeg-born peers," she added.

"It's a harder sell reaching out to people who are born and raised here."

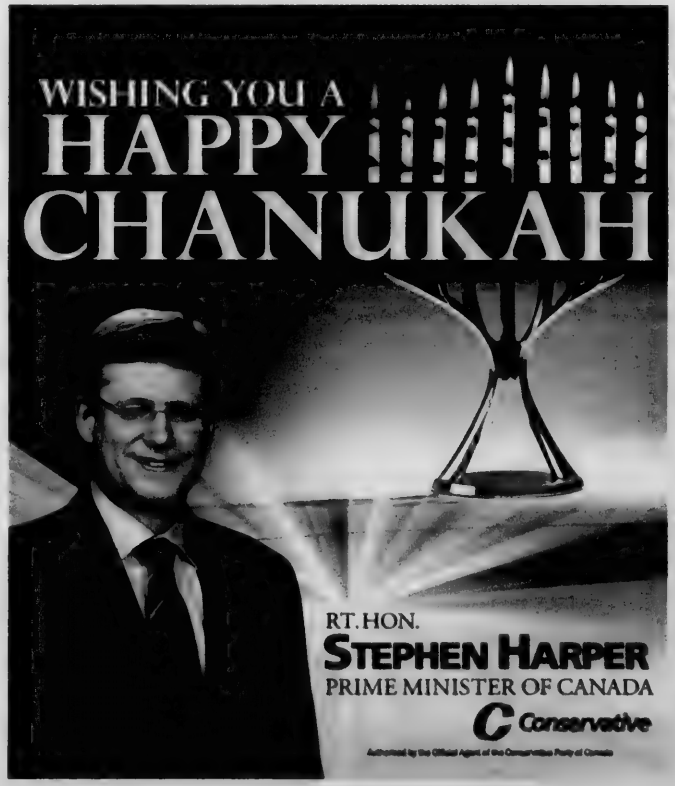
As for younger members of the community, Rosenberg Cohen points out that young Jews often identify themselves on demographic surveys as "Canadian." "Does the NHS exclude many younger Jews here who may still be interested in Jewish communal life, but don't show up in the census numbers?" she asked.

Another question she raised is how to count and engage intermarried families in the community. She cited the recent Pew study in the United States that reported a 58 per cent intermarriage rate among Jews who have married within the past eight years. The number for Winnipeg within the same age group would be similar, she said.

One positive figure is a slight growth in the number of Jewish high school- and university-aged students here since the 2011 census. Does this mean more members of that age group are staying in Winnipeg, Rosenberg Cohen asked, or is it a reflection of more recent immigration?

And the lower number of kids in the community, she said, may reflect an out-migration of people of child-bearing age, a low birth rate among Canadians or intermarried families not listing their children as Jewish.

As to the geographic dispersion of Winnipeg's Jewish population, the decades long decline of the Jewish population in north Winnipeg and concurrent growth in south Winnipeg is continuing. Whereas 40 years ago, just over 50 percent of the population lived in north Winnipeg – the former centre of Winnipeg Jewish life - and just under 40 per cent lived in south Winnipeg, today just over 10 per cent live north and about 65 per cent live in traditional south Winnipeg Jewish neighbourhoods. More than 20 per cent now live elsewhere in the city. Those living in non-traditional Jewish areas include recent immigrants, younger couples and Jewish Winnipeggers who do not identify with the community.



Israelis flock to fast-growing Winkler, Manitoba

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Jewish immigrant merchants played a prominent role in the founding and economic development in the early days of Winkler and Morden in southwestern Manitoba, about an hour's drive southwest of Winnipeg.

Now, more than 50 years since the last Jewish family left the area and more than 20 years since Milton Rabinovitch closed the last Jewish-owned business in Winkler, a wavelet of Israeli immigration is creating a new Jewish community in the economically booming region.

Within the past year, four Israeli families have settled in Winkler and one in Morden and more are on the way.

"Winkler now has the largest Jewish community in southwestern Manitoba," joked Dima Elyason.

The Elyason family – Dima, his wife, Evgenya, 15-year-old Daniel and 11-year-old Alis – came from Sderot, the southern Israel community that has taken the brunt of missile fire from Gaza over the past few years.

"We are used to living in a smaller city," said Dima Elyason, who immigrated to Israel from Ukraine when was he 19 to go to school. "Winkler is nice. There is no rocket fire.

"We see Magen Davids on some of the buildings in Winkler that used to be Jewish-owned."

Two of the other three Israeli families in Winkler, he says, come from Haifa the third from Jerusalem. The Israeli family in Morden is from Ramat Gan.

In Sderot, Dima Elyason was an assistant manager in a department store. Evgenya was a hospital lab technician.

The Elyasons and the other Israeli families came to Winkler and Morden over the past year through the auspices of immigration counsellor Adele Dyck and her company, Star 7.

"We didn't recruit the Israeli families," Dyck said. "They contact us and we just try to find a way to assist them in their desire to come to Manitoba. I have been in Israel a few times meeting the families that had contacted us and trying to understand why they would like to leave. I find their skills and willingness to learn amazing. Manitoba can only gain by welcoming these families in to our province."

The Elyasons learned about Star 7 from Israeli friends who came to Canada four or five years ago. "We spoke to Star 7's manager about our interest in coming to Canada," Dima Elyason said. "She came to meet us in Jerusalem."

Dima Elyason came to Winkler seven months ago. The rest of the family came in August. While Evgenya is looking forward to working in the district hospital (located between Winkler and Morden), the other Israelis are working for either Meridian Industries in Winkler or Décor Cabinets in Morden.

"We are getting a lot of help from the people here," Elyason said. "Winkler is a religious city. The people are proud to have Israelis living here. A lot of people have told us that they think it is a miracle to have some of the Chosen People here. People have been very friendly."

Daniel Elyason added that kids in school are very interested in what he tells them about life in Israel. He conceded that school has been a bit difficult, because his English isn't that good yet.

He said he'd like eventually to study business in university and operate his own computer company one day.

Eleven-year-old Alis is already taking skating lessons.

Dima said the Israeli families always get together on Shabbat.

"We don't want to lose our traditions or our language," he said. ""Our children speak Hebrew among themselves."

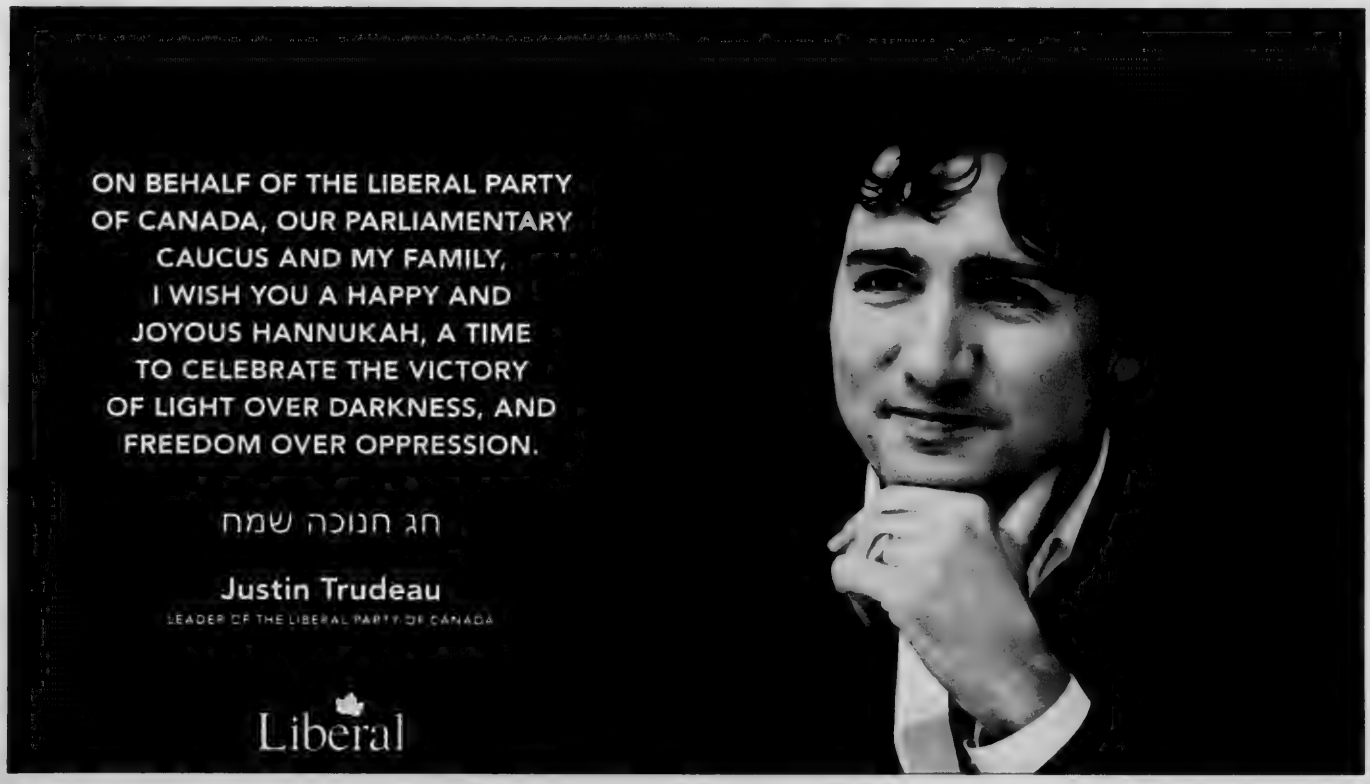
Dima and Evgenya Elyason, son Daniel and daughter Alis

The Israeli families were looking forward to celebrating Chanukah together.

He said he and Evgenya have Israeli friends in Winnipeg and have visited the Asper Jewish Community Campus there a couple of times.

The family has also visited other areas of Manitoba and even has travelled as far afield as Banff.

"We would like to see Churchill one day," Dima said.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Special needs program for kids grew out of mom's faith

Cynthia Gasner
Special to The CJN

The tenacity and spirit of a young Israeli mother, Malki Samuels, whose 11-month-old child, Yossi, became deaf, blind and hyperactive after receiving a faulty DPT vaccination (for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) in 1977, led to the development of Shalva, the Association for Mentally and Physically Challenged Children in Israel.

She pledged that if God would help her with her child, she would devote herself to helping other children with special needs and their families.

As a result, she helped develop Shalva, which serves the needs of hundreds of children with special needs and their families throughout Israel.

Seed money provided in 1990 by Gordon and Leslie Diamond of Vancouver, who believed in Samuels' dream, helped her establish the organization.

Today, professionals recognize Shalva as an international leader in the field of disability awareness and intervention for children and families. Its numerous programs are free of charge.

Recently, an inaugural Canadian Shalva dinner was held in Toronto at the home of Esty and Joseph Edell, who co-chaired the event with Nancy and Dov Friedberg. The dinner celebrated Shalva's achievements to date and the establishment of a new Shalva Center in Jerusalem.

Avi Samuels, Yossi's brother and a director of Shalva, spoke to *The CJN* when he was in Toronto, about his mother's unswerving dedication to building the organization.

"Shalva is changing negative attitudes expressed toward individuals with disabilities," he said.

Avi explained that, during a post-college trip through Europe, his father, Kalman Samuels of Vancouver, decided to visit Israel and never left. Kalman was raised in a secular home, but he studied in Israel and became a rabbi.

"After my brother had the vaccination, my parents couldn't get to first base in Israel. They went to New York hoping for get help for Yossi," Avi said.

"For eight years, Yossi lived in a closed world with no one able to penetrate his bubble of insulation. It took a tremendous toll on the family. Many professionals and friends, with the best intentions, suggested placing Yossi in an institution."

When they returned to Israel in 1983, a special education teacher, who was deaf herself, penetrated Yossi's wall of silence using Hebrew finger spelling in the palm of his hand, in much the same way as Hellen Keller was taught. With her input, Yossi learned his first word, *shulchan*, the Hebrew word for table.

His mother remembered her promise to help others with special needs. She and Kalman created Shalva, starting out in a small rented duplex.

Today, there are numerous Shalva projects, including an after-school activity centre, basketball teams, overnight and weekend respite programs, summer camps, research, education, rehabilitative programs and a day care centre.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has spoken highly of the association's work: "I wish to acknowledge the remarkable work of the Shalva organization and the invaluable role the organization played in Israel's development."

Recognizing the pressing needs and Shalva's ability to fill them, the Israeli government and the Jerusalem Municipality recently made an unprecedented gift of land to Shalva in the heart of the city. It will be used to establish the new National Children's Centre.

"The dream is only made possible with the continued support of our beloved partner and friends," Avi said. He noted that there are also hundreds of dedicated volunteers in the Shalva programs.

"Now, every mother who gives birth to a special needs baby in Israel comes to Shalva, where she receives the support she needs and the baby gets all the therapy the baby needs," he says.

"Today, at 37, my brother Yossi is inspirational," he added.

Team Shalva participates in the Jerusalem Marathon and runners come from all over the world to participate. If anyone would like to join Team Hessed to run in the Jerusalem Marathon with Shalva, please contact marla.buck@rogers.com.

For more information about Shalva, go to www.shalva.org.

Incubator drive launched at JGH

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL— The incubator in the Jewish General Hospital hallway just off the main lobby had a plush purple toy in it and looked a bit old and decrepit.

But that was the whole point.

The incubator was serving as a piggy bank – and starting off point – for a $1.3 million auxiliary campaign.

Its goal is to furnish the hospital's renowned neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) with 20 needed state-of-art models by the time the NICU moves down from the fifth floor to the JGH's still-unfinished Pavilion K, which is to house a new emergency room.

At the Nov. 18 launch of the drive – one day after World Prematurity Day – purple, mauve, and violet prevailed.

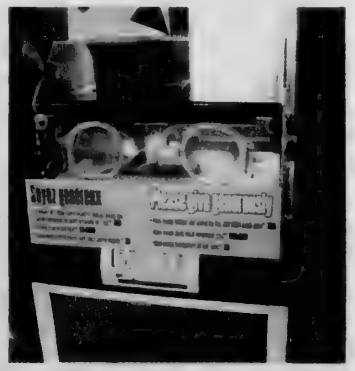
Out of the 4,500 infants born each year at the hospital's birthing centre, 700 are premature and need the NICU. The ones most at risk may weigh only a few hundred grams at birth.

"This is a very special day for us," said Dr. Apostolos Papageorgiou, chief of pediatrics and neonatology; Papageorgiou, a 40-year-veteran of the hospital and a leading figure in Canadian neonatology. "We have the best survival rate of any unit in Canada, and this new generation of incubators will help.

"The babies here fight for their lives, and need the technology that helps them do it."

Papageorgiou and NICU head nurse Serge Cloutier said in an interview that the new units will go a long way in aiding preemies.

Each new specialized unit costs $65,000, and is equipped with a special cover that lifts hydraulically and allows treatment of fragile preemies by "working around" the infants without needing to physically remove them.


The incubator "piggy bank" for the Jewish General Hospital Auxiliary incubator drive.

PJ Library celebrates expansion with concert

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Just in time for Chanukah, some 4,000 Jewish families in the Greater Toronto Area received a free Jewish children's book in the mail. The books came from the PJ Library, which expanded into Toronto and Peel Region earlier this fall.

The PJ Library is an American organization that has delivered more than 3.6 million Jewish books to toddlers and young children since 2005.

To join the program, a family with at least one Jewish parent must have a child between six months and 5-1/2 years of age. The books from the PJ Library focus on Jewish values, customs and celebrations and are aimed at kids under six.

It launched in York Region in 2010, supported by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and delivered books to more than 1,800 families. "Once we knew how successful it was and what the demand was in Toronto, we were able to secure funding so that we could expand," said Elyse Tytel, the PJ Library co-ordinator in Toronto.

Harold Grinspoon, left, and Ted Sokolsy, president and CEO of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto
(Daniel Rotman photo)

PJ Library founder Harold Grinspoon was in Toronto to attend a Chanukah-themed concert last Sunday in honour of the expansion into Toronto and Peel Region.

Grinspoon said that when the PJ Library began in 2005, it distributed only 200 subscriptions. Now, there are 125,000 books mailed each month to families in the United States, Canada, Australia, Israel and Mexico.

"I think the Jewish world in North America, especially in the U.S, is going through a crisis," Grinspoon told *The CJN*.

"We have a very high intermarriage rate, and that's scary. I think Jewish people have an amazing culture and an amazing religion. I think this program helps bring people back in touch with their culture and history and understanding Jewish values."

Grinspoon began the library after hearing about singer Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, an initiative that donates free books to children across North America and England. Grinspoon and his wife, Diane Troderman, philanthropists from western Massachusetts, were inspired to develop a similar program for Jewish families.

In Toronto, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation funds about half of the PJ Library program. The other funders are local donors, including UJA Federation and the Weinbaum Family Foundation, who ensure that families can receive one free mailed book each month. In December, the families receive a free CD of Jewish-themed music.

"PJ [Library] now has a lot of power with the publishing houses because of how many books they distribute," Tytel said. "There have been second, third and fourth printings of some of the more popular books that have stood the test of time."

Grinspoon's favourite book from the library, *Bagels from Benny*, comes from Toronto author Aubrey Davis. *Bagels from Benny* is the PJ Library's most popular book and a favourite among Canadian families.

"It's a great way to introduce Judaism and Jewish education to our kids," said Aaron Lazarus, a PJ Library subscriber for 2-1/2 years.

New subscriber Mindy Webber, who attended the concert with daughter Jordyn, agreed. "It gets my kids excited about reading Jewish stories. Every month when the book arrives, it's kind of fun," she says.

Now that the UJA has expanded this program into Toronto and Peel, Tytel said, they are planning to bring the PJ Library into schools, synagogues and day cares.

Career advice: don't wait for someone to call

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Lined up on the dais at the front of "Confederation 3," a meeting room at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, were four experts on career management. Veterans in the field, they each found a different way to say pretty much the same thing: don't sit back and wait for something to happen. Instead, be proactive.

Whether they employed the term "career management" or spoke about people "owning their own career," each of Richard Wajs, who moderated the discussion, Rich Chad, Steven Pezim and Ralph Shedletsky agreed that the main person responsible for a career is you.

They were presenting "Lesson four" on careers as part of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's "Taking Care of Business" program last week.

Most people are "reactive, not proactive," said Shedletsky, chief customer officer at Knightsbridge Human Capital Solutions.

His advice: "Understand yourself, what you want out of a career" and don't wait for a headhunter or search consultant to tap you on the shoulder with an offer.

"I find it astounding that people aren't more proactive," said Chad, president of Chad Management Group.

Get out and network, don't wait for people to call, and don't wait "until you're in dire straits."

"You have to manage your career from day one," said Pezim, co-founder of Bedford Consulting Group. He suggested developing relationships with executive recruiters even while you're working. Many people change jobs even when they're not expecting to.

Wajs, CEO of TWC International Executive Search, suggested that people "do their homework." Determine what will satisfy your needs and fulfil your dreams.

"Think about who you are. Are you living the life you want?" he said.

Extend your networks, as you never know precisely when that might pay off, he added.

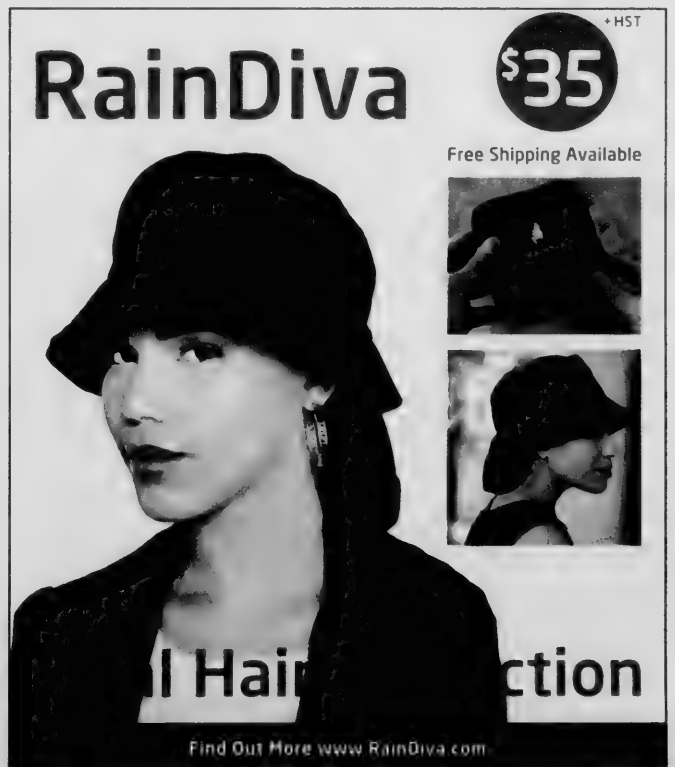
Asked whether there was a rule of thumb as to the length of stay at any particular job, Pezim said for those under 30 who are still building their career, "It's OK to have these jumps every two to 2-1/2 years. I can rationalize that."

People in their 30s should remain in the same job for three to 3-1/2 years, but "red lights" will come on if "there are many jumps early in the career."

Turning to internships, Pezim suggested some duration of unpaid work can pay off for a young person entering the job market. Even MBA grads in the United States are taking unpaid jobs, which he suggests could be a good strategy.

"Get your foot in the door," he said, but after six to 12 months, "you should [get paid] or you're being taken advantage of."

Chad said a young person could "do one or two terms" before expecting a paying job. On social media's role today, Shedletsky said the growth of this phenomenon had led to "incomprehensible" levels of networking that young people should take advantage of.



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Sufganiyot –Pt. 2 – beyond jelly

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Chanukah is finally here, and there are mouths to feed! Today, we troll the web for the jelly-filled, powdered sugar-topped, calorie-laden doughy delight, the sufganiyah.

Sufganiyot are big business. Jerusalem's Angel's Bakery makes more than a quarter-million doughnuts every 24 hours during the holiday. "The preparation of jam-filled and caramel-filled doughnuts begins a month before the holiday in a huge empty mixing bowl. Flour, sugar, and other special ingredients are poured into the bowl and kneaded by a metal mixing arm into 100 kilos of dough." **[bit.ly/sufg28]**

Back in Chanukah 1997, it seems some Israelis had plenty of time on their hands. They tried to set a record when they erected a 12-foot structure consisting of 6,400 sufganiyot near the town of Afula. As the History channel website delicately puts it, "the blob was dismantled later, and the sufganiyot were distributed to Israeli soldiers serving along the border with Lebanon." No word whether the oily pyramid ever drew the attention of the folks from Guinness. **[bit.ly/sufg29]**

The Jewish Food Recipes Archives has 21 variations, including chocolate, no-yeast and raised potato sufganiyot. **[bit.ly/sufg30]** Want to kick it up a notch? Try:

- Orange scented **[bit.ly/sufg10]**
- Quince and vanilla **[bit.ly/sufg11]**
- Pumpkin (gluten-free) **[bit.ly/sufg18]**
- Bread machine **[bit.ly/sufg19]**
- And lest we forget that we're living in frosty Canada, how about maple-glazed apple cider? **[bit.ly/sufg31]**

Mindful that we're dealing with boiling oil, Epicurious recommends a family-friendly version of the recipe that divides up the tasks. Kids "sift the flour and mix it with the remaining sugar, salt, cinnamon, egg yolks" while the adults "drop the doughnuts into the hot oil." **[bit.ly/sufg37]**

And you know something may have really gone (too) mainstream when there's even a "For Dummies" version! **[bit.ly/sufg38]**

Can latkes and sufganiyot live in harmony? They do in Naomi Silbermintz's kitchen, thanks to a recipe for Yerushalmi-style sufganiyot in which a yeast mixture is dropped by the spoonful into an inch of oil. "Every Chanukah, when we visited my grandmother, she made these. My mother always said that they are the precursors to jelly-donut-type sufganiyot. We used to call them 'Chanukah Latkes,' or 'Savta's Sufganiyot.'" **[bit.ly/sufg39]**

After you've ingested one, you'll wind up with 327 calories and 14.8 grams of fat (!) if you follow the directions at mealsforyou.com. **[bit.ly/sufg41]** (Note: the site works but loads slowly.)

But wait. All is not lost. Baile Rochel assuages her guilt by using whole-wheat flour and brown sugar to create "almost healthy sufganiyot." **[bit.ly/sufg42]** There are also alternatives that are oven fried **[bit.ly/sufg43]** and as well as a "no-fry" contender. I do wonder about this caveat about oil-less sufganiyot: "They come out not quite looking like donuts – more like itty bitty rolls – but they taste quite donut-like!" **[bit.ly/sufg44]**

If the calories don't get you, something else may. Here's the tale of one lucky survivor. "Be forewarned: sufganiyot can be dangerous! I have a small scar on my lip from boiling hot custard shooting out of a fresh sufganiyah bought from a street vendor in Jerusalem. For years now that little ridge on my inner lip has been a year-round reminder of the sweetness (and heat) of Chanukah." **[bit.ly/sufg45]**

Highway@rogers.com.

The menorah's lesson

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Chanukah celebrates two miracles: the victory of the Jews over their Syrian-Greek persecutors, and the ability of one small flask of oil to remain lit in the menorah in the Temple for eight days.

During Shabbat Chanukah, we usually read the Torah portion of Miketz, where Joseph rises to power in Egypt after correctly interpreting the dreams of Pharaoh's servants. In one of the dreams, Pharaoh's chief butler saw a vine. The Torah (Bereshit 41:10) relates the butler's description: "And in the vine were three branches; and it was as though it budded, and its blossoms shot forth; and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes." Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Baghdad, the Ben Ish Chai (1832-1909), writes that this vision carries a message that specifically relates to Chanukah.

Our sages have often compared the Jewish people, the Ben Ish Chai writes, to grape vines. One reason for this is that the people, as vines, are weak and delicate. However, just as the weak vines produce sumptuous fruit, so, too, does the Jewish nation bear fruit in its performance of mitzvot and its study of Torah. The three vine branches described in the butler's dream represent the three ingredients necessary to properly perform God's dictates. One must have his thought, speech and actions dedicated to God's service. If any one of these three elements is lacking, so, too, will a person's devotion to God be lacking.

Our sages compare the performance of mitzvot to a lamp. In order for a lamp to function properly, it needs three components: the lamp itself, fuel, and a wick. Similarly, to perform a mitzvah properly, one's thoughts, speech and actions all have to be directed toward this goal. Our lighting of the menorah reminds us of this lesson. When we light the menorah, we recall the miracle that happened in the Temple. God was sending a message that the Jews merited the miracle because their service of God was complete. They dedicated every fibre of their being to the proper service of God that was signified through the menorah.

Before lighting the menorah, we ready it by preparing candles or the oil, the wicks and the flame. If we don't have any of the above, we cannot light. The menorah should serve us as a lesson for God's service. Right before one performs any mitzvah, he should think about the menorah's message and focus with his thoughts, speech and action in order to have a complete mitzvah.

Let us all take the Ben Ish Chai's message to heart and through this meditation get closer to the source of all good, HaShem.

I'll miss U.S. Thanksgiving

Class Act
Daniel Held

Before moving to New York, I had never celebrated Thanksgiving. I vaguely remember a non-Jewish teacher at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto describing his family's celebration of the holiday, but it sounded nearly as foreign as Christmas.

Perhaps we ignore Canadian Thanksgiving because it usually falls in the tumult of the chagim – often between Sukkot and Simchat Torah. Perhaps we blush over it because it falls on a Monday. Much like Victoria Day, Simcoe Day, Labour Day, and Family Day, it seems like another long weekend with little value beyond a day off. No matter the reason for missing out on a quarter century of Thanksgivings, I fell in love with my first American Thanksgiving.

First, it's a holiday without the strictures of Yom Tov. Everyone is off work, schools are closed, and the city is quiet, but there is no need to prepare for weeks in advance (think building a sukkah, cleaning for Passover, etc.) Rather than spending the day in shul, it can be spent with family, volunteering or cozying up with a remote control and a football game. There are no restrictions on driving, electricity or what foods we can eat when and where.

But more than the practices of the day, it's the theme of the holiday that resonates most with me: reflecting on the things for which we, personally, are thankful.

The Jewish calendar is filled with opportunities to give thanks. On Chaunkah we are thankful for the triumph of the Maccabees over the Greeks and the miracle of the oil; on Purim for God's hidden hand in saving the Jews from Haman, and on Passover for the freedom of our ancestors from slavery. But these thanks are particularistic to Jews rather than universal, and express thanks for the wonders of history rather than our own lived experience.

In early America, rabbis wrote beautiful liturgies, marrying poetry with prayer, to be recited on days of Thanksgiving. In our New York synagogue, during morning services our rabbi led the congregation in Psalm 100, *Mizmor L'Toda, A Song of Thanks*, and encouraged us to take time to reflect on the things for which we were particularly thankful that year.

A lot has been made of this year's rare convergence of Chanukah and Thanksgiving. In some ways, it's exciting. Families who would not otherwise gather for Chanukah will light candles during their Thanksgiving dinner, potato latkes will be topped with cranberry sauce, and Stephen Colbert will lament that Thanksgiving is under attack by Chanukah.

Though his comments are satirical, Colbert may be on to something. While parallels may be drawn between the pilgrims' quest for religious freedom and Maccabees' fight against Hellenism, the two holidays should not be conflated. Our collective thanks for historic victories on Chanukah is not the same as the personal thanks for our lived experience on Thanksgiving. Each should be given its own time and own expression.

One of the things I will miss most about no longer living in the United States is Thanksgiving: the chag without the Yom Tov, the turkey with cranberry sauce, and the opportunity to reflect on the many things for which I am personally thankful.

Forcing a miracle

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

What is the miracle of Chanukah? Ask and you'll hear something like: "The oil lasted for eight days, when it was only enough for one day." Then why celebrate for eight days, if the first day's light wasn't miraculous at all? On the first day there was sufficient oil. We knew it would burn. There was no surprise. It was a natural kind of light, so why sing of miracles on the first night of Chanukah? Why offer the blessing about miracles – *"she'asah nisim"* – on the first night? These words seem superfluous, even inaccurate, for the first night's candle.

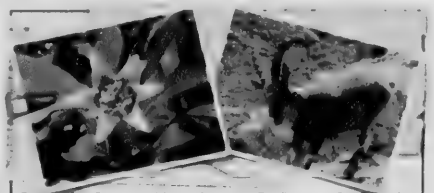
Shouldn't we only celebrate the seven "miraculous" days of Chanukah? Ask and you'll hear 100 answers. Literally. More than 100 answers to this very question were compiled in the Middle Ages.

What was the miracle of the first day? Ask at your own Chanukah party and you'll hear something like: perhaps the miracle of the first day was that the few bands of Maccabees defeated the great and mighty Assyrian-Greek army. Perhaps the miracle of the first day was that Jews remained Jews despite the allure of Hellenism; that religious expression was embraced and the Temple rededicated. Perhaps the miracle of the first day was that the factions of Jews then saw a brother in the eyes of the other and decided not to completely tear each other apart.

And perhaps the miracle of the first day was simply the human capacity for hope. When the Maccabees lit the lamp with the only remaining cruse of pure oil, they didn't expect it to last, but they lit it anyway, so the story goes. Maybe that's the miracle of the first candle. Call it hope, faith, determination or perseverance. They could have waited for certainty, but instead they worked with what they had and opened the door for another kind of miracle to take hold. We can imagine our ancestors saying to one another, "Even if it will sputter out tomorrow, let us celebrate with light today." By their own strong hands and their own strong faith they invited the Divine to enter. The miracle of Jewish hope and the defeat of human cynicism are celebrated throughout the festival of Chanukah, but especially when we light the first night's candle.

In the 13th century, Nachmanides reflected on miracles. When commenting on Exodus 13:16, he distinguishes between miracles "hidden" and miracles "revealed." The splitting of the Red Sea is considered a miracle, because it was supernatural, but Nachmanides teaches that the very rules of nature are themselves miracles. The fact that gravity has not given out on us even once is a "hidden miracle." The fact that our pupils automatically dilate to let in the right amount of light to enable us to see is a "hidden miracle." Einstein's theory of the physics of light calls attention to another series of "hidden miracles." Candles numbers 2 to 8 may stand for the "revealed miracles." Candle No. 1 stands for the countless "hidden miracles" of Chanukah.

The first candle is my favourite candle. One thin candle alone on the windowsill stands for that good Jewish impulse to work with what we've got and carve out a way for more light. The first candle receives the most praise and has the greatest impact. Each night it is relit and finds itself, miraculously, in more and more good company. This is the Jewish way. The days of revealed miracles may be behind us. But hidden miracles are everywhere. It's up to a keen observer to behold their power.



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When the U.S. let Iran off the hook

David Horovitz
The Times of Israel

Analysis

No, the provisions of the interim deal with Iran signed in Geneva early Nov. 24 are not themselves disastrous. If the United States and other world powers had been negotiating a contract with a dependable, credible interlocutor, the deal might make a certain amount of sense. The problem is that Iran is not a dependable or a credible interlocutor. It is, rather, a cunning, deceptive adversary, and the United States has let it off the hook.

As far as they go, the terms of the deal make some sense. Iran's march to the bomb, in theory, is being temporarily constrained. It can no longer enrich uranium to 20 per cent and must neutralize its existing stockpiles of 20 per cent enriched uranium. It cannot increase its stockpiles of 3.5 per cent enriched uranium. It can no longer advance work on its Arak heavy water facility, under a clause that was much improved from the amateurish formulation put to the Iranians in the original Geneva offer two weeks ago, which would have enabled them to continue construction there. Its acknowledged nuclear facilities will be subjected to far more intrusive and effective inspection. And the sanctions relief, formally at least, is relatively limited and theoretically reversible if the Iranians break their promises.

The problem is that Iran has never acknowledged that it is in fact marching to the bomb. And these interim arrangements, concluded at a moment when the regime felt itself to be under unprecedented economic pressure, a moment of maximal leverage, scandalously failed to require Iran to admit to two decades-plus of lying and deception.

Instead, the United States, the free world's only hope of thwarting Iran, appears to have convinced itself that this admission of duplicity, this Iranian confession that it has been developing nuclear weapons, can be extracted over the coming six months as negotiations move ahead on a permanent accord. Unfortunately, disastrously, that's just not going to happen.

As stated by the White House on Nov. 24, the "comprehensive solution" to be negotiated by late May "envisions concrete steps to give the international community confidence that Iran's nuclear activities will be exclusively peaceful." By definition, then, such a comprehensive deal will require the exposure of those elements of the Iranian program – such as the Parchin military complex, where the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) believes Iran has carried out extensive nuclear weapons-related activities – that the regime has insistently shielded from international view.

A "comprehensive solution" would require Iran to come clean. It would disprove its insistent contention that it has always acted in good faith and has been the innocent victim of American and Zionist plots. It would show the regime to have lied to its own people. It would expose the duplicity of its leaders' claims never to have sought the bomb.

The Iranian regime has always done everything in its power to avoid that moment of reckoning. And the United States has now let if off the hook.

Sorry, folks, but the Iranians will not spend the next six months dutifully preparing to take the IAEA on a tour of all the facilities they have been lying about – dutifully detailing the bomb-making activities they carried out, the explosives-testing they undertook – en route to the dutiful dismantling of their entire military nuclear enterprise. They won't shamefacedly throw open the doors to Parchin. They won't provide the full story of what they've done at Fordo, the underground enrichment facility that, for Emily Landau, an expert on nuclear proliferation at Tel Aviv University's INSS think tank, constitutes clear evidence of Iran's military program.

Instead, the Iranians can be relied upon to spend the next six months, and a lot longer, arguing over the terms of the interim deal, pushing their own interpretations of what's been agreed, while seeking every means to further ease the economic pressure they're under. As Landau notes, the seeds of years of potential disagreement have already been sown in that there doesn't even appear to be an agreed text of the interim deal: Iran and the White House have released different versions, with significant differences.

Iran's avuncular, English-speaking Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will assure the world that Iran is fully keeping its side of the bargain, that Iran has shown good faith, demonstrated its mature responsibility, is being unfairly picked upon, represents no danger to anybody.

Mohammad Javad Zarif

Until Sunday, the international community was telling Iran: "You want sanctions relief? Tell us the truth about your nuclear weapons program and start dismantling it." As of Nov. 24, the international community is telling Iran: "We're giving you limited sanctions relief, and we want you to start telling us the truth about your nuclear weapons program further on down the road."

In theory, the cause is not yet entirely lost. The $7 billion of promised financial relief *could* turn out to be all the sanctions relief that Tehran gets. The painstakingly constructed wall of economic pressure, so effectively heightened these past two years under the Americans' direction, *could* yet hold. And if that pressure were maintained, and the regime felt its very survival was at stake a few months from now, it *could* yet cave and come clean.

But none of that's going to occur, as the United States must know. Surrounded by Iran-backing Russia, amoral China and the impotent Europeans, facing an Iran playing smart cards from a very weak hand, the United States didn't merely blink in Geneva. It closed its eyes.

The wall of sanctions is cracked now, and the crack will widen. Self-interested nations and hard-nosed businesspeople will see to that. The pressure is lifting. There'll be no comprehensive deal six months from now – no deal that exposes and dismantles Iran's nuclear weapons program. The Iranians are sighing with relief.

An unnamed senior Israeli official was quoted on Channel 2 news on Nov. 24 as saying that, in Geneva, "[President Barack] Obama established Iran as a nuclear threshold state." Indeed so.

Does that mean the Iranians will now speed to the bomb? And if they do, will they use the bomb against Israel? No! They're unlikely to overtly flout the understandings they've reached with the world powers now. Rather, they'll argue over terms and battle relentlessly to destroy the sanctions regime, and seek to entrench the current situation where the military aspects of their program remain off-limits to the world's prying eyes.

And as its economy revives, nuclear-threshold state Iran will gradually assert itself as a regional heavyweight, with the leverage to pursue its rapacious territorial and ideological goals. At the same time, Israel will find its capacity to respond necessarily limited.

Landau has not entirely given up hope. She notes that a comprehensive deal would need to cover all aspects of the Iranian program, include "highly intrusive verification mechanisms, expose all past weaponization activities and ensure rollback from all military aspirations."

For that to be achieved, she stresses, the international community will have to hold firm on sanctions pressure as Iran complains, obfuscates, argues and exploits divisions in the international community and uses every other trick it knows in the coming months. "You'll need all possible leverage to get a full deal," she says. "And without a full deal, you've lost."

Trouble is, the Americans signalled the easing of that crucial leverage in Geneva on Nov. 24. They let Iran off the hook.

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'Options open' on military strike: Liberman

Continued from page 1

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman, in an interview Sunday morning with Israel Radio in the hours after the agreement was announced, called the agreement "a new reality in the whole Middle East," and "the Iranians' greatest victory."

In terms of the possibility of an Israeli military strike on Iranian nuclear sites, Liberman said, "As always, all options are on the table."

Avigdor Liberman

He said Israel would look to other allies in deciding how to deal with Iran.

"Israel must look into new directions in addition to the U.S.," he said. "We must take responsibility regardless of the stance of the Americans or of others. We must make our own independent decisions."

Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni told *Ynet* news, "This is a terrible deal that will threaten not only us but the entire world." Livni, the lead negotiator in talks with the Palestinians, said Israel must work with the United States and other allies to make sure the final deal offers better terms.

Naftali Bennett, chair of the Jewish Home party and a government minister, also came out against the deal.

"If a nuclear suitcase blows up five years from now in New York or Madrid, it will be because of the deal that was signed this morning," he said in a statement posted on Facebook. "Israel," he added, "will not be committed to a deal that endangers its very existence."

Iranian officials reportedly welcomed the agreement, saying it confirmed the country's right to enrich uranium and that "all plots hatched by the Zionist regime to stop the nuclear agreement have failed," the state-owned *Islamic Republic News Agency* reported.

Israeli President Shimon Peres said in a statement: "The success or failure of the deal will be judged by results, not by words. I would like to say to the Iranian people, you are not our enemies and we are not yours. There is a possibility to solve this issue diplomatically. It is in your hands. Reject terrorism. Stop the nuclear program. Stop the development of long-range missiles. Israel like others in the international community prefers a diplomatic solution."

Knesset lawmaker Isaac Herzog, the newly elected chair of the opposition Labor party, said "the deal that was struck between the world powers and Iran is a fact and Israel must adjust itself to the new situation.

"Netanyahu must do everything in order to fix the damage that was caused from the public clash with the U.S. and return to an intimate relationship with President Obama and other world leaders," he said.

In a Nov. 24 statement, Foreign Minister John Baird said, "Canada has long held the view that every diplomatic measure should be taken to ensure Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon. We appreciate the earnest efforts of the [six world powers].

"Effective sanctions have brought the regime to present a more moderate front and open the door to negotiations. Today's deal cannot be abused or undermined by deception. The Iranian people deserve the freedom and prosperity that they have been denied for too long by the regime's nuclear ambitions. Until then, Canadian sanctions will remain tough, and in full force."

He added: "We will evaluate today's deal not just on the merits of its words, but more importantly on its verifiable implementation and unfettered access of all Iranian nuclear facilities."

David Koschitzky, chair of Canada's Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, said: "We applaud the [six world powers] for [their] serious diplomatic efforts. Israelis, more than anyone, want a peaceful end to Iran's nuclear program. Canadians have every reason to maintain healthy skepticism regarding this deal, given Iran's track record of manipulating diplomacy and breaching signed agreements. Any pause to Iran's nuclear drive will only be successful if the next six months are used to reach a comprehensive agreement that permanently denies Iran nuclear weapons capability."

He added: "Israel and others in the region have pointed to a number of serious deficiencies in this agreement. Just as intensive verification of Iran's actions will be required, we urge the [six world powers] to address the concerns raised by Israel in the next round of negotiations.

"This is just the beginning of a process that will be tested in the months ahead. We caution the international community to remain vigilant in holding Iran accountable and ensuring that it retains the ability to apply additional pressures should Iran backtrack on its obligations."

With files from CJN Staff

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Wed, July 2	Berlin (Warnemünde), Germany	8:00 am	8:00 pm
Thu, July 3	Cruising the Baltic Sea	-	-
Fri, July 4	Klaipeda, Lithuania	8:00 am	5:00 pm
Sat, July 5	Riga, Latvia	8:00 am	4:00 pm
Sun, July 6	Helsinki, Finland	9:00 am	6:00 pm
Mon, July 7	St. Petersburg, Russia	8:00 am	-
Tue, July 8	St. Petersburg, Russia	-	-
Wed, July 9	St. Petersburg, Russia	-	6:00 pm
Thu, July 10	Tallinn, Estonia	8:00 am	5:00 pm
Fri, July 11	Stockholm, Sweden	8:00 am	-

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Palestinian leader wants to set agenda

Abbas willing to speak to Knesset

JTA

JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said he would be willing to speak to the Knesset, but only on the issues he chooses.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a public statement last week called on Abbas to address the Knesset and said he would travel to Ramallah to speak to the PA leadership.

"Netanyahu comes up with an offer and then immediately puts forward his own terms – that this and that should be said and so on. No, if those terms are put forward, I do not accept that," Abbas told the Voice of Russia in remarks broadcast Nov. 22. "But if he wants me to come and say the things I want to say, then I am ready to do it – but only in order to say what I want to say and not what he wants to hear. "

Abbas said there would be a "full-fledged" Palestinian state.

"When Israel realizes the need to establish peace in the Middle East, then there will emerge a Palestinian state with the capital in holy Jerusalem," the PA leader said.

He said the Palestinian Authority currently is not discussing efforts to push forward a bid for full membership in the United Nations. Abbas said Russia has a "significant part to play" in peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

NETANYAHU IN RUSSIA: Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meet in the Kremlin on Nov. 20. *[Flash90 photo]*

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Israeli entrepreneur touts business in India

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Back in the day, when opportunities in the eastern United States seemed to be drying up, energetic self-starters were encouraged to "Go West, young man."

Israelis with an entrepreneurial bent might be inclined to take the advice and spin it on its head: Go East, young man, all the way to India.

For Focal Energy, India presents a vast business opportunity where its Israeli expertise is valued and where demand for its products – renewable energy solutions – is widespread, if not "desperate."

Focal Energy does 100 per cent of its business in India, where it provides the management skill and technical know-how behind solar panel, biomass power plants and run-of-the-river hydro-electric generation, said Noam Ben-Ozer, CEO of Focal Energy.

Ben-Ozer, along with Anchit Gupta, Focal's director of business development, are scheduled to be in Toronto this week to brief business people on "The India-Israel Opportunity." The meeting is co-sponsored by the Indo-Israel Chamber of Commerce; the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce; the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs; as well as the City of Markham; businessmen Walter Arbib and Surjit Babra of Skylink Group.

Noam Ben-Ozer

Israel's energy needs are pretty much taken care of and the entire country's population is one-third that of New Delhi alone. As a result, a company like his has to look abroad for business opportunities, said Ben-Ozer. India has long held a fascination for him and when he learned that the country had a nearly unlimited demand for power – you could even call it "desperate" – he saw a potentially lucrative opportunity.

"There's a huge gap between supply and demand for power in India," he said in a telephone interview from Israel.

Even in the top hotels in India, you'll find a five-, six- or seven-hour gap each day when they're taken off the grid and have to rely on generators to provide power, he said.

Half the country is not even hooked up to the grid, but as the country develops, the need for power will continue to accelerate, he said.

And that falls right inside Focal's wheelhouse. The company's hydro, biomass and solar solutions are perfectly suited to the Indian market, Ben-Ozer said.

The country doesn't have much in the way of fossil fuels and is not giving approvals to coal-generated power plants that pollute, he said.

So, Focal's "run-of-the-river" generation projects – a 21st century equivalent to the old water wheels that powered mills – each provides 3-10 megawatts (MWs) of power. They are environmentally friendly and can be located every six or seven miles downriver. Ten MWs of power is enough to provide electricity for 20,000-25,000 households, he said.

Its solar solutions are somewhat larger projects, providing 15-20 MWs each.

Focal's expertise is in providing the "technical optimization" as well as cost containment for each project, said Ben-Ozer. "We bring the quality of materials, design, utilization, controlling and maintaining. That's why the Israeli experience is so important."

Focal works with Indian partners to implement its projects. The majority of its workforce is Indian, he noted.

"We're in a good space, a positive space. Our projects are attractive and they're good for people. You change the lives of hundreds and thousands of farmers by buying the stuff they'd burn in the fields."

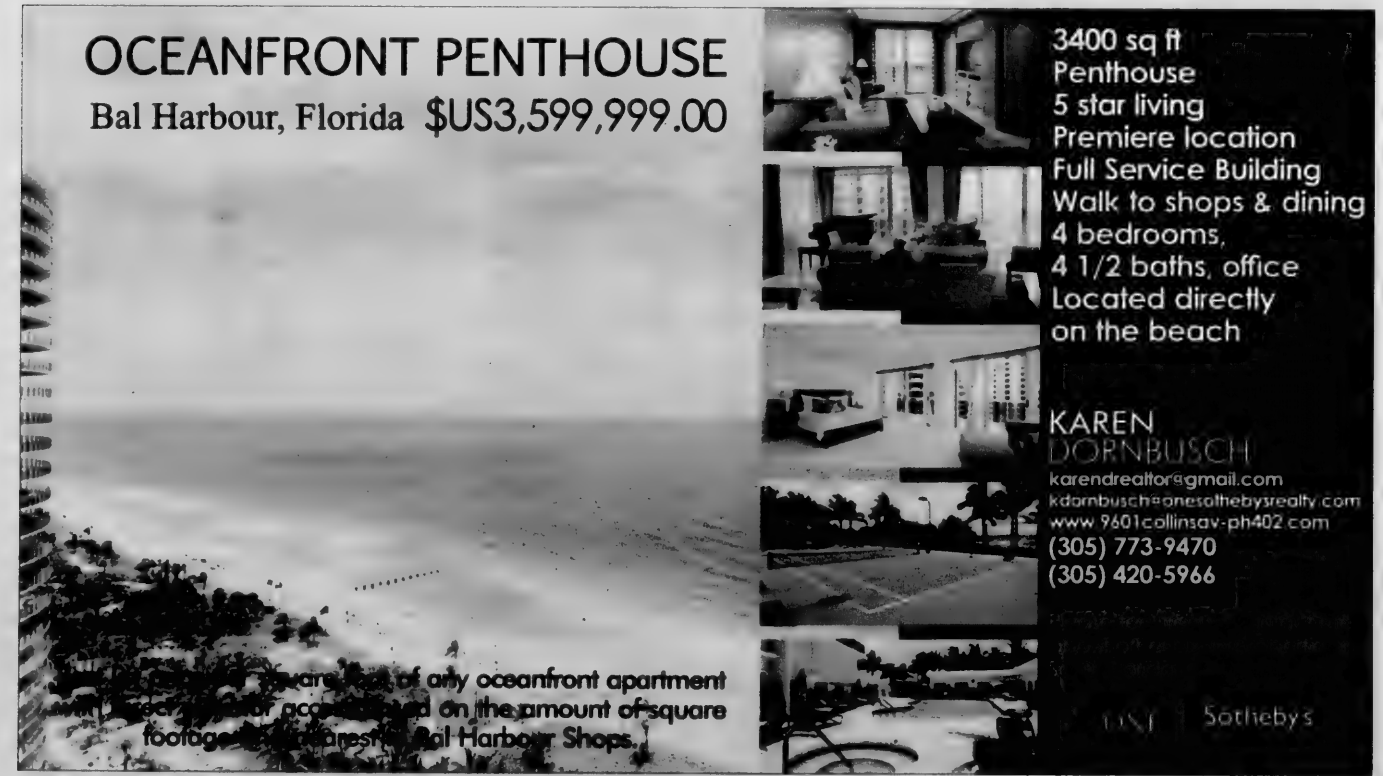
The projects generate work for many Indians, he added.

Ben-Ozer has found doing business in India is a positive experience. "India is a tremendously tolerant environment. Today, India is really favourable for Israel."

It's not too bad for the bottom line, either. Given the country's high demand for energy and the lower costs, the return on investment is in the 15-16 per cent range, "higher than in the west," he said.

Ben-Ozer will be telling his story in Toronto this week, and meeting investment bankers as well. An infusion of private capital will only increase the company's capacity to do business.

For Ben-Ozer, the sky's the limit. "Renewable energy in India and in developing nations is not a 'nice to have.' It's a necessity," he said.



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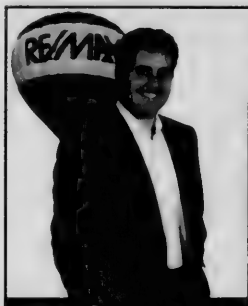

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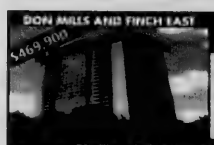

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Weisz, Ben	Oct. 19/13	3 Meadowbrook Rd
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Gartner, Lilian	Oct. 22/13	115 Palm Dr
Pickard, Al	Oct. 21/13	85 Skymark Dr
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Rubinstein, Maryla	Oct. 24/13	10 Senlac Ave
Stark, Judit Katalin	Oct. 24/13	
Caplan, Diana	Oct. 26/13	21 Chilmar Cres
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Shames, Lina Isaakovna	Oct. 26/13	1131 Steeles Ave. W
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Lewis Applebaum	Nov 17/13	484 Steeles Ave. West

Entrepreneur makes business case for philanthropy

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

"Philanthropy is good business."

In philosophy circles that phrase might be called a "conceptual polarity" and it hasn't necessarily been something widely accepted in the corporate world.

The phrase happens to be the title of a chapter in W. Brett Wilson's new book, *Redefining Success, Still Making Mistakes*, as well as the theme of his opening address at last week's UJA Federation of Greater Toronto event, "Taking Care of Business."

Wilson, perhaps best known for his role as a panelist on the CBC's *Dragons' Den*, delivered the message as a guide to corporate success. For corporations, charitable giving has traditionally been seen as a liability on the balance sheet, not an asset. But that's a perspective Wilson believes is outdated.

Charitable giving is a win-win for both the giver and the recipient, he suggested. When you look at it that way, giving is done not simply out of sense of obligation, but of opportunity. Both sides benefit.

Wilson, who co-founded FirstEnergy Capital Corp. 20 years ago, said he drew attention to his upstart company by making sure his philanthropic giving was well noticed.

Even if the amount given was modest, he made sure the cheques got in the hands of the recipients, their officers and board members and others whose attention could help benefit his company.

Currently FirstEnergy gives two-and-a-half per cent of its pre-tax income to charities – substantially more than other corporations – but it doubles as advertising for the company, he said.

"I believe that companies will become better – and bigger – donors when they start seeing community giving as an opportunity rather than any sort of obligation," he writes. "For those who might disagree with me, think hard about this: charitable giving that in turn reaps an economic return creates stronger companies that can make more meaningful contributions to their communities in the long run."

Since 1993, when FirstEnergy was founded in Calgary, it has provided, one way or another, more than $10 million to more than 500 charities or community organizations.

W. Brett Wilson *[Jeremy Otto photo]*

Wilson said individuals interested in supporting charities can give time, money or leadership. He provided a new spin to the familiar aphorism that with great wealth comes great responsibility; or that businesses should adopt the concept of corporate social responsibility. As he would have it, with great wealth comes great opportunity and companies should practice corporate social opportunity.

Growing up in North Battleford, Sask., Wilson was exposed to philanthropy at an early age, though he didn't know it at the time.

His parents were active in their community, involved in bake sales and other benevolent endeavours.

"They were active in every way they could," he said, though it wasn't until later that he realized their involvement was far from the norm.

That planted the seed for his future philanthropy. Along the way, he developed prostate cancer. He has a unique way of looking at it: "I consider myself a prostate cancer graduate,"not "a survivor," he said.

Wilson has raised $3 million for prostate cancer research as well as raising awareness for the cause, and in doing so, "changed the face of philanthropy in Calgary," he said.

Cosmetics studio helps clients feel good about themselves

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Twenty-five years ago, an encounter at a kosher restaurant helped launch Susan Kirsch into a career operating her own cosmetics studio.

She had to serve a kosher dinner and so she went to Milk 'N Honey on Bathurst Street and pinned her business card to their bulletin board.

"Not long after that, I received a phone call from a Mrs. Schmidt from [women's clothing store] Frumela's who said, 'Your card's not there anymore. I want to hire you to do my daughter's wedding.' From that moment on I was busy doing Orthodox weddings. Mrs. Helen Schmidt launched my career," she said.

Kirsch is the founder of Kirsch Cosmetics Studio, which offers a wide range of makeup services to its clients throughout the city and as far away as Winnipeg, Montreal, New York and California.

Applying makeup for more than 1,000 weddings (doing about 200 per year) as well as prom, bar and bat mitzvahs, Kirsch conducts private and public lessons and seminars and has developed her own line of quality makeup products. Her goal is to promote beauty and boost self-confidence.

"I have never been motivated by building a business based on selling lots of products. For me, it's always been service-based: making people feel good, feel happy, by teaching," stated Kirsch.

After graduating with a business degree from Ryerson University in her early 20s, Kirsch was hired as a management trainee at Hudson's Bay Company and given a project that happened to be in the cosmetic department. "I realized I needed to also use my creative talents – so I decided to become a makeup artist," reflected Kirsch.

Kirsch's business was first introduced as Kirsch Camouflage Clinic. "I worked from home for the first five years and specialized in helping people recover after surgery, focusing on camouflage and paramedical makeup techniques. I worked with dermatologists, plastic surgeons, the burn unit at Sunnybrook Hospital and the vascular malformation clinic at [the Hospital for Sick Children]."

Branching out into a retail environment, Kirsch moved to a storefront at Avenue Road and Eglinton Avenue and stayed there for 10 years. During that time, she offered private service to her clients.

"There was really no place in the city for people to learn the step-by-step makeup application in a private environment." That led to the expansion on the beauty side with weddings, special occasion photography, and makeup application.

Kirsch's business continued to grow. She acquired a corner unit of a plaza at Glencairn and Marlee avenues and has never looked back.

"I have a very large Jewish clientele, especially observant women who require a private room so as to remove their sheitel. To match their lifestyle, we offer long-wearing lipstick and shomer Shabbos makeup."

The Kirsch Cosmetic Studio team is respectful of its clients' personal style, teaching girls ranging from 16 years old right up to women starting new jobs.

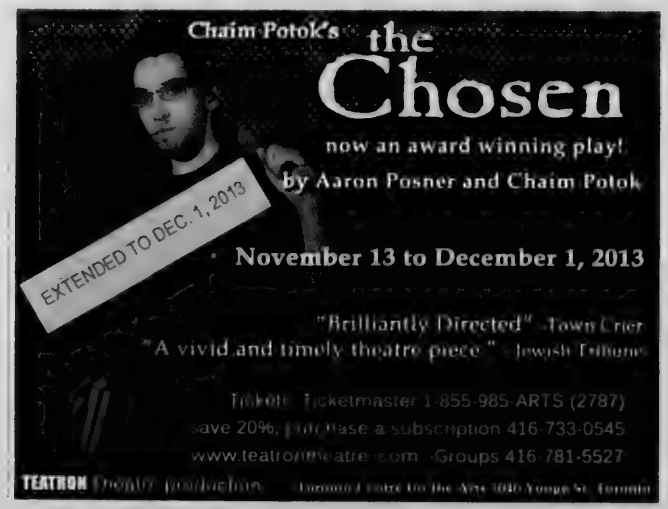
"People ask me all the time how they [can] get their makeup to last for Shabbos? The secret is layering," stated Kirsch.

Kirsch created her first product line, which was camouflage makeup. She then moved on to eye shadows and blush. "We also make our own makeup artistry tools and travel sets for clients who are on the go, or who need something in their gym bag.

"Organically, that grew into a whole new company that I created which is called Pandora's Makeup Box. I am currently building my brand and use my studio as my test location for product development and techniques," Kirsch said.

This month, Kirsch will launch a nail polish and vegan paraben-free lip gloss at some Rexall and Pharma Plus drug stores.

Susan Kirsch *[Eclipse Photography, Doug Sturgeon photo]*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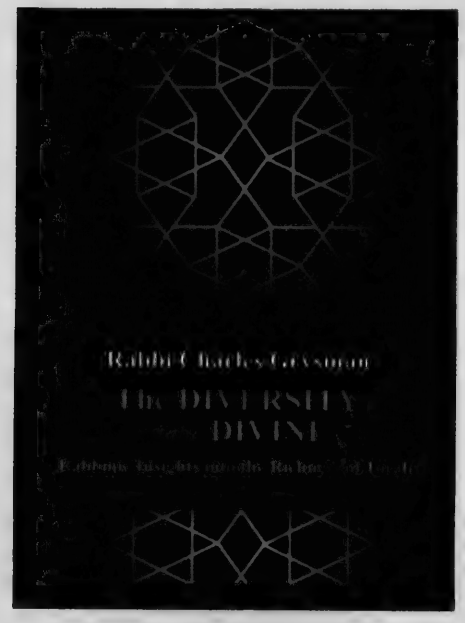
Views & Reviews
Martin Lockshin

The duties of a congregational rabbi have changed radically over the last two centuries and perhaps even over the last 50 years. Three years ago in these pages, I reminisced about the good old days in Toronto of the 1960s, when "in an area just two or three kilometres long, you could find Rabbi Gunther Plaut, Rabbi Stuart Rosenberg and Rabbi Walter Wurzburger, all writing impressive books and articles in English that were being read widely, putting Canadian Jewry on the intellectual map of, respectively, Reform, Conservative and modern Orthodox intellectuals throughout the world. And just a few kilometres away from them, you could find Rabbi Gedaliah Felder and Rabbi Avraham Price writing erudite books and articles in Hebrew that are still being studied and cited throughout the world among students of rabbinic texts."



A congregational rabbi pulled me aside and politely told me that the demands on rabbis have changed: it is no longer reasonable, he argued, to expect a congregational rabbi to become an author. In the '60s, he claimed, people took pride in rabbis who studied and wrote. Today, they want rabbis to do marital counselling and mediation, and to be available for their congregants as confidantes and advisers every hour of the day.

So I'm always impressed when a successful congregational rabbi manages to publish a book of Jewish learning. My good friend, Rabbi Charles Grysman, rabbi of Zichron Yisroel Congregation of the Associated Hebrew Schools in Thornhill, Ont., has done so with the publication of his two-volume *The Diversity of the Divine: Rabbinic Insights into the Richness of Torah*.

Rabbi Grysman represents an interesting blend of the old and the new rabbinical models. His acumen in the study of classical rabbinic texts and his level of erudition are top notch. Yet he has also embraced the new roles of a rabbi. Like most rabbis, he teaches. But unlike most, he has also completed a PhD in education. Like most rabbis, he does counselling and mediation. But Rabbi Grysman has professionalized and modernized these aspects of his job by obtaining an advanced degree in social work, as well as accreditation as a mediator.

Rabbi Grysman's book provides sources and insights relevant to each of the parshiot (weekly Torah-reading segments) of the entire Five Books of Moses. Even a beginning student who knows no Hebrew and little Bible will be able to follow this book.

Rabbis write books on the weekly Torah portions for two reasons. Some attempt to provide the authoritative "correct" understanding of the biblical text. Others use the biblical text and the hallowed commentaries written on it in the past as a springboard for some moral lesson. Rabbi Grysman's book belongs to the second category. As he writes in the introduction: "There is a tendency amongst some to use source material to direct the reader to a single conclusion; this has the benefit of lending an air of certainty to the text. Others look for rare sources and novel perspectives so as to ensure that the material is unique... The goal of this book, however, is to present a diverse set of perspectives on a given issue that flow from a varied selection of source material. It is my conviction that overly definitive approaches to Scripture have the potential to inhibit the desire for further exploration and to obscure the sense of wonder that can emanate from a broad study of Scripture and commentary."

His sources are eclectic. Aside from traditional Jewish commentaries, including a smattering of chassidic texts, Rabbi Grysman cites less orthodox sources such as the writings of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Sigmund Freud, as well as works on social psychology. His goal is to inspire us to become better human beings and better Jews.

In an example from this coming week's Torah portion (Miketz), Rabbi Grysman analyzes at some length the poignant scene where Joseph, viceroy of Egypt, toys with his brothers, whom he recognizes although they do not recognize him (Genesis 42:5-20). Standing in front of Joseph, but not realizing who he is, the brothers think back on their sin in the distant past when they ganged up on young Joseph and sold him (or led to his sale) as a slave (Genesis 42:21). The oldest brother, Reuben, describes their current predicament as their just deserts: "Now comes the reckoning for his blood" (Genesis 42:22). Rabbi Grysman cites the comment of the most respected Jewish Bible commentator of all time, Rashi (1040-1105), who suggests, with only the flimsiest textual support, that Reuben was saying that they were being punished not only for what they had done to Joseph but also for the pain that they caused their father, Jacob, all these years.

Rabbi Grysman explains that, following this line of interpretation: "Reuben expressed the awareness that their assault on Joseph was also an attack on Jacob, and that they bore fault for how it had affected Jacob." Rabbi Grysman, the educator, teaches a lesson: "A true reckoning of the consequences of one's actions must be inclusive, to the point that one sees the full range of the misery that one has caused."

For some thoughtful moral and psychological guidance from a compassionate rabbi, pick up a copy of *The Diversity of the Divine*.

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Travel Talk

Bill Gladstone

TREASURE HOARD FOUND NEAR TEMPLE MOUNT DATES FROM SOLOMONIC TIMES

A Hebrew University of Jerusalem excavation some 50 metres south of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem has uncovered stunning remains from the Solomonic period. Shortly after breaking through the surface of a new area filled with modern debris, excavators found a hoard of rare gold coins, silver and gold jewelry, and a large gold medallion ornamented with a menorah.

"This happens only once in a lifetime," said Dr. Eilat Mazar, who heads the archeological team that made the discovery this summer.

Mazar and her team believe the menorah medallion and other items were probably used to adorn a Torah scroll; if so, they are the earliest known Torah scroll ornaments ever discovered.

Found inside a 6th-century Byzantine structure, the fantastic collection was most likely hidden by a prominent group of Jews during the Persian conquest of Jerusalem.

It is the latest of a series of extraordinary finds Mazar's team has unearthed. Last year she uncovered a piece of pottery bearing the oldest alphabetical inscription yet to be found in Jerusalem.

• • •

Color Gone Wild: The exhibition *Color Gone Wild – Fauve and Expressionist Masterworks from the Merzbacher Collection*, has received such an enthusiastic reception by the Israeli public in the last few months that its run has been extended two months.

The exhibition presents fauve and expressionist masterworks from the collection of Werner and Gabrielle Merzbacher. *Color Gone Wild* showcases some 40 works by artists such as Georges Braque, André Derain, Alexej von Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Henri Matisse, all linked by a vivid use of vibrant colour as a vehicle for emotional expression. At the Israel Museum until Jan. 11, 2014.

Another exhibit at the Israel Museum focuses on the history of Israeli architecture. *Aircraft Carrier – American Ideas and Israeli Architectures* explores the dramatic changes in that field beginning in 1973, highlights the influence of the United States, and features architectural photography, sculpture, and installation. On view thru Jan. 3.

Also at the museum, *The Annunciation*, a rare fresco created by Italian artist Sandro Botticelli during the Florentine renaissance, remains on view thru next January. The fresco is on special loan from the Uffizi Gallery in Florence in honour of Israel's 65th anniversary. www.english.imjnet.org.il/

• • •

Kosher Cruises: Crystal Cruises, which has been repeatedly voted the world's top deluxe cruise line by readers of *Condé Nast* magazine, is offering two upcoming kosher cruises in its deluxe vessel Serenity. Kashrut is being supervised by kosher chef Malcolm Green.

A 12-day cruise from Rome to London also takes in Porto Venere, Monte Carlo, Barcelona, Gibraltar, Lisbon, Oporto/Leixoes, and Bordeaux. Hosts are Rabbi Stewart and Susi Weiss of the Jewish Outreach Centre in Raanana, Israel. A cultural program of Jewish interest is being arranged. The cruise departs Rome on Sunday Aug. 24, 2014 and ends in England on Sept. 5.

A Historic Harbours kosher cruise follows the routes of famed explorers John Cabot, Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain. It embarks from Quebec City on Oct. 26, 2014 and concludes at New York City on Wednesday Nov. 5. Ports of call include Septlles, the Magdalen Islands, Halifax, Bar Harbor, Boston and Newport.

For further information and reservations, please contact David Freudmann of UniWorld Travel & Tours Inc. 416-493-3322, ext. 356, david@uniworldtravel.com

Medallion discovered near the Temple Mount dates back to Solomonic times.

• • •

Israel Notes

• The first-ever Gran Fondo Giro d'Italia tour will see cycling enthusiasts from around the world cycling along a 155-km. course along the contours of the Dead Sea on Dec.13. Participants will cycle through the Dead Sea region's breathtaking landscapes and natural wonders and take in a cycling expo at Ein Bokek. www. granfondo-deadsea.co.il/en

• The recently opened Avital Volcano Park in northern Israel's Golan Heights features a model volcano, eruption simulations and hiking trails over basalt rocks. Guided nighttime walking tours and a stunning audio-visual show are offered every Thursday evening.

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

PLAY EXPLORES WORLD OF SHANGHAI'S JEWISH REFUGEES

Next Stage Theatre Festival presents the premiere of *On the Other Side of the World*, a play written and directed by **Brenley Charkow**, about a young Jewish girl whose family flees to Shanghai during World War II. "I wanted to honour this little-known piece of history," Charkow said. "Growing up Jewish, I was raised with the knowledge of what happened during the war, but not once did I hear of the Jewish refugees and ghettos of Shanghai. The more research I did, the more I wanted to tell this story."

The production will feature a 14-person cast that includes **Ashleigh Hendry**, **Nicholas Rice**, **Sam Rosenthal**, **Dale Yim**, **Liza Balkan**, **Jordan Kanner** and **Dov Mickelson**. It also features an original musical score incorporating both Asian and Jewish musical influences that will be performed live. $15. Factory Theatre Main Stage, 125 Bathurst St. Jan. 9 to 19, 2014. www.fringetoronto.com, 416-966-1062.

• • •

Israeli Film Festival: The Daring Independent Film Festival (DIFF), which grew out of the five-year-old but now defunct Moving Image Film Festival, makes its debut in Toronto in December, headed by Toronto-based filmmaker **Ron Furman**. DIFF, in partnership with the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, is presenting a full day of Israeli films.

"My mission is to promote Israel as best as possible," says Furman, who once worked for the Israeli foreign ministry and the Israel advocacy organization Stand With Us, and who adds that films that bash Israel will not be accepted in the festival.

"I believe there are a lot of anti-Israel films out there that do not represent the state in the proper way. I wanted to do my part to present Israel as I see it. An Israeli film festival is the best way to promote Israel and to educate people as to what Israel is all about."

The program includes *Welcome Home*, Furman's hour-long documentary about groups of young participants in the Birthright program from New York, Chicago, Toronto, Los Angeles and Miami as they visit Israel for the first time. Other titles include *Strangers No More*, *Dolphin Boy*, *804*, *Red Nose* and *Out in the Dark*.

While DIFF's first three days of screenings take place at a downtown venue, the Israeli films will be screened on the fourth day – Sunday, Dec. 29 – at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre, 9600 Bathurst St., north of Rutherford Rd. in Vaughan, Ont. $10 per film, day pass $36. www.diffest.com

• • •

Ishay Shaer in Concert: Syrinx Concerts Toronto presents acclaimed Israeli pianist **Ishay Shaer** playing a program of **Beethoven** and **Somers**. He has performed throughout the world and won both national and international prizes. $25, $20. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. Sunday, Dec. 8, 3 p.m. syrinxconcerts.ca/concerts

• • •

Jews of Egypt: Congregation Darchei Noam is screening the Egyptian documentary film *Jews of Egypt* by director **Amir Ramses**, supposedly the first film of its kind produced in Egypt and permitted a general release. The film covers the Jewish involvement in Egyptian business and arts in the first half of the 20th century, mentions the founding of Israel in 1948, the Egyptian revolution of 1952, and the forced exile of Egypt's Jews.

Khaled Diab, an Egyptian-Belgian journalist, wrote an opinion piece in *Ha'aretz* after a screening of the film in Egypt was cancelled. "This damages the push-back against strong anti-Jewish sentiment gripping the country, while failing to remind Egyptians of a past era of diversity and tolerance," he wrote. $10, $5. Darchei Noam, 864 Sheppard Ave. W. Sunday, Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m.

Arts in Brief

• *Aftermath (Poklosie)*, a recent film by Polish director **Wladyslaw Pasikowski**, is a controversial, award-winning thriller dealing with the reality of Polish-Jewish relations since World War II. This Toronto Jewish Film Festival Chai Tea and A Movie selection is co-presented by the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation. A Q&A with producer **Dariusz Jablonski** follows the screening. $15. City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan (off Bathurst, south of Hwy. 7). Sunday, Nov. 24, tea at 4 p.m., film at 5 p.m. www.tjff.com, 416-324-9121.

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** continues his series on "The Enigmatic Genius of Robert Altman. Topic, "Documentary – Tanner 88." $11.25, drop-in, students $6. Miles Nadal JCC, Monday, Dec. 2, 7 to 9 p.m.

• Active Seniors and Boomers presents *More Gems from the Jewish-American Songbook*, with **Jordan Klapman** playing selections from **Irving Berlin**, the **Gershwins** and **Richard Rogers**. $4. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Dec 5, 1:30 p.m.

• Toronto Jewish Film Society and Koffler Centre of the Arts present two documentaries on Jewish music in South America – *Tango, A Story with Jews*, and *Rio Klezmer*. With guest speaker **Eric Stein**. Tickets ($15, $10) available 15 minutes before screenings. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Sunday. Dec. 8, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

• Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents the world premiere of *Seven Days*, a play by **Ron Rutberg** about some former fighters in a Jewish underground movement in pre-independence Jerusalem who moved to America after the state was declared. The play explores the question: "What drove these fierce nationalists so far from their cherished homeland?" Toronto Centre of the Arts, Studio Theatre, Jan. 8 to 19, 2014. teatrontheatre.com

Israeli pianist Ishay Shaer plays a program of Beethoven and Somers.

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Jazz musician thrives on improvization

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Nothing thrills Toronto jazz musician Brian Katz more than getting on a concert stage and making something up.

Katz, 57, loves to improvise, and he often feels the urge to create new melodies at his shows and in the studio. He recently finished his first solo album of jazz recordings, *Leaves Will Speak*, and had planned to stick to the strict compositions he had written. However, that plan was short-lived. Of the 18 tracks on the album, he improvised six.

"My soul just needed to create new things," Katz tells *The CJN*. "It was really a little shocking to myself. This wasn't starting off to be a free improv record, but now it's a marriage of my pieces and free improvisations."

It took Katz a long time to finally get to this premiere solo effort. He spent more than 20 years collaborating with internationally renowned Jewish artists like Yiddish musician Lenka Lichtenberg, author Dan Yashinsky and the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band.

Katz got into klezmer music professionally in the late 1980s. He credits this to growing up in a "music friendly household" where his parents often played Yiddishkeit, klezmer music, as well as jazz and classical arrangements.

He began playing guitar at eight, later took up the piano and then developed a taste for classical guitar as a young adult. When Katz began to perform professionally, he blended the musical influences he listened to as a child into his recordings – and later, his improvisations.

"That was just a natural thing for me to do, to bring Jewish music influences into jazz," Katz says. "I can't get away from my Jewish influence… nor do I want to."

One of the most vibrant tracks on *Leaves Will Speak*, called *Mezzonia*, features an eclectic mix of musical styles, including klezmer, Bulgarian, East Indian and blues, showing off his taste for mixing genres. Katz wrote another melody, *In the Olive Grove*, in Jerusalem and he says he often travels to Israel.

He also dedicates *Leaves Will Speak* to his father, Bernie, who died last year. In the album's liner notes, Katz calls his dad "my first jamming partner, who infused me with a deep love of music."

Bernie was an amateur harmonica player who had a big love of music, Katz says. "He took me to the symphony when I was very young. He was an opera buff. We played music from the time I was a very young age."

When he is not performing or in the studio, Katz leads a busy life as a music teacher around Toronto. In addition to leading a klezmer ensemble at York University, Katz teaches improvisation, jazz and classical music there. He is also a professor of music education and Delcroze Eurhythmics at the University of Toronto.

"I like living on the edge," he chuckles. "However, I balance that by still maintaining practice in classical music. I do enough stuff that is preordained."

Delcroze Eurhythmics is a highly experiential approach to music, named after a Swiss music teacher, which sees the body as the first instrument. Katz teaches people rhythm through the body and emphasizes that his students should learn to move on each note they make.

"Delcroze said that for every sound, there's a gesture. For every gesture, a sound," Katz says. He even invented an offshoot of the Eurhythmics foundation called Yidrhythmics, which focuses on movement enhanced through chassidic tunes.

Katz is also busy working on the We Are One Jazz Project, designed for students aged eight to 13 who live in disadvantaged areas. He will spend the next three months rehearsing with kids living in and near Toronto's Jane and Finch neighbourhood, teaching them jazz and the blues, as well as improvisation.

Brian Katz got into klezmer music professionally in the late 1980s.

Alongside instructors like jazz pianist Howard Rees and legendary musician Barry Harris, Katz will prepare the grade-schoolers to perform for a concert in February at the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

"It's amazing how kids from Grade 3 can learn (jazz and) all those syncopated rhythms," Katz says. "But, in fact, kids have such fast nervous systems. Kids totally get that. They live in that universe of really fast rhythms."

Katz says that being a teacher has made him a more confident performer. The improvisation he includes in a classroom setting rubs off on him.

Although he keeps his time full with teaching and performing, Katz says he now wants to focus on songwriting and perhaps do a solo guitar record of jazz standards.

He would love to tour across Canada, once again performing without a net, not knowing what each new improvised performance will bring. "There's nothing more exciting than that," he says.

Leaves Will Speak is available in various Toronto stores including Israel's Judaica and worldwide via the Internet. Visit briankatz.com for details.

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Documentary shows revitalized Polish Jewish life

Jordan Adler
Special to The CJN

Toronto filmmaker Francine Zuckerman always wanted to travel with her father, Jack, to Poland. Jack fled Poland in August 1939, two weeks before the war broke out. He was fortunate to make it to Canadian soil, as the "none is too many" immigration policy closed the country's doors to Jewish immigrants.

But they did not get a chance to visit Poland together before he died in 1992. "Even though our family had this negative impression of Poland, he really didn't," she says. "He wanted to connect, he wanted to show me but we never got a chance to go."

However, when Zuckerman spoke with people she met on an earlier film she directed, the Gemini Award-winning *Half the Kingdom*, they told her about a new wave of Jewish life developing in Eastern Europe. Zuckerman says she had believed that there were no Jews left in Poland.

She knew it was time to head to her father and mother's birthplace.

In Poland, Zuckerman became one witness to the birth of this cultural and religious revival.

Her new documentary, *We Are Here*, tells the story of several Polish Jews who live under the shadow of the Holocaust and the new efforts to rebuild Poland's Jewish community. Zuckerman dedicated the film to her parents.

The first time she visited was during the 65th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. From this maiden visit, she started contacting Jewish citizens.

"Each time I went back, I put little pieces of the puzzle together," she says. "Slowly I started to understand what was really going on in Poland. It's 20 years after Solidarity and the fall of the [Berlin] Wall. There's a new world that's opened up. It's almost hip now to say, 'I've got Jewish roots.'"

One woman she met at the Ghetto Heroes Monument during her first visit was Irena Likierman, a Holocaust survivor who became one of the documentary's five Polish-Jewish subjects.

Likierman was only eight when Nazis forced her family into the Warsaw Ghetto. She would later escape from the ghetto and hide in several homes before returning to Warsaw after the war. Likierman chose to stay in Warsaw but changed her name and hid her Jewish identity.

"When I go to the [Ghetto Heroes] monument, that's how I feel connected to my family," Likierman told *The CJN*.

Likierman struggled to find her place in Poland after the war. However, Polish Jews growing up in a post-Communist era are finding more comfort in the nation's slowly developing Jewish community.

One of these Jews, Ania Ciszewska, works for Limmud, a UK-based organization focused on educating people about Jewish life, history and events. The agency also connects people to their Jewish roots. Ciszewska says the job is important to her because it reminds her of her own realization that she was Jewish.

Ciszewska started to discover her faith as a child, even though her parents had repressed their religious identity. In high school, she became more attached to her Jewish identity through the Holocaust literature she read in her classes.

This was a key learning curve for her, since history classes in Poland skim over World War II, she says. But once she became interested in knowing more about Judaism, Ciszewska did not let up.

"I joined the Jewish Senate Organization and I went on Birthright," she says. "It was like this kick for me. I started to run the Jewish holidays at my place. I invited my mom and my sister and some of my friends and we did it together."

However, Jewish family celebrations are still more difficult to do in Poland. "There are many kids like me, who want to bring [Judaism] to the house, but the parents [and] the grandparents do not want it," Ciszewska says.

The estimated number of Jews living in Poland ranges from estimates of around 10,000 to 100,000. Although a 2010 census showed that around 10,000 Jews lived there, many have either not yet discovered this identity or do not identify as Jews.

"I was sitting in a café in between shooting. I look over and I see somebody who totally looks Jewish to me," Zuckerman says. "I was watching her, and I thought, I bet she doesn't know [she is Jewish]. That was probably the most profound thing for me. I grew up with this entire sense of who I am as a Jew. They didn't."

Although Jewish life has begun to spring into Warsaw, anti-Semitism remains. This intolerance is more rampant in smaller towns like Lublin, where Jews are not an active part of the community.

We Are Here took Zuckerman six years to make. It will preview at the Royal cinema in Toronto on Dec. 3 and is set to air on the Documentary Channel on Dec. 9. Zuckerman says she hopes to get *We Are Here* into next year's Jewish Film Festival in Toronto, as well as international festivals.

Earlier this month, the film screened at Warsaw's Museum of the History of Polish Jews. The museum, set to open in September 2014, was built on the ground that used to be part of the Warsaw Ghetto. The screening this month brought Zuckerman's journey full circle.

"When I was there for the 65th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the president of Poland and the president of Israel got together," she says. "They walked from the monument for the people who died during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising to the new site of the Jewish museums. We realized we were moving from commemorating the death to acknowledging the life."

Ania Ciszewska, right, with her mother Joanna Ciszewska at a museum in Lublin.

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Partners hope app is key to fitness success

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Two Waterloo-based men are hoping their app will change the way people take care of their bodies.

Built through a partnership between Phil Jacobson and Garrett Gottlieb, both 23 years old, fitness app PumpUp has been reaching people all over the globe.

With more than 100,000 downloads, the app helps build personalized workout routines. For example, someone with just 15 minutes at home with no equipment could log on and get a routine laid out for them. The same goes for someone with hours to spare at a gym, surrounded by weights and machines.

"We show them what to do and how to do it, and they can share their progress with broader community," Jacobson said.

Gottlieb said it all started when he was in high school, getting into the routine of doing a daily workout and learning from his father.

When he got to university, he continued the habit, but by the time he was in his third year, he felt that his workouts were becoming stale.

PumpUp's creators Garrett Gottlieb, left, and Phil Jacobson

"I tried searching for apps on my phone to make me a cool workout, but it was just workout libraries or exercise lists, so I decided to build it myself," he said.

After working at three startups and then at BlackBerry (then Research In Motion) as part of his computer science studies at the University of Waterloo, he realized he didn't want to work for a big company.

"The responsibility was very low, and there wasn't a whole lot of creativity involved. It didn't feel like I had as much artistic freedom," he said.

He took some time to develop the app as part of the University of Waterloo enterprise co-op program, where he won $4,000.

That's when his friend and Jewish fraternity brother, Jacobson, joined the team, bringing in the skills he learned as a business student at Wilfrid Laurier University.

"I developed the prototype and vision, but it was a matter of executing that vision," Gottlieb said.

Once they won a $25,000 prize in the VeloCity Venture Fund, a competition at the University of Waterloo for innovative tech startups, they knew they had something worthwhile.

But it wasn't long before the pair decided that they needed to go bigger. They tried out for CBC's *Dragons' Den* and although they were turned away, a month later, they were invited onto the show. It aired earlier this month.

So they walked into the den with a phone attached to a large monitor to demonstrate the app, as well as a hugely muscular bodybuilder. That was the producer's idea, Jacobson told Waterloo-based tech hub Communitech, explaining that the app targets beginners more than experts, so he wasn't thrilled with the idea, but the producer insisted.

On the show, the pair asked the "dragons" for $100,000 in exchange for 10 per cent of the business. Unfortunately, at that time – in April – they didn't have the user numbers to convince the investors their business was worth the investment.

At the time, they'd had only 12,000 downloads, with only about a third of them active, and a handful of people opting for the paid premium features, which so far is just a voice coaching option.

PumpUp's founders try to make a deal on CBC's *Dragons' Den*.

The fact that the pair were focusing on increasing their number of users rather than figuring out how to encourage those users to pay for the app dissuaded the dragons from making a deal.

David Chilton, author of successful financial planning book franchise *The Wealthy Barber*, did offer to invest in PumpUp, but he offered $100,000 for 20 per cent equity, as well as 25 per cent royalty.

"We believe all cash, whether by investment or revenue, needs to go back into the business," Jacobson said. "That would have held it back."

He said the fact that PumpUp has since then increased its subscribers by 1,000 per cent shows that it was a smart decision, and he doesn't regret turning down the offer.

However, the company still isn't focusing on monetizing the app – something that Venture Communications CEO Arlene Dickinson said is a problem with startups. "They're so full of, 'We know everything and we've got the best thing since sliced bread,' and it's ridiculous," she said after the PumpUp team left the den.

Fellow dragon Bruce Croxon, CEO of LavaLife, reminded her that if these kinds of ideas catch on, they can scale very quickly.

That's what Jacobson and Gottlieb are hoping will happen with PumpUp.

"We're continuing to involve the product and grow the user base... We'll focus on revenue in the future. Right now, we're focused on growth, and we're seeing hypergrowth," Jacobson said, adding that the growth includes adding two more staff members.

He credits his success partially to his experience in the Jewish fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi. In his last year of university, he was president of the Waterloo chapter, and he said the role helped him learn how to manage an organization.

"It's a platform for you to explore and learn," he said, adding that he would encourage any male Jewish university students to join. "If you leverage it from an exploring and learning perspective, you get so much out of it."

Both Gottlieb and Jacobson are hoping to continue drawing on that and other experiences to help the company continue to grow.

They are optimistic. "A year from now, we'll have millions of users using the product across the world," Jacobson said.

For more information, visit pumpup.co.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: Dec. 2 is the deadline for the issue of Dec. 12. Dec. 9 is the deadline for the issue of Dec. 19. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Nov. 28

WOMEN AND TORAH

Naomi Seidman discusses "Women and Torah: A Revolution in Jewish Education," 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

JIAS ANNUAL MEETING

JIAS' annual general meeting will be held at 7 p.m., Lipa Green Centre. Featuring staff and volunteer recognition awards, scholarships and a performance by **Yael Morris.** RSVP 416-630-6481

VISIONS FOR CANADA

Liberal Leader **Justin Trudeau** speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 7 p.m. Advance registration required at RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org or 416-221-3433.

Friday, Nov. 29

ONEG SHABBAT

B'nai Torah Congregation holds an Oneg Shabbat and dinner, followed by a roundtable discussion on "Can you be a successful professional and still adhere to Jewish ethics?" For dinner reservations, call 416-226-3700.

WRITTEN IN DIRT

David Lipovitch discusses "Written in Dirt," how archeology can explain ancient Israel, 8 p.m., Temple Har Zion.

Monday, Dec. 2

ARCHEOLOGY OF JERUSALEM

Dan Bahat, former district archeologist of Jerusalem, gives a 3-part talk on the history of Jerusalem. Tonight, "Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period," Beth Tzedec Congregation, 7 p.m.

WOMEN OF THE WALL

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein discusses the Women of the Wall and the new "Southern wall" proposal, 8 p.m., Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St.

ISRAEL'S NEW REALITY

Rabbi Kinneret Shiryon, spiritual leader of Modi'in's Reform congregation, discusses "New Realities, New Opportunities: The Cultural Revolution in Israel Today," 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

Tuesday, Dec. 3

BOOK REVIEW

Marilyn Herbert reviews *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by **Mohsin Hamid,** 8 p.m., Adath Israel Synagogue. $10/$15.

Wednesday, Dec. 4

JEWS AND BASKETBALL

The First Basket: Jews and Basketball will be shown at 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. Guest speaker **Mike Katz,** former head coach of the University of Toronto Varsity Blues. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Thursday, Dec. 5

A NIGHT ON BROADWAY

Cantor Alex Stein performs songs from Broadway, 7:30 p.m., Adath Israel Congregation. $18. Call 416-635-5340.

YIDDISH VINKL

Elly Gotz reads Yiddish poetry with translations, noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 includes lunch. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

Other News

CHANUKAH FUN

Nov. 28 Menorah lighting, food and **Aristov Family Circus,** 6:30 p.m. at Mississauga Civic Centre, 300 City Centre Dr. 905-268-4432

Nov. 29 Bring your menorah to Temple Kol Ami. Services at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner. RSVP jaykowal@gmail.com

Nov. 30 Beth Tikvah Synagogue holds a Chanukah on ice celebration, 7:30 p.m. at Canlan Ice Sports. RSVP 416-221-3433 $5/$10.

Family Musical Chanukah Show with **Lenny Graf,** Pride of Israel Synagogue, 6 p.m. Pre-registration required. 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

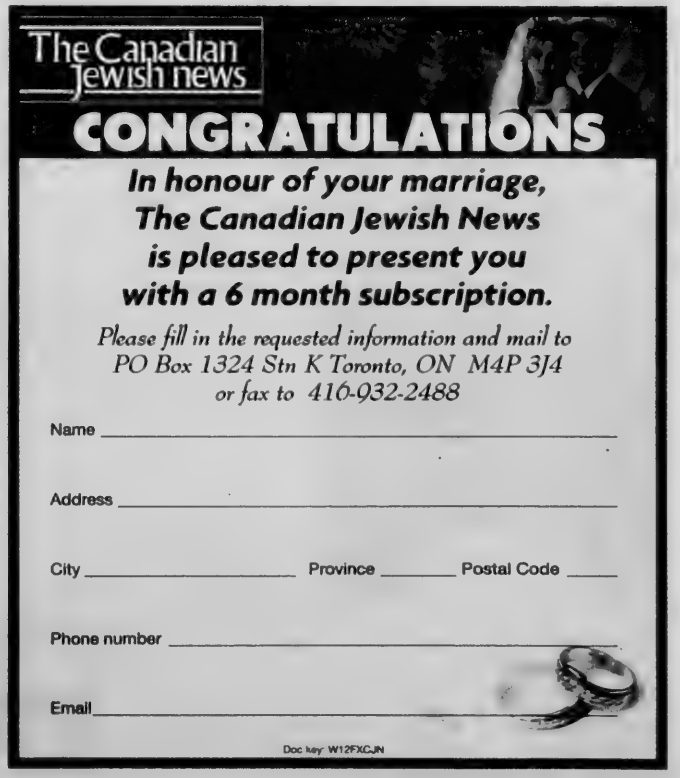
Dec. 1 Chabad of Markham presents Eighth Day in concert at a Chanukah festival, 3 p.m., Thornhill Community Centre. $25. For tickets, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221 or www.chabad-markham.org.

Menorah lighting, crafts and music at Iroquois Ridge Community Centre, 1051 Glenashton Dr., Oakville, 4 p.m. 905-268-4432.

Beth Radom hosts a Chanukah party featuring magician **Brandon David,** food and games, 12-2 p.m. 416-636-3451.

Dec. 2 Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired holds a Chanukah dinner and party, 7 p.m. Call **Bess** 905-508-2892.

Continued on page 61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Continued from page 60

Menorah lighting, crafts and music at Hugh Foster Hall, 141 King St., Milton, 6:30 p.m. 905-268-4432

Dec. 3 Illusionist and mind reader **Mike D'Urzo** perfoms at Chabad of Markham's Chanukah dinner for young adults (20-30-ish), 7 p.m., 83 Green Lane, Thornhill. $25. For tickets, call 905-886-0420 or email rabbig@chabadmarkham.org

Dec. 5 Musical Chanukah Nash and Drash, with **Cantor David Edwards** and **Klara Bagley**, Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon. $12/$15. 416-633-3838.

Dec. 6 Shaar Shalom Singles hold a Chanukah Oneg Shabbat, 8 p.m. 2 Simonston Blvd.

Dec. 11 Toronto Jewish Folk Choir performs Chanukah songs, 7 p.m., Barbara Frum Library.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Teenage volunteers are needed for a teen-senior Chanukah party, Dec. 1, sponsored by Ohalei Yoseph Yitzchak Congregation and Shorashim Hebrew School. Email hannah-safferspiro@gmail.com, or call **Rachel**, 647-708-8201.

Reena is looking for a female volunteer to assist during swim time at the Holland Bloorview Pool, Mondays at 6 p.m. The volunteer does not need to be a strong swimmer, but must be comfortable in shallow water. Call **Mille Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org.

VISIONS FOR CANADA

MP **Chris Alexander,** minister of citizenship and immigration, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Advance registration required. Email RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org or 416-221-3433.

EXODUS DECODED

Adath Israel Synagogue shows the film *Exodus Decoded* with filmmaker **Simcha Jacobovici,** Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-635-5340.

SYRIAN JEWS

Judy Feld Carr discusses "The Secret Rescue of the Syrian Jews," 7:30 p.m., Beth Jacob Synagogue. $40. For tickets, call 416-638-5955.

FILM FESTIVAL

Temple Sinai shows the films *Neil Diamond: Solitary Man, Closed Season, Noodle* and *Zaytoun* Dec. 6-8. Advance registration only. Call 416-487-3281 or email programs@templesinai.net.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Stop the Roller-coaster: A workshop for parents or professionals who want to learn more about the change in teenagers' behaviour and attitudes. Nov. 27, 7 p.m.

Is There Life After A Death: A workshop for men and women who have lost a spouse and want to move forward. Nov. 28, 7 p.m., Prosserman JCC.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Dec. 10, 9:30 a.m.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m.

Dating in Mid-Life: A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for 2 or more years. Dec. 12.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Circle of Care sponsors a 6-week workshop about community services, safety, financial and legal planning for seniors, Fridays, 1:30 p.m. to Dec. 13, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call **Anne Sicilliano** 416-635-2900, ext. 462.

Beth Tzedec Haverim: Dara Solomon, director of the Ontario Jewish Archives, shares stories of the Jewish community. Bring your own photos and stories. 1:30 p.m., Dec. 2 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Dec. 18. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Wednesdays mah-Jong 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Dec. 3 **Diana Mingail** discusses "Morocco: Its King and Its Jews," 10 a.m.; Dec. 4, Chanukah lunch and concert, noon. $13/$17; Dec. 5 **Mirna Iskander** discusses "Falls Prevention," 1:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Email lisar@mnjcc.org. Dec. 5 **Jordan Klapman** performs songs by **Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Richard Rogers** and more. 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267.

Raise money for Special Olympics Canada, Dec. 1, 9 a.m.-noon by cycling. Register at Prosserman JCC website.

Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 p.m.

Try Nia, which combines martial arts, dance and healing arts. Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.

Shalom Singers are looking for both male and female singers. Weekly rehearsals and performances year-round. Thursdays, 10 a.m. No auditions required. Call 416-781-6066.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com. or ext. 4103.

Register now for winter programs: **Beverlee Swayze** discusses "The History of Symphony," Jan. 21, 1 p.m.

Iain Scott discusses "Great Canadian Opera Singers," starting Jan. 16

Kevin Courrier discusses "Produced and Abandoned 111: Yet More Best Movies You Have Never Seen," starting Jan. 15.

To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Dec. 2, Documentary: *Tanner 88.*

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m. to Dec. 18.

Mapping Harbord Village: Stories of a Neighbourhood, developed by the Harbord Village Residents' Association and the master of museum studies program in the University of Toronto's faculty of information is on display in the gallery until Dec. 15.

Chanukah at the JCC: Poolside Chanukah Party, Nov. 30, 6:30 p.m.; Community Chanukah Celebration, Dec. 1, 10 a.m.; 44 in 44: 44 Jewish book titles reviewed in 44 minutes by **Belinda Keshen** and **Sharoni Sibony,** Dec. 1, 10:30 a.m.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two documentaries on Jewish music in South America, *Tango, A Story with Jews* and *Rio Klezmer* Dec. 8, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Guest speaker: **Eric Stein,** Ashkenaz Festival Director. Tickets at the door, 15 minutes before screen times, $15/$10.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

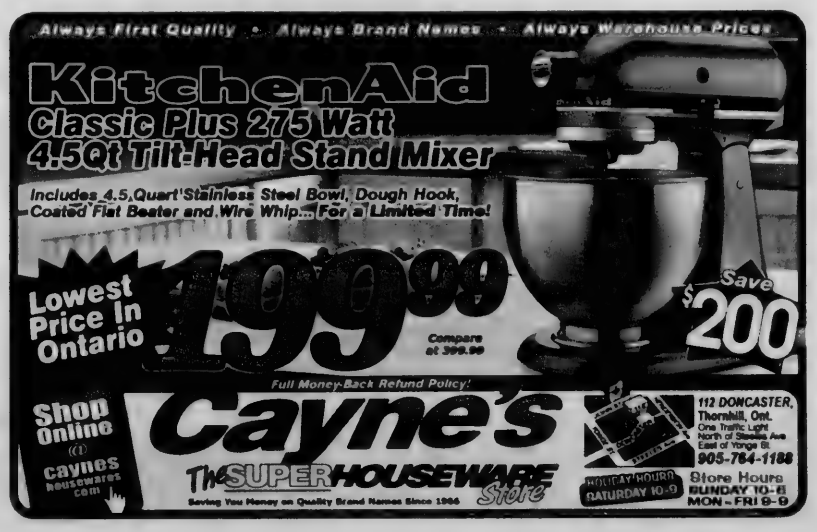
SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Chanukah Party for Singles 50+, Dec. 1, 2:30-5 p.m. $16/$20. Call ext. 3006 or email **Andrea** adaiam@srcentre.ca.

Social club for singles ages 35-50, Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. $16/$20.

Pre-registration required for both events. Call ext. 3006 or email **Andrea**, adaiam@srcentre.ca.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FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

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Happy 102nd birthday, Betty Rumberg. Lots of love from family and friends. Mazel tov till 120!

Mazel tov to our parents, Rose & Sam Pacht, on their upcoming 65th wedding anniversary! With love from all your children and grandchildren

Mazel tov to Max & Lil Ander who are celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary with their five children,14 grand children and three great-grandchildren.

Adele & Morris Alvo, Miriam & Sam Bensimon joyfully announce the engagement of their children, Mireille & Daniel. A spring wedding is planned

Mazel tov to Justin Schwartz, Grade 4 student at Associated Hebrew Schools for being a winner in the Caribou International Math Competition.

Mazel tov to Sarah Frankel who will celebrate her 100th birthday in December. Love from her children, Hershie Hannah, Marilyn, 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Just what is COR?

Kosher Living

Richard Rabkin

As the calendar year comes to a close and with it the completion of the commemoration of our 60 years serving the kosher community, it may be interesting to reflect on our origins and answer the basic question, "What is the Kashruth Council of Canada?"

The Kashruth Council of Canada, known colloquially as "COR" because of our kosher symbol, or hechsher, is a charitable non-profit community organization. We certify approximately 1,000 facilities – both local "food service establishments," which includes restaurants, caterers, supermarkets, retirement residences and the like, as well as commercial manufacturing plants in Canada and around the world that produce products that appear on the shelves of grocery stores and as base ingredients used in products worldwide. We, as well as the entire kosher community, have come a long way in our 60 years.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, kosher meat supply in Toronto was unregulated and chaotic, frustrating the local Jewish community. Rumours circulated of unscrupulous butchers passing off non-kosher meat as kosher. Indeed, writing in the 1950s, Meyer W. Gasner, who would become COR's first lay chairman, wrote, "A study has revealed that only 50 per cent of all poultry sold in Toronto as kosher, is ritually slaughtered by a shochet. The remaining 50 per cent, though treif, is sold as kosher to you at a higher price, as though it were ritually slaughtered. Thus, one out of every two fowl sold is non-kosher."

Looking for a solution, a group of 10 of Toronto's synagogue presidents held an initial meeting in 1952, headed by Gasner, through the Canadian Jewish Congress. Their ongoing discussions led to the establishment of a kashrut organization with both lay and rabbinic oversight bodies. In November 1953, they formed the Kashruth Committee of the Canadian Jewish Congress and authorized the chairman to invite rabbis to join the Vaad Hakashruth.

By 1954, the membership of the Vaad Hakashruth consisted of 12 pulpit rabbis. A sub-group, the Rabbinical Council of the Vaad Hakashruth, was composed of Rabbi G. Felder, Rabbi B. Rosensweig, Rabbi D. Schochet, and Rabbi W. Wurzburger.

Rabbi Gedalia Felder was appointed chairman of the Vaad Hakashruth, while Gasner became chairman of the lay committee. Rabbi Nachman Shemen was engaged to run the day-to-day operations of the kashrut department. After Rabbi Felder's illness, Rabbi Yitzchok Kerzner took over as chairman of the Vaad Hakashruth, while Rabbi Mordechai Levin assumed control over day-to-day operations upon Rabbi Shemen's departure.

Sixty years later, the same model is employed today. The Kashruth Council of Canada has a staff that runs day-to-day operations and reports to two oversight bodies. The rabbinic body is still called the Rabbinical Vaad Hakashruth (RVH), which now comprises 19 rabbis from various shuls in the Greater Toronto Area. The RVH is headed by Rabbi Yacov Felder, the son of COR's original RVH chairman. A core group of rabbis from the RVH called the "executive RVH" meets on a regular basis to discuss matters of policy and reports back to the larger RVH.

Similarly, COR staff report to a board of 34 lay representatives, of which 14 meet on a regular basis and act as the board's executive. Ira Marder is currently the chairman of the board.

From a financial perspective, COR is a non-profit organization. All of the fees collected go toward covering our operations. In the food service division – restaurants and caterers – we actually operate at a financial deficit – that is, our expenses are greater than our fees. We are able to marginally compensate this loss in revenue from our other divisions.

Everyone involved in working for COR does so out of a passion to serve the kosher community. But we don't view it simply as communal work. It's holy work. As long as there has been a Jewish People, we have been eating kosher food, and those of us who work and volunteer our time at the Kashruth Council of Canada intend to keep it that way.

Rabbi Gedalia Felder explained it best, writing in 1957, "I trust that the Jewish men and women of Toronto will be guided by our counsel, will help us in this holy task, enable us to restore kashruth to its sacred place, so that it can again be said, 'Israel, thou art a Holy nation to thy G-d.'"

For kosher questions, please email us at questions@cor.ca.

A kosher feast for the senses

Norene Gilletz
Special to The CJN

Kosherfest 2013 was the biggest kosher buffet I've ever attended. Dairy in the morning, meat in the afternoon.

The 25th anniversary of Kosherfest, the world's largest annual kosher-certified tradeshow, took place at the Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus, N.J., late last month. More than 6,000 kosher food and beverage buyers, industry professionals, food bloggers and cookbook authors attended the two-day show.

Thousands of kosher-certified products and services representing every category were on display, with strong international participation, including exhibitors from Canada, the United States, Israel, Italy, Argentina, Spain and more. There are more than 200,000 kosher products available today. An estimated 500 new products were scattered among the 350 booths, and nearly 150 products were submitted to the annual New Product Competition.

Menachem Lubinsky, the founder of Kosherfest, proudly spoke of the dramatic changes in the kosher food industry. Kosher has made a huge leap from the more traditional foods that many immigrants brought with them from eastern Europe to today's abundance of mainstream products that now bear kosher certification.

"Kosher today has truly become a worldwide phenomenon," Lubinsky said.

Kosher has successfully made the transition from baby boomers to today's younger generation of kosher consumers, with their appetite for new, unique products. The new-age product list at Kosherfest consisted of Facon (beef bacon), Asian sauces, hickory-smoked meats, organic Italian extra-virgin olive oil, pareve gelato, even pizza cones. Many coconut-based kosher products from the Philippines were introduced at the show for the first time. In almost every category of food, there were new products, new packaging and/or a healthier version of something that had been on the market for years.

Here's a round-up of some of the best kosher products I discovered as I wandered through the jam-packed aisles.

Matzolah (Foodman LLC): In 2012, their Maple Nut Matzo Granola won best new Passover product. This year, they introduced their nut-free, gluten-free Cranberry Orange Matzo Granola Breakfast and Nosh, made with Vermont maple syrup and cranberries.

Rye Tam Tam Crackers (Manischewitz): These crisp, pareve crackers are terrific topped with hummus or cheese.

MOLLIE KATZEN'S POTATO LATKES

(use her hint to keep batter from turning brown!)

2 lg potatoes • 1 medium-sized onion • 2 eggs • 1/4 c flour 1/2 tsp salt • Black pepper • cayenne to taste (optional) • Oil for frying

Bring a medium-sized saucepan of water to a boil. Scrub, then grate potatoes in food processor (no need to peel). Lower heat under saucepan to a simmer; drop in grated potatoes. Parboil 3 min., then drain in a colander over a sink; rinse with cold water. Drain thoroughly; transfer to a bowl. Grate onion, add to potatoes along with eggs, flour, salt, optional cayenne. Heat ½" oil in a skillet over medium heat. When hot enough to sizzle a breadcrumb on contact, spoon in ¼ cups of batter, pressing down to form thin pancakes. Keeping heat medium-high; fry on both sides until crisp and brown. Drain finished latkes paper towels (don't stack them! single layer only!); keep warm in oven.

Serve hot, with sour cream and applesauce.

The Caplan Family extends best wishes for a happy, healthy Chanukah

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Manischewitz has come a long way since it first introduced its super-sweet, ceremonial wines. Manischewitz also introduced its new recipe app at the show.

Goldbaum's Gluten Free Flatbread Crisps won an award in the best new bread, grain, cereal or cracker category. These tasty flatbreads are pareve and come simply salted, or in a range of savory flavours.

You Won't Believe It's Pareve: Corim Industries won the New Product Competition's top honours, along with best new beverage for its single-serve beverage cups designed for K-Cup brewers. Their pareve K-cups come in cappuccino, hot chocolate and chai tea flavors. Clever!

I went back for a second helping of Finchi's Decadent Chocolate Mousse, available in regular, low fat and sugar free versions. Chocolate velvet! I loved their all-natural Chocolate Brownie Torte. Both desserts are nut-free, dairy-free, and gluten-free. Finchi's won the award for best new kosher for Passover product. Well deserved.

The award for best new candy went to Schmerling for its Sugarless Rosemarie Parve & Rosemarie Milk Chocolates. Best new dessert/baked goods went to Melissa Cupcakes for its gorgeous mini cupcakes.

If you love the crispy edges around the brownies, you'll adore Sheila G's Brownie Brittle (dairy). This crunchy dairy snack comes in four fabulous flavours, including Toffee Crunch and Salted Caramel.

Grape Seed Flour (Solio): I often use grape seed oil but never saw grape seed flour before. This unique product is pareve and gluten-free. New culinary adventures ahead!

Jack's Gourmet: Last year, Jack's introduced its prize-winning Facon, which looks, cooks and tastes like bacon. This year, the company introduced several flavours of sausage patties, including spicy Mexican-style chorizo beef sausage patties, and a sweet Italian sausage patty. Good news – they will be distributed in Canada by Hartman's of Toronto.

Toronto cooking mavens Estee Kafra and Dassi Slater were promoting their popular website, www.kosherscoop.com. Kafra proudly introduced her gorgeous new cookbook, *Cooking Inspired*, an innovative recipe collection featuring 200 of the best recipes from Kosher Scoop, hot off the presses.

Cholov Yisroel yogurt wars: Mehadrin introduced its non-fat Greek Yogurt in strawberry and blueberry. Unfortunately, my sample was confiscated when I went through security at the airport! Norman's launched its Greek Yogurt Light, with 100 calories per container.

Mikee-Mac's Non-Dairy Mac & Cheeze Dinner won in the new pasta, rice, bean or soup category. Now you'll be able to serve your kids their cheezy pareve noodles while the rest of the family is enjoying brisket and potatoes. Does that mean peace at the dinner table?

Summit Point Farms introduced Hickory Smoked BBQ Beef Brisket, fully cooked, sliced and ready for reheating, in one-pound packages. It won an award in the best new meat, seafood or poultry category. Smart!

Royal Wine introduced the new Kedem fresh grape juice, with no added sugar, which is packaged like fresh-squeezed orange juice.

I tasted hot dogs made from fish, a new product from Aaron's. They were surprisingly good and didn't taste fishy at all. Frozen gefilte fish logs from A&B Fish included gluten-free, sugar-free and salmon gefilte fish options. Silky smooth and delicious.

Matt's Munchies won an award for best new sweet snack food. These gluten-free, pareve, organic fruit leather squares come in various flavours (Mango Açaí, Ginger Spice and Choco Nana). They're perfect for the lunchbox.

Osem has removed the MSG from its soup and seasoning mixes, and its broths have no MSG or additional additives. Its Israeli couscous now comes in bigger size packages, great for larger families.

The Center for Kosher Culinary Arts (CKCA) and Jack's Gourmet LLC co-sponsored an exciting Iron Chef cooking competition. Three talented local chefs were given a mystery basket of Mediterranean ingredients. The winner was Alexandre Petard, executive chef, Ladino Tapas Restaurant of Manhattan. Chef Petard is donating his $1,000 cash award to a local organization supporting Hurricane Sandy relief. I predict this talented, charismatic young chef will have a career ahead of him on the Food Network.

The next Kosherfest will take place on Nov. 11 and 12, 2014. Until we eat again...!

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CHANUKAH GREETINGS 2013

Tzedakah important part of bar/bat mitzvah celebration

Sammy Hudes
Special to The CJN

A bar or bat mitzvah is a momentous occasion in a child's life, one in which they accept a new range of adult responsibilities.

One of these responsibilities is tzedakah, the act of lending one's efforts to those in need.

Many 12- and 13-year-olds choose to dedicate their own momentous occasion to the betterment of the community, be it locally or to the greater Jewish population of the world.

Fortunately, there are many ways to do just that.

"Tying in tzedakah as part of this milestone is really quite important. It's a wonderful, powerful opportunity for children to be connected," says Lance Davis, executive director of Jewish National Fund of Toronto.

Davis says that through JNF, children are able to donate funds raised through their bar or bat mitzvah toward the organization's many projects in Israel. These include projects based on tourism, water, recreation, education, research and development, and security.

"Something in our inventory will surely speak to a child and then they can direct the funds to something in Israel so there is a real, tangible connection between the child and the land of Israel at this important milestone in their life," he says.

Michal Freedman supported Mazon Canada at her bat mitzvah.

At the children's hospital of Israel's Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem, there is currently a high demand for wheelchairs.

In late spring, the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation designed a new program aimed at bar/bat mitzvah youth called the Boomerang Project, according to Gayle Kertzman, the organization's manager of events and communications.

The project aims to raise funds for additional wheelchairs, each of which costs approximately $500. Through the Boomerang website, a child can set up his or her own personal fundraising page to collect donations from family and friends in honour of the occasion.

All participants receive an inscription of their name on the wheelchair wall plaque at the hospital. In addition, participants will be invited to play in a basketball game with an NBA alumnus later on in the year, Kertzman says.

The organization will also help children organize their own fundraising events, throughout the year, says Kertzman. She says bar and bat mitzvah children are always welcome to donate a portion of their gifts as well.

But to honour their transition to adulthood, children don't necessarily have to look as far as Israel in order to make a difference.

Through Mazon Canada's Gimmel Project, a child or family can donate an amount equal to a portion of their party's food costs, in order to fight hunger within the local community, says national executive director Ida McLaughlin.

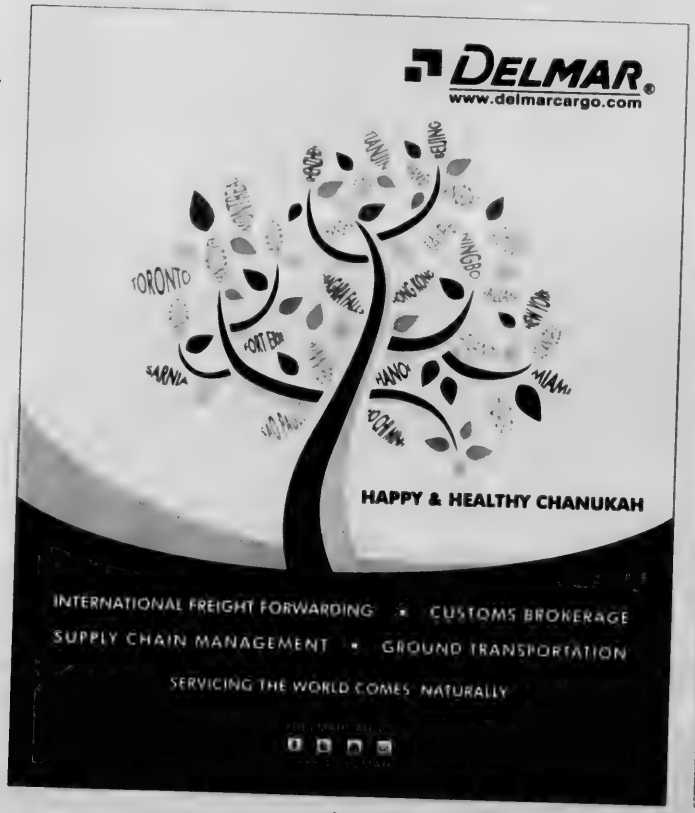
She says the suggested rate is three per cent of whatever the family pays for food costs. They can also purchase place cards for guests from the organization, McLaughlin says.

"We are fortunate that we get to sit with our families once a week around our dinner table and be thankful for what we have," McLaughlin says. "I like to be able to link the simchah with that sort of thing. The importance of giving in this particular case is to say, 'we are fortunate in that we can eat, but others are not, so let's think of them in this time of celebration.'"

Angela D'Aversa, assistant director of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, says there are a growing number of children in the community donating a portion of their gifts to charity.

The United Jewish Appeal's B'nai Tzedek Teen Philanthropy program is an outlet for those bar/bat mitzvah age or above to start honing their leadership skills. It connects Jewish teens to hands-on, volunteer opportunities with the various community agencies UJA works with, according to D'Aversa.

"The key is really connecting what the kids care about to community needs," D'Aversa says. "Most kids realize that they live a very privileged life and that it's important to give back, and especially with the rite of passage of bar or bat mitzvah, it's the beginning of responsibility and tikkun olam and tzedakah, and it really is an important time in their life to do that."



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Warding off the nightmares:

Survivor's poems tell important story

Robert Hirschfield
Special to The CJN

Miriam Steinmetz makes sure that every apartment she lives in has two exits. If the Nazis break into one, she can escape through the other. She lives in a building with a doorman in Manhattan. But it is her residence of memory, and the poetry she wrenches from it, that brought me to her door.

I heard her read one of her poems months before at the poetry workshop she was taking at the Mid-Manhattan Library. She read with her strong Hungarian accent, her lines simple, stark and declarative.

There were no carefully worked images, no attempt to add to the sum of Holocaust art. Just the desire to resurrect an event; to give suffering a coherent shape.

Listening to her read that day, I wondered where the strength came from to do such hauling and shaping. What made her begin?

We were sitting in her living room. Behind us, in the foyer, like tiny ghosts under glass, were her parents – her father, who died at Auschwitz and her mother, who survived Bergen-Belsen, but barely. She was reduced to 70 pounds of skin and bone.

Steinmetz, sturdy, open-faced, plain spoken, fit no brooding description of the perennial survivor, hidden in two orphanages while Eichmann was rounding up the Jews of Hungary for slaughter. Her mother saved her life by sticking her in an orphanage outside the Jewish ghetto in Budapest when she was three. It was hit by a Russian bomb and the children were taken in by Evangelical nuns and put in their orphanage.

"Ten years ago, when I was having terrible nightmares about the Holocaust, I'd wake up at two in the morning and turn on the TV, or read a book. Suddenly, spontaneously, I began writing poetry; it just came out of me," Steinmetz said. "I thought that writing would be a release. I could get it all out of my system. Of course, I could never get it all out of my system, but it was a relief to have an outlet for my memories. Since then, I have grown to love writing poetry."

Miriam Steinmetz

"Do you recall your first poem?" I asked.

She plucked it automatically from the stack of poems on her table. I thought of a mother who always knows where her first child is hanging out.

The poem was called Winter 1944, Budapest Jew House. It opens with these lines:

Do not be afraid my little dove
Said the man in black to me
As my mother held me tight.
In the cold basement of the Jew House.
Do not be afraid now, it is only gold I'm after.
Later, I will take lives
I already took your childhood.

The theme of the man in black is one she would return to years later in her poetry workshop. I heard her read a variation of that poem, fitted with new details: "battered suitcases," "coal briquettes," "a discarded toilet."

"When you tell someone they killed a million and a half children, it blows your mind. Who can imagine that? One child they can imagine."

Continued on page B 5

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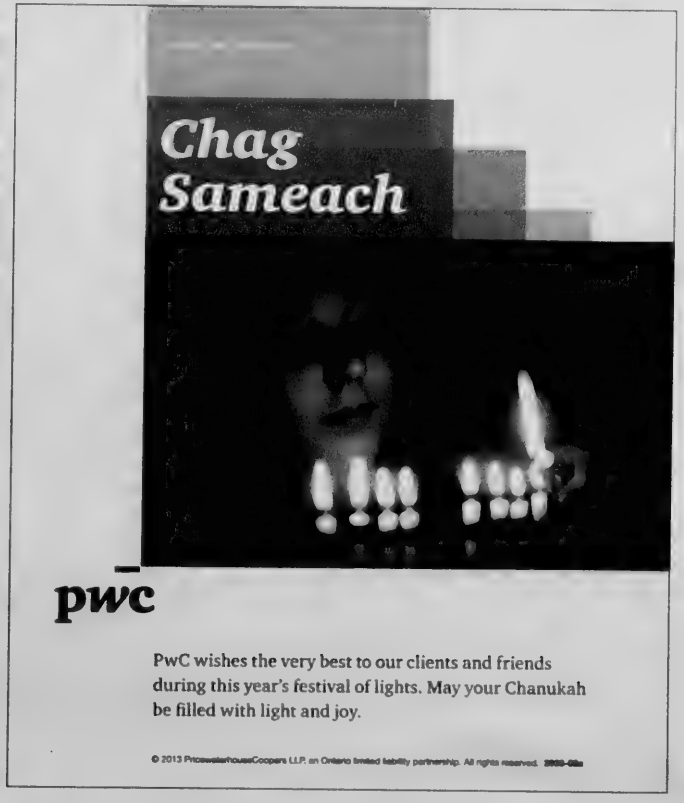
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By remembering for one, she remembers for many

Continued from page B4

I stood shivering and crying
for my Mother, for a hug.
Scratching my scalp, home for a squatter
family of lice being evicted by burning liquid
poured on, dripping into my eyes.
Pushed under the shower's cold deluge,
I washed away my tears,
for my hair, for my yesterday.

She was four years old when the war ended, and her grandmother came to claim her. Reunion with her mother would take a while longer. She was recuperating from the effects of starvation and other aspects of bodily ruin in the British-run displaced persons hospital.

Laughing conspiratorially, Steinmetz drew me into her memory: "I didn't know she was my grandmother. I didn't recognize her. But I let her hug me, because then I could keep eating the raisins she had in her paper bag. In the orphanage, I was always so hungry."

She writes of the experience in her poem, *Raisin Nagyamama (Grandmother):*

I left the orphanage with her
Not daring to ask does she have more
Food for me to eat?
How long will this new stranger
Keep me?
Where am I going?
Who am I?

It hadn't really occurred to me, so used to thinking of the Holocaust in over-reaching terms, that children like her had to begin again from ground zero of near starvation.

Steinmetz's poetry reminds me of the lines in Czeslaw Milosz's *Ars Poetica*:

The purpose of poetry is to remind us/ how difficult it is to remain one person.

By remembering for one, Steinmetz remembers for many. She was never much interested in poetry. She comes to poetry through the roots of her own tree.

It is an unusual tree even for a Holocaust survivor. When the Hungarian Revolution broke out in 1956, Steinmetz found herself hiding from Soviet troops in the same basement she and her mother had hid from the Germans.

Her mother was living with her second husband in Sopron on the Austro-Hungarian border, over 200 kilometres away, so Steinmetz again had to endure maternal separation. In 1957, the family migrated to America, where Steinmetz eventually married a Holocaust survivor and raised a son and a daughter.

Sitting with her, whose poems are unpublished, made me realize how forgettable much of our published poetry is by comparison.

The unashamed nakedness of memory (*I majored in survival/at the university of pain*), poetry's terrible sacred room is her literary home.

Steinmetz has read her poems at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York. Poems of hers were also read two years ago at the Lincoln Square Synagogue on Tisha b'Av, also in New York. I find it apt that she is a poet in the great oral tradition, telling her epic story in verse to her community. Because she holds no literary title or reputation, and comes across as quite ordinary, she makes it easy for you to hear her story, to climb into her skin, to contemplate the randomness that turned her from potential char heap to storyteller.

"In my poems, there is only what I saw with my own eyes. For many people, their memories of childhood were visits to the park, playing on a swing. For me, it was looking out the window of the orphanage and seeing a man hanging from a tree," she said. "Years later, during the revolution, again I saw men hanging from trees shot to death. I still have nightmares that the Germans are going to come and kill me and hang me from a tree."

Raised in a secular family estranged from Jewish orthodoxy, Steinmetz became religious as she grew older. Faith, like a life fully lived, fell into her category of sweet revenge against Hitler. She was like a partisan who insisted on fighting her singular guerrilla war long after the war was over.

Her poem, *You Up There*, documents her evolution from a faith of reaction to a faith of reflection:

Walking in the path of Your protection
I did not run away
But leave my footprints.

I asked Steinmetz about the reliability of memory after so many years.

"Can you imagine what it was like, being left by your mother in an orphanage, among strangers, during a war, at the age of three? Every day was a nightmare. Wouldn't you remember?" she said.

We did not understand a thing
only the feeling of endurance and loss
in the silence of hidden tears...

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Find a hidden Jewish history lesson in Sicily

Bill Genova
Special to The CJN

Jews have been in Sicily since the second century BCE, however, unlike in the north of Italy, Spain and other areas, there are no prominent physical signs from which you could infer that Jews once inhabited this island, located just off the boot of Italy in the Mediterranean.

In 1492, just before the Spanish Expulsion (Sicily was then part of the Spanish Empire), up to 50,000 Jews may have been living there, centred not just in the cities of Palermo, Messina, Trapani and Siracusa, but in more than 50 towns.

From the eighth to 15th centuries Jews survived through good times and bad under the many occupiers of Sicily. They were active in the silk and cloth trade and in the practice of medicine. The majority were artisans – weavers, dyers, cobblers, silver workers, jewelry workers, blacksmiths and carpenters. There were also philosophers, doctors and advisers to whoever was in power.

One can see throughout Sicily signs of the past, from the initial aboriginal people, Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Arab, Norman, Swabians, Argonese/Spanish and even American and English, but there's no Jewish indication in sight.

Bill Genova, left, with Josephine Asaro, a Sicilian guide, and Filippo Ganci, president of the Jewish Return Committee, stand by a Jewish monument in Salemi, Sicily.

No synagogue, ghetto or building could readily be indentified as Jewish. But this is beginning to change.

Sicilians are now making an effort formally and informally to discover their Jewish past. Numerous hidden objects, hidden places, little centres and hamlets that were once home to Jews are now being rediscovered.

With Pope John Paul II reaching out to the Jews by his visit to Rome's synagogue and the retraction of the idea that Jews were the Christ killers, an atmosphere of interest now prevails.

To this end, scholars, archeologists, communities and amateurs are increasingly uncovering the Jewish past of Sicily.

If you visit Syracuse you will find in the main courtyard to the new Bellomo Gallery three sizable Jewish tombstones from the 15th century. Fifteen years ago in this same city when a building was being renovated, they discovered a mikvah that is now thought to be the oldest in Europe. In Palermo, signs indicating the district where the Jews had lived are posted in Italian, Hebrew and Arabic. Also in Palermo, in the Zisa, a summer Norman palace, you will find a tablet written in four languages – including Hebrew. In Erice's museum you will find a menorah on a clay lamp. In 1992, the town of Salemi issued a proclamation inviting the Jews who had been expelled some 500 years before in 1492 to return. They erected a marker with Jewish writing to emphasize that Jews were welcome.

In Spain, out of 200,000 Jews, 150,000 accepted banishment rather than convert to Christianity. In Sicily, a different story unfolded. Scholars believe that most of those leaving were poorer Jews while the richer Jews, not wanting to leave their property and good lives, opted to stay and converted, some turning their back on their Jewish past and others continuing their Judaism in a hidden manner.

In Salemi, of the 30 Jewish families, only four families opted to leave, a special case and not typical. In San Marco, 723 out of 728 Jews preferred to leave. In Castronovo 120 of 130. Who knows how many people of Jewish origin walk among Sicilians without knowing anything about their Jewish ancestors?

When the expulsion edict came down, the Spanish viceroy did not want to see the Jewish communities leave the island. At first, he delayed the edict and petitioned the Spanish king and queen not to enforce it. He was joined by many of the aristocracy and business interests in Sicily.

But, on Jan. 12, 1493, the Jews left. There are recorded stories of Christian friends weeping at the docks as their Jewish friends left by ship for Calabria, Greece or North Africa. Some even went to Rome, where the pope surprisingly adopted a protective attitude toward the new arrivals. Sicilians did not share Spain's severe damnation of Jews.

The tempo of interest in Sicily's Jewish past continues to increase with scholarly research and tours now being offered. Recently in Salemi, in the province of Trapani, a convention was organized to discuss the historical importance of Jewish communities in Sicily. The week-long convention, attended by important Catholic and lay personalities, represented a solid beginning that continues to grow with the help of documents in archives and libraries throughout Sicily.

The Jews in the recent past did return to Sicily and made a brief return on the eve of World War II, but the population left or were interned. Today, there are Jews once again in Sicily, and with some detective work, you can contact them in Palermo and Siracusa in order to attend services.

Jewish tours are offered by Rabbi Barbara Aiello and Bill Genova of Genova Tours. Visit genovatours.com for more info.

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Social group avoids 'the elephant in the room'

Shalom-Salaam lets Jews, Arabs and Muslims get to know each other

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

They go bowling and on picnics. They play billiards and get together for potlucks. They go out to dinner.

Food plays a big role. After all, breaking bread figures large in all social interaction.

Getting to know one another socially, whether over a dish of baba ghanoush or a pool table, is the point of a group called Shalom-Salaam Toronto. Formed in 2008 in the wake of Israel's Operation Cast Lead incursion into Gaza, its mission statement is self-explanatory:

"Before Canadian Arabs and Jews can stand as one for peace and justice, we need to overcome racism, prejudice, intolerance and animosity which have accumulated in our communities. The first step of our program is to provide an opportunity for Arabs, Jews and Muslims to interact in an atmosphere that promotes learning about each other as human beings rather than as creatures with exceptionally strong political opinions and inadvertent tendencies to discount suffering of the other side."

Put another way, it becomes harder to shut out, hurt or kill someone you have come to know, maybe even like. Seeing "the other" as human is the first step to peace, or at least, tolerance, members believe.

There's no heavy lifting here, no heated debate about Palestinians, Jewish settlements or the peace process. Being distanced from the Middle East conflict "allows us, at least theoretically, to be more objective," the group says. "We need to overcome our tribal mentality and openly acknowledge suffering the other side is experiencing."

With close to 300 members – even that term seems too formal; they're more like Facebook friends – the group has grown precisely because it avoids the standard controversies.

Shalom-Salaam Toronto co-founders Urz Heer and Steven Holt *(Ron Csillag photo)*

"There are so many other groups out there that debate," said Shalom-Salaam co-founder Urz Heer, a 44-year-old Muslim. "We wanted to talk about the issues but we really wanted an end-goal in mind, and that was that we all want peace in the Middle East. We wanted to figure out how to navigate those discussions with that goal in mind. We've had people who have said, 'I want to tell everyone why I'm right.' This group is not for them." This evening, 23 members meet and chat in a Turkish restaurant in Downsview over plates of hummus and Mideast salads.

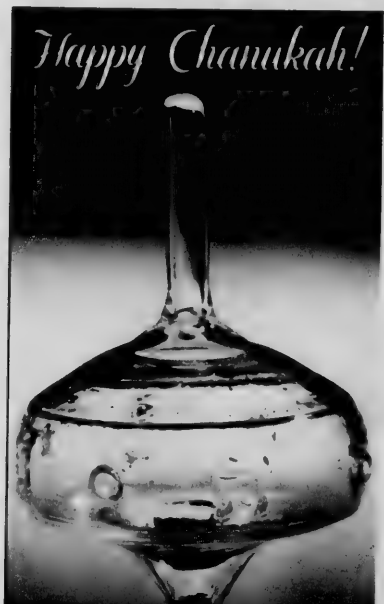
They seem evenly divided between Jews and Muslims, with a smattering of Christians, and hail from a host of countries: Jordan, Algeria, Israel, Albania, Bangladesh, Egypt, South Africa. The atmosphere is cordial, even fun.

One by one, they rise, introduce themselves and state the reasons for their presence, which are remarkably similar. Starting from a position of empathy and shedding hidebound biases are common themes.

"We're very grassroots," explains Heer, who works for a local member of Parliament. "We don't have a consulate or government backing us. Through meeting like us, we've established a lot of friendships. Sometimes the conversation has been heated. There has been crying tears of joy, tears of sadness. But this is how we grow a grassroots movement. This is how we grow as people."

She calls it taking "baby steps."

Continued on page B10



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Not an issues based group

Continued from page B8

The CJN asks whether the group believes Israel should exist as a Jewish state, and whether it supports the boycott, sanctions and divestment campaign.

"It has not been a conversation topic," Heer replies.

There's been discussion, she adds, on whether Israel and the Palestinian territories "should be one state, two or even three states. [But] I don't think anyone has said Israel should not exist. I think we all have the understanding that Israel is a state."

As for the BDS movement, "it's never come up."

She concedes it all sounds a bit soft and fluffy.

"We're not an issues-based group. We want to find ways to co-exist, here and abroad. We have an elephant in the room. We just have not yet acknowledged it. Our meetings have been a mix of social and conversation. Once you break down social barriers, it's easier to get to the hard issues."

The group aims for social get-togethers monthly. At quarterly meetings, usually held in a meeting-room environment, discussions on the Mideast conflict itself are moderated "so that everyone continues to grow in respect and understanding for the views of others," explains Shalom-Salaam co-founder Steven Holt.

But even socially, strong views are not avoided. One South African woman, who said she was raised in "a very conservative Jewish" family, now believes she was "brainwashed" into holding certain views about the Israeli narrative. Another South African Jewish woman laments that a close relative has called her a "self-hating Jew" for her participation in the group.

There are no comparable stories from the Muslims in the room.

But they're mirrored by Holt, who told those gathered that he started the group because "I just couldn't stand it anymore. I couldn't stand reading the paper and feeling powerless to do anything.

"I grew up in a family where Jews were always right and everybody else was 'them.' There was a subtle understanding that we were the good guys and always did the right thing."

Holt, 59, related that while travelling in Morocco, "some people actually wanted to kill me because I was Jewish. So I've experienced that level of irrational hate."

He repeated that this is not a forum for debate. And Holt is content to put Middle East history behind him.

"I don't really have to know about what's happened in the past so much. I know that's a contentious statement. I know terrible things have happened on both sides. We could watch and argue for hundreds and thousands more years. Or we can just say 'I've had enough.'

"This is huge and simple. It doesn't take much."

RISING STARS: Religious Jewish singers, Gil, left, and Arie Gat are achieving fame for their performance of Simon and Garfunkel's *The Sound of Silence* on the Israeli TV show *The Rising Star*. While performing mainstream music on television might seem less than kosher for such observant Jews, these guys say it's all good. "We checked out the whole issue of participating in the show in Jewish law," Arie said. "It's not like we jumped into rumbling waters without checking the temperature. From the perspective of Jewish law, there's no problem with what we are doing." That said, the brothers, who don't own TVs themselves, haven't told their children about what they're doing. Most of their friends and neighbours are in the dark as well.

[Ronen Ackerman/Keshet broadcasting/Israel Sun photo]

Happy Chanukah

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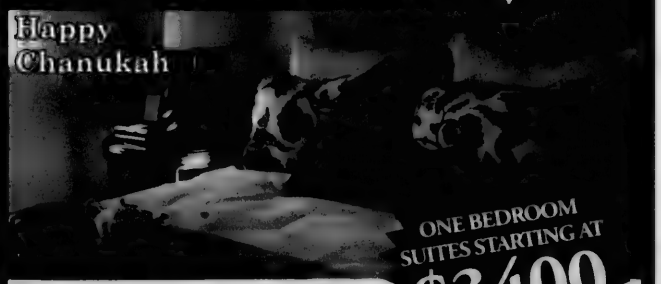

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Stars visit Israel on cultural and historical tour

Abigail Klein Leichman
Israel 21C

"I'd love to be in a romantic comedy in Tel Aviv because we had an amazing nightlife there, or maybe I could play Cleopatra at Masada," mused *Sullivan & Son* co-star Vivian Bang on the final day of her first trip to Israel.

Bang was part of a Hollywood contingent of visitors led by veteran actress Lea Thompson (*Switched at Birth, Back to the Future*) and Thompson's husband, director Howard Deutch, under the auspices of America's Voices in Israel, a project of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

The cultural, historical and religious adventure also included C.S. Lee, co-star of the cult hit TV series *Dexter*; and Anson Mount, lead actor in the TV show *Hell on Wheels*; as well as Thompson and Deutch's daughters – Zoey Deutch, star of the forthcoming movie adaptation of *Vampire Academy: Blood Sisters*; and Madelyn Deutch, a musician and screenwriter.

Guided by America's Voices for Israel director Irwin Katsof and hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, El Al Israel Airlines, David InterContinental and Inbal Hotels, the group toured the Golan Heights and Gaza border regions, explored Israel's high-tech and boutique wine industries, visited Masada and the Old City of Jerusalem, and partied long into the night in Tel Aviv.

Lee was mobbed by Israeli admirers wherever he went. "I had no idea *Dexter* was so popular in Israel," said the Korean-American actor. "It was great meeting all the fans."

Speaking with members of the press at the Inbal in Jerusalem, each participant told ISRAEL21c there had been surprising elements about the tour – from the "resort vibe of the beaches" (Howard Deutch) to the consistently excellent wines (Lee).

"I was surprised by how much everyone enjoys their life here," says Madelyn Deutch. "My sister observed that people burn their candles here and eat their candies. In [Los Angeles,] we hide our nuts like squirrels and don't enjoy our day-to-day as much as Israelis do."

Her mom was amazed by "the diversity of experiences you can have here in such a short time – swimming in the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, all the museums, the desert, so many interesting people and perspectives.

"There is such an ancient feeling here that speaks to your heart in a way that no other place that I've ever been has."

For Bang, a visit to the new media

C.S.Lee who portrayed Vince Masuka on the TV show *Dexter* was one of a group of actors who visited Israel.

department of the Israel Defence Forces shattered her "grim misconception" about the military in Israel.

"I didn't realize that going into the army here is actually kind of like a college where you get placed in different groups and learn different skills," she told ISRAEL21c.

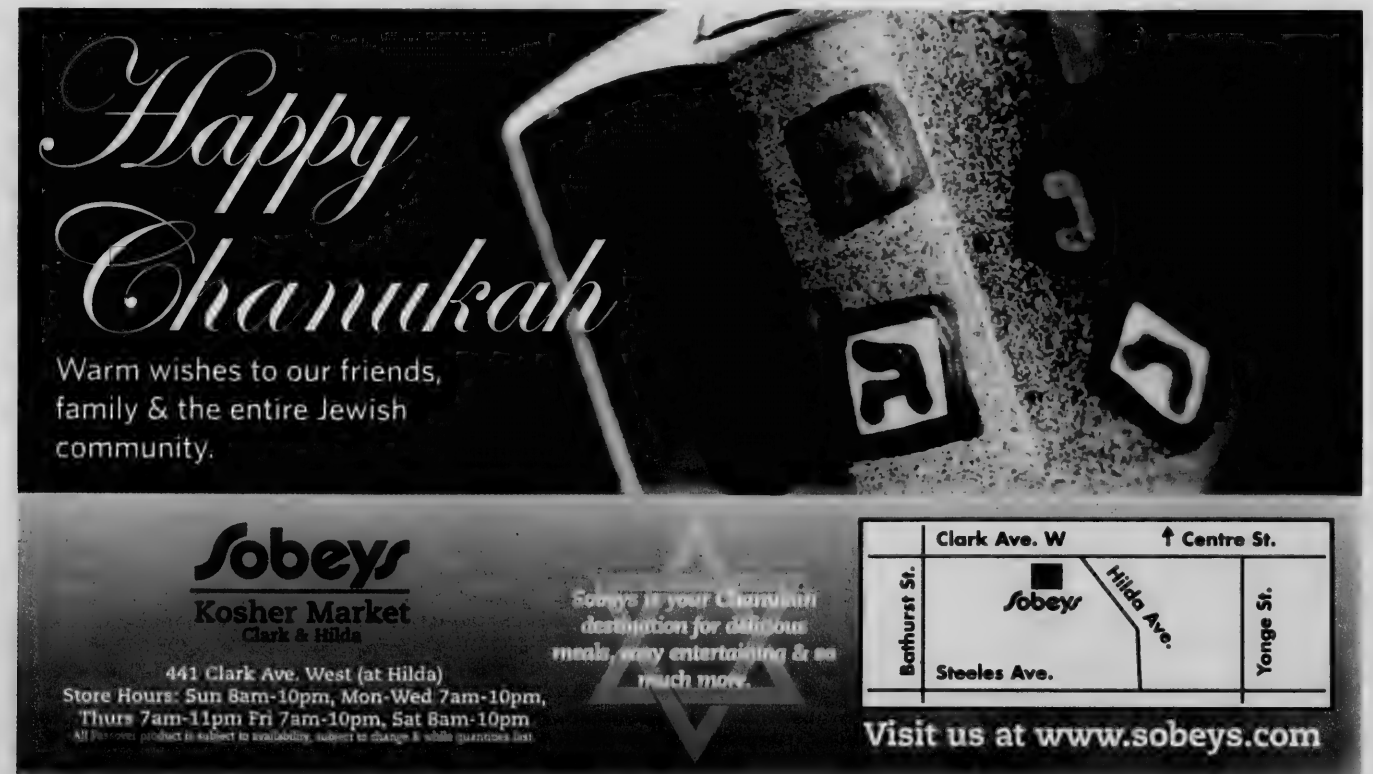
"It was so refreshing to meet these really intelligent young people from all over the world, coming to make a difference. We met people from New Jersey, Chicago, New Zealand, Belgium, France – all so smart and so enthusiastic, showing us their Twitter sites and Facebook sites. The army here is more like an educational process."

Mount related that what most impressed him was "the clearly visible effects of responsible land use. When you go to the Golan Heights, where they have a very proud wine business, and then you go to the Syrian border, you can very clearly see the dividing line between Israel and Syria due to the colour. Israel has cultivated green, while Syria is still brown. It makes you realize this is really fertile territory and I had no idea about that."

The *Hell on Wheels* lead actor got introduced to the Israeli film industry by viewing the Academy Award-nominated *Footnote* en route to Israel. "I will make a concerted effort to see more Israeli films," pledged Mount, who said Israel had long been on his "top five" list of new places to visit.

Madelyn Deutch, who just completed a screenplay to star her sister, said she would love to do some of the shooting in Israel.

"Parts of Tel Aviv would double for New York insanely well," she said. "There's a similar vibe and urban feel. It would be awesome to shoot some exteriors for my new film there."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Visit the Culinary Bazaar at the First Station

Sybil Kaplan
Special to The CJN

In September 1892, the Jerusalem train station opened as the first and last stop of the Jerusalem-Jaffa line. It closed in 1998 and the station offices, ticket office and hall and its 3,000-square-metre concourse sat deserted until "First Station" was renovated and restored this past year.

The site opened in May and is a venue for seven eateries, a family bazaar, a design fair for 30 designers, a running shoes store, an activity centre for children and a visitors store plus a myriad of activities running seven days a week.

For those interested in food, a tour of the kosher Culinary Bazaar is a must. Nir Zook, the 37-year-old Israeli-born chef, was our guide. Zook has worked in restaurants in Israel, France and the United States since the age of 13 and currently owns three restaurants in Jaffa – Cordelia, upscale, candlelit and romantic, its little sister Noa and the Jaffa Bar.

When Avi Murdoch, partner in the management team and entrepreneur, created the idea of making the old train station a centre for culture and food, he approached Zook with the idea of a culinary bazaar in what was once the storage room for goods being shipped to Tel Aviv.

On the patio is a seating area with clever stools made from used tires with grass-like seats, and a wonderful wagon with hot corn on the cob cooking. A restaurant will also soon open opposite this area.

Next to the seating area is a bar with drinks and produce for sale on one side as well as a candy bar with at least 27 different candies, nine spices and 28 dried fruit, nuts and snack varieties.

On the opposite side of the bar, is the booth of Michal Havirian and her husband from Moshav Nocham (near Bet Shemesh, 15 miles from Jerusalem). The booth sells 50 to 60 different kinds of organic produce, freshly picked for only a day's sales. Kale, baby leeks, lettuces and other vegetables are sold in their natural state with their leaves attached. Particularly tasty was the raw corn on the cob and the Napoli pumpkin.

Inside the old building are 10 kiosks, including a booth where fresh falafel and hummus is sold. Next is Itzhik, who sells 150 to 200 kosher cheeses and 150 different kinds of wine from 30 wineries around Jerusalem plus one from the Golan. Itzhik also operates a cheese and olive stall in Jerusalem's produce market, Machaneh Yehudah.

Another shop sells pots and pans imported from France; it will soon sell knives and operate a knife-sharpening service.

Nir Elimelech operates a fish shop. On the day we visited, he had sea bream, striped bass, red mullet and grouper delivered twice a day, and imported salmon from Norway, delivered twice a week. Oriental condiments to go with the fish are also for sale. Soon fishing accessories will be available, and one can organize a fishing trip with him.

Another stall sells halvah, techinah and baklava, and at the pizza/pasta stand, one can eat or buy fresh pasta to take home.

Gruda's Bakery, made by Leon Gruda, pastry chef, has breads, cakes, tortes, cookies, quiches and croissants to eat here or take home, or, as they say in Israel, "take away."

At Daskalide's, one can buy one Belgian chocolate out of the 30 varieties offered or buy entire boxes. Chocolate chips, all sizes of gifts items and gift baskets are also available.

Tom runs the coffee shop, Café Barista, where beans are roasted. One can drink the house coffee, made from five different kinds of beans, or take home a bag of coffee.

For ice coffee enthusiasts, the beans are soaked in water for 24 hours then separated and the liquid strained. This is poured over crushed ice resulting in a wonderful tasting cold coffee.

Snacking in the Culinary Bazaar is a fun experience; wandering through the bazaar to buy foods for home is definitely an entertaining and enjoyable time one wants to repeat on a regular basis.

Former Jerusalem train station is now a hub of activity. [*Barry A. Kaplan photo*]

Vignettes from a visit to Israel

Synagogues, parking tickets and ancient history

Donald Carr
CJN President

The new synagogue:

A very few kilometres north of the Egyptian border, about the same distance to the east from the Gaza Strip – not far from where Gilad Schalit had been kidnapped – the paved, but pretty well deserted road bears a signpost pointing to Bnai Netzarim. There's nothing but rolling sand to the right and to the left.

There is a bend in the road and before us are fields of green with tented hothouses stretching in ordered lines, parting the sea of sand.

Yes, these hothouses are of the same design and purposes as those left behind in Gaza in the area known as Gush Kativ, by the inhabitants of Moshav Netzarim, who were uprooted when Sharon's government voluntarily "withdrew" everyone from Gaza. That was intended as a token of good faith towards the Palestinian Authority.

Those hothouses, with the latest technology in growing crops, which were exported to Europe, were the ones wantonly and foolishly destroyed by the Gaza Arabs. Whether they wanted no part of the available means to pull themselves out of their abject poverty, or whether their mindset did not permit them to use what Israeli ingenuity and cutting edge agricultural knowledge could yield for them, nobody knows.

We turn to the left and, suddenly, before us are paved roads and curbs, laid out in a way reminiscent of a new North York subdivision. However, there are no newly built houses. Dotted among the roadways are those tasteless, utilitarian, oblong, white pre-fabs, which one could always see across the Israel of the 1950s and 1960s.

Children's toys, clotheslines, some parked cars, an empty playpen here and there. A mother, enfolding a baby in her arm and holding onto an older child, who clings to a third and a fourth – a natural chain of family progression.

This is Bnei Netzarim – the children of Netzarim. Here, many of the former members of Gaza's Netzarim, their children and their children's children resettled together – determined against what seem like overwhelming odds, they established new roots – literally. Bit by bit, they carved out a new home and a new source of bounty, which they and their predecessors had proven could be drawn from what looked like a barren and heartless territory, with the sun beating down from a cloudless sky.

"Lucky that you weren't here yesterday," says one of our hosts. "We had one of our real sandstorms."

We turn another corner and see, standing on different lots, a few partially built and some completed, modern, one-storey concrete homes.

The site of an ancient temple built by Herod in honour of the emperor Augustus at Sebastia National Park.

This is a religious community. One of the first permanent buildings had been the school, which had served as a place of worship.

The purpose of our visit was not just to marvel at what had been achieved, but to attend the dedication of a new synagogue – a *chanukat ha'beit knesset* – with some connection to Toronto.

On the edge of the community – literally rising from the sands – stood the modern structure, beautifully designed and overlooking the whole moshav.

Continued on page B 14

The dilemma of getting a parking permit in Israel

Continued from page B 13

The Toronto connection? With the constant aid and encouragement of World Mizrachi – embodied, of course, in that resolute octogenarian, Kurt Rothschild, who recently made aliyah from Toronto – funds had been provided from four sources.

First, a family from Florida provided some "seed money." Next, the estate of Freda Fejer, a survivor of the Shoah and long-time resident of Toronto, had donated a substantial amount for the construction. The family of the late Herb Green, a well-known Toronto developer and philanthropist, had provided the funds for the most beautiful, modern Aron Kodesh and bimah, finished in exquisite polished and carved wood. Finally, a bank had extended a loan, which ensured the completion of the building – money which the moshav will have to repay.

After the affixing of the mezuzah to the main entrance doors, the community and guests moved into the main prayer hall, designed to accommodate many hundreds of worshipers.

As visiting dignitaries spoke, I looked around. From the soaring ceiling a cluster of modern decorated glass cubes of light cascaded above the bimah. The balcony railing is a delicate fretwork, depicting many designs, behind a glass frontispiece. Light streamed in from three-storey high windows, adding to the illumination from the recessed ceiling fixtures.

Typical of so many Israeli synagogues, the seating is in movable lines, with a comfortable "theatre-type" seat, a hinged wooden book rest in front, covering a deep recess to store siddurim, chumashim and, perhaps, tallitot.

This community of genuine agronomists, agriculturalists, farmers, students and quiet torchbearers of "Torah" has arisen again from the desolation which most would regard as an unyielding, useless scrap of land. As they did from Gaza, they are exporting bumper crops of fruits and vegetables to Britain, to Germany and – hard to imagine – potatoes to Russia.

These are today's Israeli chalutzim, or pioneers, "settlers", in the most positive of terms.

Jerusalem parking permits:

Those who have read my earlier accounts, will recall that in order to park in the square in front of the apartment building where we live, one has to have a municipal parking permit on the car's windshield. Otherwise – ticket!

Originally, unless you owned the car, there was no way of getting a permit. Thus, if you had a rental car, you either parked a long way away or got a ticket.

Latterly, the municipality started issuing permits for rented cars, so long as you brought into the appropriate office the car's official licence, your rental agreement, your passport and your driver's licence. You then got a permit for the rental period. If you wanted a permit in the future, you had to remember to peel the permit off the windshield before returning the car and keep it in a safe place. It had to be produced with the other documents next time.

We arrived in Israel during chol hamoed Sukkot. In Jerusalem, nearly all businesses close for the whole of Sukkot. So does city hall. Thus, no permit. But parking tickets still get issued during chol hamoed Sukkot. What to do?

The Byzantine Church in ancient Sebastia. Some Christians believe it's the site of John the Baptist's beheading.

Our good friend and former Torontonian, Stephen Glazer, has a position with the City of Jerusalem, similar to that of an ombudsman. He scratched his head and spoke to someone who manned the emergency city hall phone. The only hopeful solution was for him to write a long essay in Hebrew – for me to place in the car window – describing my predicament and promising to get a permit as soon as city hall opened after Sukkot. The parking officer was supposed to read it and desist from ticketing my rental car.

It worked!

Continued on page B15

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Excavations have revealed vestiges of the kings' palace

Continued from page B14

Sukkot ended on Thursday. City hall did not open on Friday. Then there was Shabbat.

Early Sunday morning I went to the appropriate office, but the computer was down. After a half hour, it was up and running and I took my documents to the proper booth.

The policeman there looked at the papers, then at the computer screen.

"You are turning the car back on Friday," he said. I agreed.

"That's less than one week," he said, "and we can only issue permits for a week or longer."

I started to tear out some of my remaining hair. I was back in a catch-22 .

I, quietly, full of control, pointed out my inability to get the permit on any of those eight or nine days that the office was closed. He stared at me. He thought for a while. I was afraid that he was going to ask someone else in the office and that we would have one of those long debates. "I suppose it's OK," he said, with a frown. I got the "short term" permit.

Sebastia:

Sebastia is an Arab village, with orchards and buildings sprinkled along a steep hillside in Shomron, about eight kilometres from Nablus (the biblical Shechem). Quite unremarkable in itself, its highest reaches lead, by way of an unpaved, rock-strewn track, to the remains of a city first built in 879 BCE.

This city – the capital of Israel – was referred to in several places in the Book of Kings and was captured and occupied, successively, by Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Macedonians, Hasmoneans, Romans and Byzantines.

There has been construction, destruction, rebuilding, further devastation and yet more rebuilding over a period of almost 1,000 years, making this one of the most interesting sites of the Israel National Parks Authority.

Excavations have revealed vestiges of the palace and fortress of the kings of Israel. Superimposed on those are the remains of Hellenistic walls and round towers. What are most evident are the later Roman walls, columns, towers, colonnades, theatre, temple and stadium.

There's a two-person performance in what is left of the Roman theatre during the day. Two actors, dressed in period costume, engage in a 15-minute humorous dialogue in Hebrew, expounding – I am told – on the times which they are meant to represent.

A performance was given while we were there. Only our son, daughter-in-law and our grandchildren could understand it. We took their word on what it was about.

Sebastia
National Park

Sebastia National Park is one of the most interesting sites of the Israel National Parks Authority.

Walking back to the parking lot when it was over, we were passed by one of the actors, on his way to the refreshment bar. Just at that time, I was wondering out loud how many performances a day were presented.

"Five," he said, overhearing me. Even in his costume, as he spoke and half turned around, he seemed familiar. I suddenly realized that he was the same actor, who, last year, appeared in flowing white robes as a Samaritan at the top of Har Gerizim, the ancient home of the Samaritans on the other side of Nablus, and about whom I had written last year.

He, too, recognized us. He had been a youth leader in the past and had visited Camp Ramah in Ontario, knew Toronto well and had pleasant memories of visiting Beth Tzedec Congregation.

As I waited in the parking lot for the rest of the family, who inevitably had to visit the gift store, I noticed a number of Arab men were gathering in front of a square-shaped single-storey building, which stood at the top of the village and flew a Palestinian flag.

The Israeli army and border police squads, who constantly patrol this area, also saw what was happening. They all sauntered slowly from their vehicles toward the building.

Continued on page B16

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Don't make assumptions based on your predisposition

Continued from page B 15

As the local group grew ominously larger, they were joined by a video cameraman, two youngsters, each holding large placards written in red and black Arabic letters, as well as by someone with a microphone and a loudspeaker.

In response to the one with the loudspeaker, the group started to chant in time. The youths held up their placards, hoisting them up and down. The cameraman started to record everything, exhorting the crowd to shout louder and move closer to each other.

What was going to happen? I looked over at the young soldiers and policemen. They were now standing in a rough, widely-spaced semicircle, facing the demonstrators. They did nothing to interfere and made no threatening moves. They seemed, like me, to be interested spectators, although their weapons and shoulder mounted radios somehow belied such innocence. I expected some move.

However, the demonstration was over as quickly as it started and the men started to disperse. The Israelis moved off, in groups of two or three, to resume their patrolling.

Knowing full well that the Arabs had been demonstrating against Israeli "occupation," I asked one of the teen-aged soldiers what it had all been about.

"They are," he said, "complaining about the Palestinian Authority, which is preventing them from expanding or building houses in their village."

The moral to my story? Don't make assumptions based on your predisposition, learned from television and the newspapers.

As I said, it was chol hamoed Sukkot and our family had packed a lunch, hoping that we might find a sukkah in one of the Jewish communities dotted around Samaria.

Our granddaughter, Aliza, on leave from Israel Defence Forces, saw the soldiers and policemen in the middle of their hot, unrelenting eight-hour shift. They were unsheltered from the blazing sun. They were perspiring and covered in dust. She turned to her father and pointed out how unlikely it was that we would find a sukkah and that we would probably have to wait until we got back to Jerusalem to eat. She strongly suggested that we give our bottled drinks, which were on ice, as well as our cookies, to the soldiers and policemen. They gratefully accepted those gifts and made short shrift of them.

It was another example of how the populace looks upon its people's army and the bond linking all Israelis.

SMART PARKING: The owner of this Smart car found a novel way to park it. Parking in Israel's dense streets is an obstacle that locals and tourists have to deal with.

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Education a common theme for adult bar and bat mitzvahs

Lila Sarick
CJN Staff

Some never had a bat mitzvah because they were girls, while some were raised in non-Jewish or thoroughly secular homes. For others, a family trauma pre-empted the ritual coming of age. And still others want a re-do, to approach the milestone with the wisdom and intention of an adult, not a newly minted teenager.

The motivations for adults to become bar and bat mitzvah are as varied and numerous as the individuals themselves.

Bar and bat mitzvah programs for adults are found in every stream of Judaism, reflecting the diversity of Jewish education. Nearly every participant says the experience of becoming a bar or bat mitzvah as an adult is a profoundly emotional event.

Of course, rabbis point out, Jews become bar and bat mitzvah simply by turning 12 or 13 years old. But that doesn't mean that adults long past braces and teenage awkwardness aren't hungering to reach the milestone, but on their own terms.

Debbie Gilbert, 58, celebrated her bat mitzvah 18 years ago at Congregation Darchei Noam, a Reconstructionist synagogue.

"I have two daughters who were approaching their own bat mitzvahs, and I felt I should go first," she said.

"As a woman claiming equal ritual opportunity, I needed to step up and take on the obligation. It was an opportunity to claim our place in Judaism."

Undertaking an adult bat mitzvah (the majority of participants are women) is a rigorous process. At Darchei Noam, and other liberal synagogues, students typically attend a year-long class, participate in a Shabbaton, do a tikkun olam project and prepare to lead the Shabbat morning service, including reading Torah and a Haftorah, and delivering a sermon.

Gilbert recalls her group's bat mitzvah fondly.

"The sanctuary was overflowing. It was a time of men and women celebrating together. It was not a ceremony of anger, it was not a ceremony of bitterness. It was sweet, dancing with the Torah."

At Darchei Noam, Rabbi Tina Grimberg interviews candidates and then designs the curriculum around what they wish to learn and the gaps in their education.

"It builds Jewish knowledge, it links people to their ancestral tradition as well as contemporary realities," she said.

The program also builds community, she said. "Many people walk away with very special friendships... People have become more involved in synagogue and had transformative life experiences."

Gilbert's class has remained close and annually marks the anniversary of their Chanukah bat mitzvah with a group aliyah at the Shabbat-morning service.

Continued on page B18

Rabbi Tina Grimberg, left, and Debbie Gilbert, who marks the 18th anniversary of her bat mitzvah this Chanukah, hold Darchei Noam Congregation's chupah, which was handmade by an adult bat mitzvah class. (Lila Sarick photo)

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Adult ceremonies demand commitment

Continued from page B 17

"The seed was planted 18 years ago, but it continues on for me today," Gilbert said. "It's been a marvellous journey for me."

It was the educational component of Darchei Noam's program that attracted Sid Markowski, 55, to become a bar mitzvah for the second time last year.

"I felt at the time [of his first bar mitzvah] it was just learning the reading. I was pretty nervous and anxious."

This time around, he led Friday-night services at Baycrest as part of the group's tikkun olam project, and studied with his wife, who did not have a bat mitzvah as a teenager.

His class of 18 men and women now continues to meet monthly and studies together.

At Chabad of Markham, Goldie Plotkin teaches a bat mitzvah class for women that also emphasizes Jewish education.

"The class was formed as a response to women's desires. They were lacking in Jewish education and they felt their children knew more than they did," Plotkin says.

She took the curriculum offered by the beit din for potential converts and added her own personal insights and weekly homework assignments.

"I didn't just teach it how it was taught at Mount Sinai. I tried to make it real and practical for their lives as mothers and daughters," she said.

"When we did Pesach, we spoke about what does maror mean to us today. We make the whole of Judaism become alive and practical in our life in 2013."

The program culminates with a Shabbat weekend in Crown Heights, N.Y., and a ceremony in the synagogue where women speak about what they learned.

Michelle Benjamin, 35, remembers the ceremony being a very emotional day.

Her father died just before she was to have her bat mitzvah when she was 12, and her grieving family didn't celebrate the milestone.

"I had lost that opportunity when I was 12... and I felt this was my second chance."

Now married, with a young family of her own, Benjamin took the course with her mother-in-law. "I could be a role model to my family. No matter what age you are, you can always learn more about your Yiddishkeit."

Michelle Illiatovitch, 67, embraces that philosophy. Raised in an Orthodox home, she says she could never find her place in Judaism. After being estranged from synagogue life for more than three decades, she recently joined the City Shul, a newly formed Reform synagogue in downtown Toronto.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, founder of the City Shul, said she expects her adult bar and bat mitzvah candidates to regularly attend services on Shabbat, learn to read Torah and lead services during the year-long course.

"I'm really stressing for them to say, 'I really can be counted on. I have the skills to help the community thrive.'"

For Illiatovitch, the idea of having a bat mitzvah as an adult was appealing, but she admits she is "terrified" when she thinks about the upcoming date in May that has been selected for the group to lead Shabbat services.

"When this was offered I became very interested and very nervous at the same time," she said. "We've had three classes so far, and I feel like it's a homecoming. I feel like I'm getting taught something I can grapple with."

A WALK BY THE SEA
Israelis cast reflections on the water as they walk on the beach in Tel Aviv.
(FLASH90 photo)

Jamaican Jew doesn't fit the usual stereotypes

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

When Rivka Campbell was still in high school, she started to become curious about her Jewish heritage. It wasn't something that often came up in her day-to-day life. Her family wasn't particularly observant, but she knew she was Jewish on her mother's side, going all the way back to the Sephardi expulsion from Spain 500 years ago.

Rivka Campbell

At 18, she considered visiting Israel as part of her process of self-exploration; she had already visited her parents' homeland, Jamaica, on numerous occasions.

But, as the old saying goes, life is what happens while you're busy making other plans. In her early 20s she married and had two children.

"It was not until my marriage broke apart that I had to find out more about who I was, as a Jew, to find out what it was to be a Jew," she said.

"I also felt I owed it to [my children] to tell them the whole family history."

It would take a couple of decades before Campbell would make the trip to Israel, but in the interim she did re-discover her roots and she began to live a more actively Jewish lifestyle. She enrolled her children in Jewish school. She attended synagogue regularly, she became a passionate advocate for Israel and the Jewish people and, in her explorations of her multifaceted identity, she found many others who don't fit any stereotype of what a Jew should look like.

It turns out, there are lots of people like Campbell, Jews of many colours and backgrounds, who are claiming their place among the Jewish people – and some who are wannabes.

After attending a lecture by a self-proclaimed "black Hebrew" from Chicago, she discovered the group wasn't what it appeared and that its Facebook page was misleading.

"I call it the 'black and treif group.' They were missionaries, Hebrew Israelites. They were trying to convert Jews. Oy, oy, oy, I got so sick of it."

Instead of merely complaining, Campbell started her own Facebook group called "A Minority Within a Minority – Jews of Colour."

"It's open to Jews of colour and also to people who have Jews of colour in their family, and people who are interested."

With about 300 members, "it's really active," she said.

The site includes many posts on Torah study, Israel and on Jews who don't necessarily resemble Ashkenazim.

Articles recently posted on the site included a fascinating look at the Lemba of South Africa, the Abayudaya in Uganda and the more familiar Jews of Ethiopia.

There's a link to a photo essay featuring Jews who do not fit any stereotypical mold; there's a section on "Debating Judaism;" another about Israel; and there's one called, "Black and Jewish – Jews of color."

It's a rainbow coalition of the People of the Book.

Campbell's interest in Torah studies was cemented during her one year in Israel, which she managed to visit a couple of decades after she'd envisioned it.

While living in Arad, she attended Chabad "shiurim" and "I enjoyed it a lot."

Not only were the lessons themselves fulfilling, but she said she gets the fewest questions from religious Jews. "They must figure I belong there, or why would I be there."

In Toronto, when she attended services at a large Conservative shul, she experienced something quite different. Once on Kol Nidre eve, she felt "a tap on the shoulder." A woman sitting behind her "asked where I'm from, if I was Ethiopian and do I come here often. I pretty much said to her I come here on a regular basis. I almost said if you came here on a regular basis you'd know that too."

Campbell admits the incident made her feel uncomfortable. "The assumption in that question is 'you don't belong, so why are you here?' It's not a welcoming question.

"I have black, brown Jewish friends who would be put off if they hear that question.

"It's not easy to fit into the Toronto Jewish community when you look different," she added.

Continued on page B 20

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'We're Jews too...'

Continued from page T 19

Campbell – "it's spelled like the soup," she said – has found that humour can deflect some of the more irritating questions posed to people like herself. When she's asked if she converted, her reply might be, "No, I'm still Jewish."

Another that she's adopted from a video-maker in New York answers the question, "How are you Jewish?" with the quip, "I'm fine, thank you. How are you, Jewish?"

"It's a question that Ashkenazi Jews don't get," she said.

Campbell is now working on a video to highlight the diversity of the Jewish people.

"The purpose of my video work is not to bitch and moan. It is to say, this is our reality. We are different. That's one of the beautiful things about being Jewish."

"Given that we as a people are scattered throughout the world, why is it unusual to find people with brown hair, dark curls, Asian [looking]?"

In the broader community, she's rarely asked about being black and Jewish. Instead, the questions she gets are about the religion itself. She was often the go-to person for answers on things Jewish when she worked as a nurse at North York General Hospital.

Living a Jewish lifestyle is something she strives for constantly, while returning to Israel remains high on her list of priorities.

Based on her experience there, she's often pushed back against the charge of Israel as an apartheid state. She's been barred from some Facebook pages because of her persistence. The irony is that "I can go anywhere in Israel except in Hebron, where a sign is posted [in the casbah], 'Jews are not allowed,'" she said.

"I get asked to defend Israel against the charges of apartheid... I will never say it's a racist country. I will tell you there's a lot of work that needs to be done."

One is an attitude that she believes was imported from the Diaspora, "that tends to rank Jews. That needs to be addressed."

"Progress will be shown. We're Jews. There shouldn't be ranking among Jews," she said.

As to her home in Toronto, Campbell wants others to remember, "we're Jews too. I think that's what I want people to understand.

"We all have a story."

A CHASSIDIC WEDDING

Rabbi Hanania Rokach, son of Rabbi Yosef Meir Rokach and grandson of the admor of the chassidic dynasty of Belz Machnowka, weds Nechama Pasil Rokach, granddaughter of the admor of the chassidic dynasty of Belz Machnowka, in the haredi neighbourhood of Bnei Brak on Nov. 8. ***[Flash90 Photo]***

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HAPPY CHANUKAH

Women sparking a Jewish sex-ed revolution

Julie Wiener
JTA

When Sarah Epstein returned home to Dallas after her first semester at Brandeis University, the modern Orthodox yeshiva graduate had some surprising news to share – she was undergoing 200 hours of training to become a peer sex educator.

"When I told my family at the dinner table, my older brother was like, 'Why couldn't you just join the tennis team?'" Epstein, now 23, recalls.

Epstein's family adapted as she went on to organize standing-room-only workshops at Brandeis for observant Jewish girls interested in learning more about their bodies and sexuality. Recently, together with Amy Beth Oppenheimer, a Jewish educator and founder of the website Jewrotica, Epstein launched Halachically Yours, a website with educational resources about sex and intimacy for observant Jews.

Encouraging open discussion and education

In the modern Orthodox world, where discussions of sex often have been taboo or confined to the logistics of marital intimacy laws, women like Epstein and Oppenheimer (as well as some men) are encouraging open discussion and education in a manner respectful of modesty and other religious considerations.

Meanwhile, in the more liberal community, another emerging group of female sex educators is trying to enrich discussions about sex and relationships by putting them in the framework of Jewish texts and values.

Halachically Yours, which includes lessons such as, "Halachah is important but so is pleasure" and, "Fantasies are normal and can be shared," comes amid a wealth of new sexual resources targeting Orthodox Jews. An Orthodox sex guide, *The Newlywed's Guide to Intimacy*, came out two years ago and was recently translated into Hebrew. Growing numbers of Orthodox day schools are using *Life Values and Intimacy*, a new sex-education curriculum. And in 2011 a website touting "kosher" sex toys – sold discreetly, without any explicit images – hung out its cyber-shingle.

What's spurring the Orthodox sex-ed revolution? In part, there seems to be a growing recognition that traditional pre-marriage classes don't offer enough information. There's also a perceived need for religiously sensitive alternatives to more explicit messages coming from the wider culture – and especially online.

"Instead of surfing the Internet and coming across all sorts of things observant people don't want to see or hear, we're making learning materials and resources framed in a halachically sensitive way accessible," Epstein said.

The growth of Jewishly inspired sex education is not limited to the Orthodox world.

Rabbi Jessica Minnen started a series of workshops on sex and relationships for Jews in their 20s and 30s as a fourth year rabbinical student at the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary. The workshops, called Seven Wells, use text study and role playing to help participants see the connection between their sexual and spiritual selves.

"Judaism gives us a framework for exploring who we are in ways that don't seem related to sex at all," Rabbi Minnen said. "We use Jewish concepts to frame all our workshops. For example, in a workshop about sexual boundaries, we're studying eruvim, the boundaries between public and private space."

While Seven Wells is still in its infancy, Rabbi Minnen hopes it will eventually grow into a national program training facilitators to run workshops in synagogues, JCCs, schools and living rooms. So far, says Rabbi Minnen, who also holds down a full-time job as assistant director of the Jewish Journey Project, Seven Wells has generated more interest than she has been able to accommodate – including from Orthodox Jews.

"To be in a position where you have too many people wanting to do your program than you can serve is a wonderful problem," she said.

Another relatively new Jewish sex-ed program, JLove and Values, focuses on a younger audience and takes a less text-heavy approach. Founded by Mara Yacobi, the program has workshops for teens about sexuality and relationships at the American Hebrew Academy boarding school in North Carolina and at various overnight camps.

"There's some Jewish content sprinkled in, but I want to make sure my audience's attention is captured," Yacobi said. "I don't want this to be about a study session, but a foundation of the information they need to keep themselves healthy."

A sex educator who has worked in public schools and for Planned Parenthood, Yacobi started JLove and Values because she wanted to be able to discuss the role of religion and Jewish values in sexual decision-making – and because her own day school experience growing up had been almost devoid of sex education.

Yacobi believes that easy access to pornography makes values-based sex education particularly important.

"A lot of times teens associate sex with every slang term in the book – all these degrading words," Yacobi said. "I try to impart that it's about intimacy, love, pleasure and holiness."

In this case, familiarity breeds contentment

"Those of us who live here are treated as guests, in the full sense of that word, and individual dignity is treasured in ways that are transparent and contagious."

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Christian Zionists to unveil Europe's largest chanukiyah

JTA

Christian Zionists in the Netherlands are building what they believe will be Europe's largest menorah as a Chanukah gift to the country's Jewish community.

The Chanukah candelabrum, or chanukiyah will be approximately 11 metres tall and made out of metal, said Sara van Oordt, who works at the Netherlands headquarters of the Christians for Israel organization. It will be placed near the group's offices in Nijkerk, 50 kilometres east of the Dutch capital.

"We think that this is a good way to show our support and solidarity for the Jewish community worldwide," van Oordt said.

Shaped like a Star of David, the giant candelabrum will have nine branches running along its top beam. According to Christians for Israel, it will be Europe's largest chanukiyah.

It is scheduled to be inaugurated at Nijkerk on the eve of Chanukah on Nov. 27 by Binyomin Jacobs, a chief rabbi of the Netherlands who has agreed to light the first candle of Chanukah at a public ceremony that is expected to draw several hundred people.

The chanukiyah cost just more than $30,000 to make and is currently being manufactured in Friesland in the northern Netherlands under the supervision of Arjen Lont, the Christian Zionist owner of a construction firm.

Lont, who also participated in the reconstruction of Jerusalem's Montefiore windmill last year, has sponsored a part of the chanukiyah's cost, according to van Oordt.

"We did not approach Jewish or Israeli businesses and donors, only Christian ones, because this is supposed to be our gift to the Jewish people," van Oordt said.

The five-ton chanukiyah will be transported in several parts from Friesland to Nijkerk.

Rabbi Jacobs told *JTA* that the Netherlands has several large menorahs and chanukiyot that became popular with local Jews and Christians about 10 years ago.

"Not everyone was enthusiastic at first, but they kept popping up," he said. "It brings people who would not normally celebrate Chanukah to partake and it shows the world in general that we, Jews, are also here and a part of this society."

Large menorahs or chanukiyot can be found in 18 Dutch cities, including Amsterdam, The Hague, Maastricht, Haarlem, Groningen and Rotterdam, Rabbi Jacobs said.

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Remembering the Canadian, Jewish, Chinese cowboy

Bernie Farber
Special to The CJN

Moishe "Two-Gun" Cohen, the Canadian swashbuckler, soldier of fortune and an honoured officer in the army of Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat-Sen died 43 years ago this month at the age of 83. His impossibly improbable story is the stuff of Hollywood movies and legends. Indeed such a movie is being produced this year.

Born to Orthodox Jews from Western Poland in 1887, his family moved to London, England's rough and tumble east end, as did many wanting a life safe from eastern European anti-Semitism. There, Moishe learned the ways of the street – from gambling to petty thievery – guided by a street crook known as "Harry the Gonif." Here too Moishe learned to fight. He boxed under the name "Cockney Cohen," amongst others.

It wasn't long before his thieving ways caught up with him and Moishe ended up in an English reform school. Following his release, his parents sent him to western Canada with the hope that this still-British colony would provide a new start for young Moishe, who ended up as a farm hand in Whitewood, Sask.

Moishe also learned to gamble and shoot, two pursuits that would suit him well later in life. It wasn't long until Moishe quit his job as a farm hand and started wandering around western Canada, where he worked various odd and menial jobs.

With the outbreak of the First World War, Moishe seized what he saw as another opportunity and joined the Canadian Railway troops in Europe. It was here where fate intervened. Placed in charge of Chinese labourers who were sent to the front from Canada, where they were building the CPR, Moishe was taken by the strange food, traditions and customs of these Chinese workers.

Following the war, Moishe returned to Canada, where he developed strong friendships with many Chinese immigrants. A frequent customer at Chinese gambling dens, he was one of very few non-Chinese to gain the respect of this cloistered immigrant group. Indeed according to Joe King, who wrote a fascinating essay on Moishe's life, his legend was bolstered when he saved Mah Sam, a Chinese "businessman" (the owner of a gambling den as it turned out). As King relates:

"[Moishe] turned up one night at one of his favourite haunts; he found the aged Chinese restaurant owner, Mah Sam, being held up by a hoodlum.

"Moishe wasn't going to have his plans for the evening interrupted, so he sidled up to the thug, whacked him in the head, disarmed him and then threw him into the streets."

It was this newly minted relationship with Mah Sam that moved Moishe to travel to China in 1922. Mah Sam was an ardent devotee of Sun, the Chinese nationalist. Considered an evolutionary hero of China, he had overthrown the Qing Dynasty 10 years earlier, founding the first Chinese national republic.

Moishe managed to wangle a meeting with the Chinese leader and used his charm to wheedle his way into a job.

Moishe started off as a personal body guard to the leader, then helped teach Sun's troops how to fight, shoot and smuggle weapons.

It was during a protection detail that Moishe was involved in a gunfight. Slightly wounded in one arm, he learned his lesson well and taught himself to shoot with both hands. From then on he always carried guns in a hip and shoulder holster, earning the nickname "Two-Gun."

For his courage and exploits, Sun promoted Moishe to the rank of colonel and following Sun's death in 1925, Moishe was promoted again to general. By 1930 "Two-Gun" headed Chinese Intelligence and following the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, Moishe helped the Chinese forces obtain weapons while doing intelligence work on behalf of the British.

Upon hearing that Sun's wife was taken prisoner by the Japanese, Moishe attempted a rescue. Unfortunately he was captured by the Japanese and imprisoned.

Insisting he was just a Canadian businessman in a very rare prisoner exchange, Moishe was released and repatriated back to Canada in 1943.

As if the war was not enough for "Two-Gun," Moishe then gave his talents over to the fledgling Jewish state in British-mandated Palestine. Here he helped the Zionist cause by procuring much needed weapons and teaching the inexperienced Jews, many who had never held a gun in their lives, to shoot and fight. He even travelled to the U.S., where he was able to convince the head of the UN Chinese delegation to abstain from voting against Israel, doing more than his bit to help establish the new Jewish state.

In the years to follow Moishe moved back to Canada, where he married and established business ties between China and the West. He was one of the very few to maintain good relations between mainland communist China and Taiwan.

Canada's Jewish cowboy, samurai warrior, spy, petty thief and gambler is buried in the Jewish cemetery in Salford, England. His black granite tombstone is inscribed in three languages – English, Hebrew and Chinese.

Bernie Farber is a writer and human rights advocate. He is senior vice-president for Gemini Power Corp., where he works with First Nations reserves to help build sustainable industries.

Gen. Morrice Abraham COHEN
MORRICE COHEN WAS BORN ON COMMERCIAL ROAD, IN LONDON, ENG. IN 1887.
AT 15, HE CAME TO CANADA TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE. AFTER SEVERAL YEARS AS A CLERK, FARM HAND AND REAL-ESTATE SPECULATOR, HE CAME TO CALGARY WHERE HE MET DR SUN YAT SEN.
SOON HE AND DR. SUN ESCAPE FAST FRIENDS, AND COHEN BECOMES HIS SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION IN WESTERN CANADA.
DURING WORLD WAR I, HE SERVED ON VARIOUS SECRET AND LATER WAS IN CHARGE OF A CHINESE LABOUR CORPS NEAR THE FRONT.
HE SERVED AT THE CHINESE MINISTRY OF WAR AND WAS ENTRUSTED WITH SEVERAL SECRET MISSIONS BY CHIANG KAI-SHEK, WHO SUCCEEDED DR SUN ON THE LATTER'S DEATH.
IN 1922 COHEN WENT TO CHINA WHERE HE BECAME AIDE DE CAMP TO DR. SUN AND SOON BECAME A POWER IN CHINESE POLITICS. HE HELPED REORGANIZE AND TRAIN DR. SUN'S ARMY.
WHEN WORLD WAR II FELL, COHEN WAS CAPTURED BY THE JAPANESE WHILE TRYING TO ESCAPE BY PLANE.
HE HAS RECENTLY BEEN REPATRIATED TO CANADA AND WILL SOON BE RETURNING TO CHINA.

An image from the first of three Canadian Jewish Congress comic books published in 1944.
[Canadian Jewish Congress National Archives]

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A land of milk and chocolate

Tourism at Cadbury World is cocotastic—and kosher

Nathan Jeffay
JNS.org

It's easy to imagine that if the ancient Israelites had been familiar with the cocoa bean, God might have promised them a land flowing with milk and chocolate. He didn't, but such a land does exist.

In the English city of Birmingham, a 90-minute train ride from London, Cadbury – the company that popularized modern British milk chocolate – welcomes half a million visitors a year who come to pay homage to Cadbury World. And if you are kosher observant and accustomed to foodie attractions where you can look but can't taste, you should rejoice, the London Beth Din regards almost all products made by Cadbury as kosher.

Non-Brits may not grasp just how big Cadbury is – as a cultural institution as well as a brand. But you'll quickly get the hang of it at their huge visitor centre. In addition to the main exhibition, there's an outdoor children's play area with climbing zones, tube slides and tunnels, a separate area at a lower level for the under-five set, and a multimedia show. The show consists of two five-minute features during which you meet the earnest Quakers who set up the company back in 1824, after which you get to create your own chocolate, with melted Cadbury chocolate and fillings.

A visit to Cadbury World can take up to three hours, but it is so well choreographed that time flies by. It isn't an "exhibition" in the conventional sense, but rather a mixture of displays, acted sketches, 3D multimedia presentations, demonstrations of the production process, and, of course, tastings. Yet you do learn a lot. In fact, Cadbury World was one of the first institutions in the U.K. to be awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, recognizing it as a provider of quality, safely managed educational experiences for young people.

For those of us used to family outings where different people circulate at different speeds and everyone loses each other, Cadbury World is brilliant. As you go past various junctures, such as the shows, in batches of around 50 people, you are constantly synchronized with your party. The various components of the experience have been designed to hold the attention of the very young while stimulating the grown ups. There was a 70-year age span in my family group, and both granddad and toddler daughter loved every minute.

In Britain, Cadbury is a cultural institution as well as a brand.

The exhibition begins with a series of 3D stages where miniature figures give you short snippets of the history of chocolate. You find out about "chocolate houses" where grown men (women and children were barred) used to gather to drink hot chocolate and gamble, and you meet an actress who recreates the atmosphere of these dens of sugary indulgence. Then an actor introduces the members of the Cadbury family who established the company and made it great. They tell their story of how their chocolate is made through a series of presentations, one of them featuring seats that move as the cocoa breaks are shaken. You find out how specific Cadbury lines are made, and you make your way through a packaging plant to an area where you can watch the production of one of the company's premium handmade products.

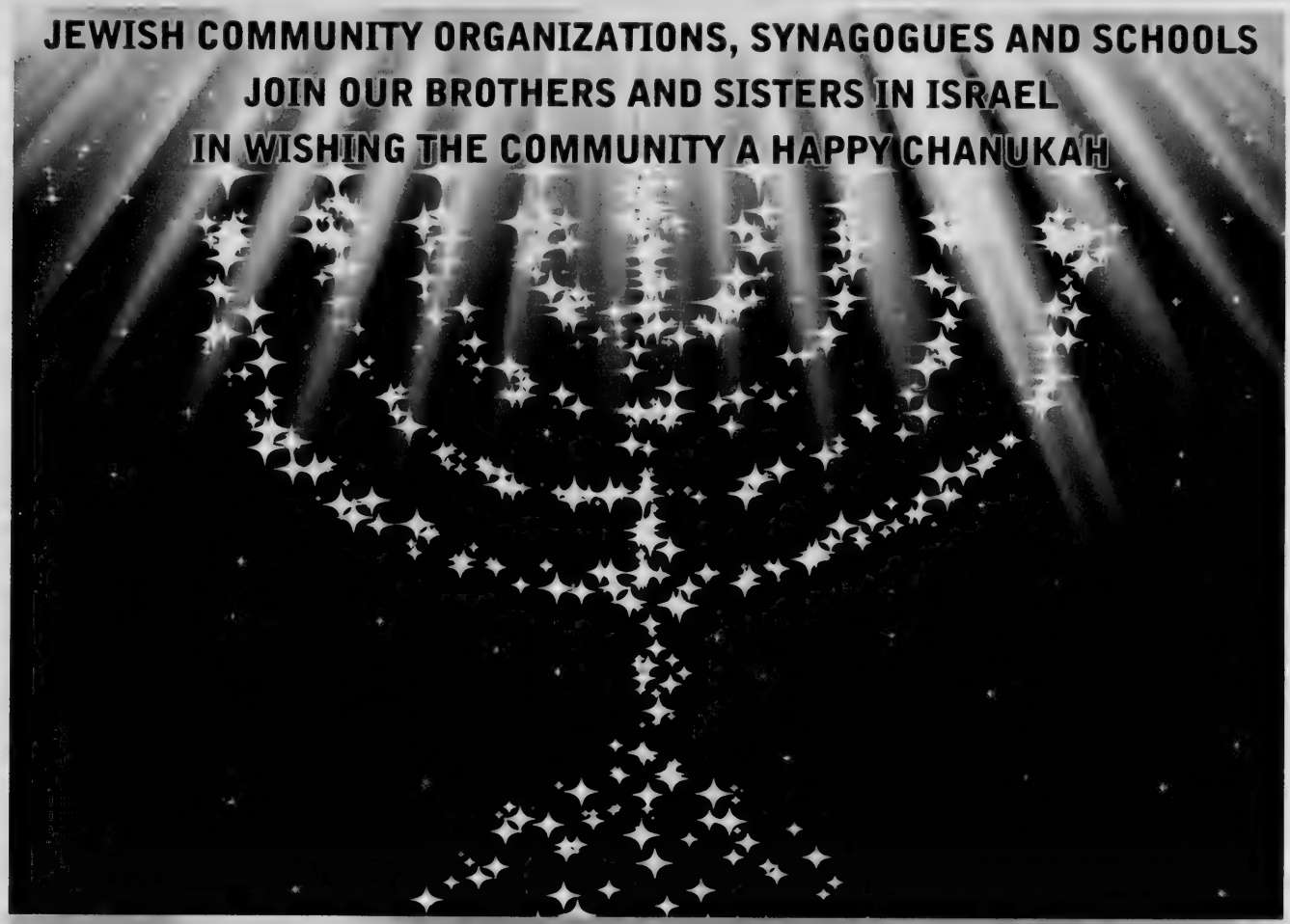
The place really does flow with chocolate – A kilometre of piping on the ceiling takes it around. And even after nearly three hours, the kids are still on a high, not just because of their pockets full of samples or the cup of liquid chocolate (the day's second), but because the whole trip ends with an adorable ride, Cadabra, which takes you on little carriages through a world in which cute cocoa beans are engaged in all sorts of activities, including skiing.

I always dreamed of visiting Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. This was definitely the next best thing.

While most products distributed at Cadbury World are kosher, some are not. The London Beth Din's listing of kosher Cadbury products can be found at www.kosher.org.uk.

Originally published by www.Jewish.Travel, the new online Jewish travel magazine.

The place does really flow with chocolate. A visit to Cadbury World is the closest thing to visiting Willy Wonka's chocolate factory.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Total Lift Bed puts patients in a standing position

Abigail Klein Leichman
Israel21c

The Israeli-innovated Total Lift Bed is a simple but revolutionary solution that could set a new standard of care in hospitals and rehabilitation centres worldwide.

Made by VitalGo Systems, the patented Total Lift is the only hospital-grade bed that can elevate a patient from a lying to a fully standing position – and all points in between – for treatment and transfer with no lifting required of the caregiver.

Two major companies are now distributing Total Lift in the acute-care and home-care markets in the United States. About 350 of the beds are in use there, with a goal of tripling that amount next year. The product is registered with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Certification Experts in Europe.

Israeli innovation prevents patient falls and caregiver injuries

"We have to ramp up production because we are getting approached from all over the world – Germany, the UK, China, Japan and other countries," says Ohad Paz, VitalGo's president and CEO.

"We believe that our product will eventually become the standard of treatment in hospitals and healthcare facilities, as the concept has numerous advantages over the beds used today. We can already see a movement of the big companies trying to imitate our concept and understanding the importance of early mobility."

He points out that Total Lift not only prevents patient falls and caregiver injuries but also leads to shorter hospital stays because it allows patients to get out of the prone position earlier and more often. Lying in bed for prolonged periods can cause medical problems such as muscle atrophy and bedsores.

"This is the only bed in the world that can do all of this," says Paz, a certified public accountant by training and an entrepreneur by interest.

Around 2005, Paz and his business partner Ofer Parezky – who had worked on successful consumer goods in the past – were approached about designing products to enable the elderly to "age in place" in safety and dignity. Then, Paz's father was sent to a rehab centre after suffering a stroke, and the issue got closer to home.

"We started with a showering product that moves the person from a standing to a reclining position. This was my first patent, and it was very complicated mechanically," Paz says. "I said to myself, if we made a product like this for the shower, why not for the bed?"

The Total Lift Bed has a few patents, one of which is a unique weight-bearing control system that shows the exact weight bearing of the patient by calculating the amount of pressure placed on the footboard in relation to the patient's body weight. The more the patient is tilted up, the more pressure gets transferred to the lower extremities.

This feature allows, for the first time, for three options – zero weight bearing, partial weight bearing and full weight bearing. Each option has important implications for treatment, Paz explains.

"For patients in rehab today, it's all or nothing – lying or standing – and the therapist needs to hold onto them and it's dangerous. With our bed, you do it gradually, step by step, and can measure the weight bearing. This system is so innovative that we had to explain its benefits to doctors, and once they understand it they see its great potential."

The ability to transfer weight to the footboard, even without getting out of bed completely, is advantageous for people who are too ill to walk or are hooked up to myriad machines.

"With our bed, there is no risk," Paz says. "If you have some of the weight shifted for a few hours, it makes a huge difference in not losing muscle tension, which is the biggest problem. Every day in bed, you lose 1.5 per cent of muscle tension."

VitalGo recently launched its new Total Lift Bariatric Bed, which can handle patients weighing up to 1,000 pounds. "It is already being used in the U.S. Some of these people have not stood up for months or even years, and this is their first opportunity to get out of bed," Paz says.

Bankrolled by private investors and based in Tel Aviv, VitalGo has an office in Florida and produces the bed piecemeal from parts made in Israel, Turkey, Scandinavia and the United States.

Student and teacher make beautiful music together

Sholom Wargon
Special to The CJN

The teacher was adamant: "I'm sorry, I'm fully booked. I can't take on any more students."

The mother wasn't taking no for an answer.

"Let me hear her play a little," relented Eli Kassner. "Then I'll decide."

The "audition" took mere minutes to become lesson one. In lesson three, Kassner assigned his precocious pupil a page of *Asturias* – an intricate, graduate-level piece. She returned one week later with four pages.

Liona Boyd was 13 years old.

"Why waste time putting a PhD candidate through kindergarten?" says Kassner. "She was – and is – a special talent."

Fifty-one years later, Boyd has put out multiple gold and platinum recordings, received the Order of Canada and played close to 1,000 concerts worldwide. She has such a mastery of her instrument that in 1975 she earned the moniker Canada's First Lady of the Guitar.

Student and teacher are back where it all started, in Kassner's Toronto studio. Peers now, they're comparing notes and reminiscing.

"Eli was my mentor. He allowed me to grow," Boyd said.

Unlike some music teachers who are possessive of their prize pupils, Kassner facilitated Boyd's exposure to other influences and mentors, including several world-class guitarists. At his suggestion, she enrolled in a master class given by Julian Bream, the very virtuoso whose performance in the seventh floor auditorium of Eaton's College Street had first ignited Boyd's passion for classical guitar.

For teacher, as for student, age 13 was a watershed year.

Liona Boyd and Eli Kassner. "Eli was my mentor," Boyd said. "He allowed me to grow."

It was Vienna, 1937. Kassner's participation in the Hanoar Hatzioni (Zionist Youth) Movement affords him an opportunity to make aliyah. The diminutive musician — a guitar player since age seven — brings none of the physical prowess deemed prerequisite to life on an agricultural kibbutz. But he alone among the "prospects" speaks Hebrew with the modern Sephardic pronunciation, which allows him to converse with the shaliach in charge of the selection process. ("My father insisted I learn. I was his only hope for a yeshiva bocher in the family; my brother Edward had no interest in religion.")

It's aliyah selection day. One by one, the names of the 50 chosen olim are called. Kassner's is not among them. At name 50, his fast-eroding hopes are extinguished. Whereupon the shaliach turns to him: "And *you* can come too."

"My knowledge of Hebrew probably saved my life," intones Kassner. Without the rapport established by mother-tongue dialogue, he would in all likelihood have stayed in Vienna and perished at the hands of the Nazis along with his sister Charlotte. (Brother Edward survived and went on to enjoy great success as a music publisher, including a prescient purchase of the rights to Bill Haley's *Rock Around The Clock*).

An aspiring visual artist on his 1951 arrival in Canada ("for me the guitar was just a hobby,") Kassner hoped to earn a living by selling his paintings. Slow sales led to his plan B – a job at Whaley, Royce & Co., the iconic instrument and music dealer on Yonge Street. One fine day, as he strummed a Bach gavotte (in-store playing was good for sales), a customer approached and asked for lessons.

"I've never taught before, but if you'd like to be my guinea pig, I'll be happy to try," volunteered Kassner.

The rest is history. Over the next half century, Kassner was to play a vital role in the advancement of guitar studies. According to Carl Morey, professor emeritus at the University of Toronto's faculty of music, Kassner "virtually single-handedly created serious guitar studies in Toronto, if not in Canada," according to *Guitar Canada*.

In 1956, Kassner co-founded the Guitar Society of Toronto, of which he served seven years as president and 39 years as artistic director. In 1959 he began teaching at the Royal Conservatory of Music and the University of Toronto. In 1967 he established the Eli Kassner Guitar Academy, resigning from the RCMT but continuing to teach at the U of T. He has also taught at the École Normale de Musique in Montreal and Queen's University. He composed and performed for the CBC-TV series *The Nature of Things*, winning the Bell-Northern Prize and the Monaco Award for the film *The First Inch*. For this and other *Nature Of Things* films, he not only composed the music but also contributed his own microphotographs. Today, at age 89 – though slowed by a stroke and macular degeneration which has rendered him virtually blind – he continues to teach at his Toronto home, where he lives with his wife Ann.

Though Kassner's brush and palette were usurped by his guitar, evidence of his visual artistic talent remains. Adorning one wall of his home is a series of illustrations of the chassidic figures that populated the Vienna of his youth.

Continued on page B 28

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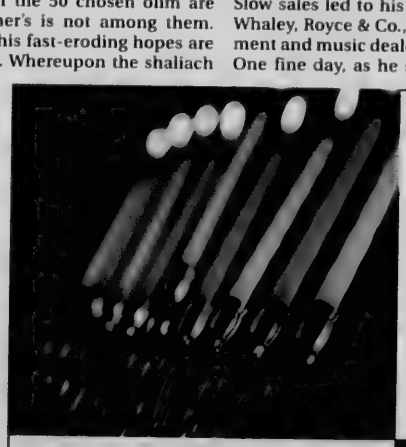

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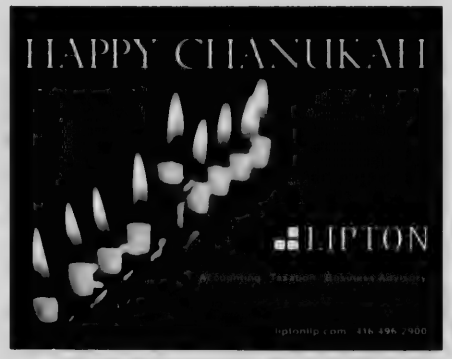

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Making beautiful music together

Continued from page B 27

While Kassner was redefining the art of guitar instruction, Boyd was fulfilling her early promise on stage and in studio. In 1974 *The Guitar*, her first record, was produced by Eleanor Sniderman, wife of Sam Sniderman. In 1995, she dedicated a self-composed Canadiana suite of recordings — *My Land Of Hiawatha* — to Kassner.

In 2003, Boyd was diagnosed with task-specific focal dystonia, a condition stemming from excessive repetition of specific muscle movements. Common to guitarists, it often leads them to stop playing altogether.

Not Boyd. By dint of sheer determination and an underlying conviction that she could and would play again, Boyd used a six-year hiatus to reinvent her playing technique. That process included, temporarily, using a pick with her right hand.

And she began to sing. And write. Not just experimentally, but for keeps.

From her first album as a vocalist and composer, released in 2009 *(Liona Boyd Sings Songs Of Love*, with Srdjan Givoje*)* to the just-released *The Return... To Canada With Love*, Boyd has demonstrated that she of the golden hands has a set of vocal chords to match.

No one is more impressed than Kassner.

"Liona never ceases to amaze me," he exudes. "To sing is one thing. To sing at a level commensurate with her guitar playing? Unbelievable! Liona solves all her own problems."

Single since her 2004 divorce from California real estate developer John Simon, Boyd is nevertheless smitten – with the native land to which she returned in 2011. Thirteen of the 15 compositions on *The Return* are lyrical odes to Canada: its places, its landscapes, its people. In content and execution the material is spectacularly new. If a breakthrough album is supposed to happen only once in one's career, someone forgot to tell Boyd.

Never once during the long road back did Boyd view herself as a "reclamation project." To her the comeback was an evolution, a renaissance. "I feel more complete musically now than ever," she beams. The quicksilver speed that once earned Kassner an admonishment from the legendary Andrès Segovia – who felt that Boyd was playing "too fast" – has slowed an iota. But to measure the cheetah by a stopwatch alone is to miss the beauty and grace of its gait. The sound is still unmistakably, mellifluously Boyd: riveting and precise. The same sound whose clarity, in 1962, made squeezing in one more student the easiest decision of Kassner's career.

Today, at age 64, Boyd continues to tour, accompanied by guitarist Michael Savona, and to record, with producer Peter Bond. She and Kassner, who now reside in close proximity, enjoy an ongoing relationship of mutual respect and fervent admiration.

"Eli doesn't just teach guitar, he personifies it," says Boyd. For Canada's First Lady Of The Guitar, Eli Kassner is the de facto first man.

Eli Kassner is also a visual artist as this painting of his of two Chassidic Jews attests.

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New cheap coffee-to-go chain in Israel

Viva Press
Israel 21C

Mainstream news will lead you to believe something diplomatic or political is the talk of the day in Israel. But for most Israelis, the big news right now is whether a new, cheap coffee chain that recently opened in the heart of Tel Aviv will spark a coffee revolution and bring down the prices at cafés around the country.

Entrepreneur Avi Katz – the guy who brought the "dollar store" concept to Israel – is leading the latest coffee revolution. His team opened Cofix, a takeaway-only café, on one of the busiest thoroughfares in Tel Aviv.

Everything on the Hebrew-English menu is five shekels (about $1.40): quality Italian coffee, cappuccino, sandwiches, bakery goods, fresh juice and desserts. A cup of coffee at a café in Israel usually runs $2.80 to $5 while a sandwich costs $7 to $11.

Within hours of the opening of this audacious venture, people were lining up out the door and down the block. The long lines continued for the next three days, and Aroma, Israel's biggest café chain, has already announced that it will lower the price of cappuccino to NIS8.

"There's no way I could have known this would happen," Katz, the founder and president of the crowdsourcing investments Hagshama Fund, told ISRAEL21c. "Even someone as optimistic as me couldn't have known this would take place."

The idea for the new café chain had been brewing in Katz's mind for 12 years. The veteran businessman said he will always remember the day he pulled his "new Mercedes into a gas station and went to buy coffee and a snack at the service stop. Paying over $14 for two coffees and baked goods hurts, even for someone with a new Mercedes."

Katz founded Cofix in Tel Aviv and hopes to open 300 branches across Israel.

Along with his daughter, Hagit Shinover; his partner in Hagshama, Benny Farkash; and attorney Hanan Shemesh, Katz opened the first branch of Cofix on Ibn Gvirol Street. They plan to keep it under their ownership for the first few years. Katz said they plan to open more branches in Tel Aviv's downtown area in the coming months.

"After we check the market and pay the price of experience, we'll franchise out," he told ISRAEL21c. Cofix's long-term development plans cite opening 300 branches around the country.

The café market in Israel is brimming. According to a 2009 report by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, there were over 1,300 cafés peppered throughout Israel and some 120 in Tel Aviv.

Cofix is meant to sharpen the distinction between the takeaway café scene and the sit-down coffee-shop market, which Katz says has been blurred.

"It's not about what other café owners are feeling [in response to Cofix's opening] but rather what they'll do," Katz said. "There's no reason that kiosks don't sell coffee at our price. This is a realistic price. It still enables us to make a nice profit. Our motto is to sell more for less, not to sell a little at a high price."

The same day that Cofix opened, in fact, two other café chains advertised $1.40 cappuccinos, albeit for a limited time offer.

Cofix is not strictly a social venture, as Katz is very upfront about wanting to make a profit. However, the new kosher café chain does answer the public's desire for fair prices.

It makes sense that he would be the one to lead the coffee revolution. Eighteen years ago, Katz founded the Bee Retail Group, Israel's largest group of retail chains for home and leisure merchandise.

He's the guy who introduced the Kfar Hashashuim toy store chain to Israel and offered more affordable prices. He also introduced the Doctor Baby chain, a store selling reasonably priced baby paraphernalia. And, of course, the dollar store enterprise was his, too.

"There's always a social purpose to what I do," Katz said. "The public's feeling that the cost of living has risen unjustly is correct. People want to see a change in food prices. Prices have fallen in fashion, computers, phones. There is no reason to pay $4 for fresh carrot juice that is made from broken carrots grocers can't sell anyway."

Katz said that Cofix is meant to perk up the takeaway sector but that it could – and should – improve sit-down café options, too.

Coffee shops "should return to what they really are," Katz said. "Until five years ago, there was a difference between what you could get in a sit-down café and fare served at a takeaway place. The owner of a sit-down café has to charge for what they offer: service, a proper meal and distinctive ambiance. I feel the menu will have to change."

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Donation brings Saskatchewan's Jewish history to life

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

At the age of 80, after 40 years of researching and collecting material on the Jewish farming colonies of Saskatchewan, scholar Anna Feldman donated her entire body of research to the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Que.

Among the material is audio cassettes with songs, interviews and oral narratives, personal memoirs and a wide range of other textual documents. It's a rich and highly relevant contribution that sheds light on those small colonies and the hopes and dreams of their Jewish inhabitants, says Judith Klassen, music curator at the museum.

"It really makes sense for it to be here," Klassen says. "The breadth of Anna's work is really exciting. For example, she didn't record only one particular genre of song as she looked at Yiddish song and culture. Rather, she recorded different types of music from a broad spectrum of people, including cantorial training, ornamentation, traditional song and storytelling."

Jews arrived in Saskatchewan in the 1880s, many fleeing from persecution in Europe. They established farming colonies with names like New Jerusalem, Sonnenfeld and Edenbridge and by 1930 those colonies were populated by thousands of Jewish farmers and their families. The Jewish colonies' decline started in the 1930s with the Depression and a drought. By the 1960s most of the farm colonists had left the land for larger cities. Today, all that remains is open prairie where homes and settlements once were and small cemeteries marking the graves of the original settlers. In Edenbridge, the Beth Israel Synagogue, constructed in Carpenter Gothic style in 1906 and used until the 1960s, is now a municipal heritage site. But for any kind of context about the lives lived here, you have to go to the museum.

Fortunately, material like Feldman's, which is now being processed for the public archives, is accessible. To immerse yourself in the collection you have to travel to Gatineau, but for those who are looking for specific documents, those can be ordered, copied, scanned or mailed. "We've already had inquiries from people interested in this collection, even from outside of Canada, which shows it's of interest beyond our borders," Klassen says.

Feldman is an accomplished scholar who obtained an ARCT in Singing, a bachelor of music and a master's degree in Canadian studies from Carleton University. In 1983 she received the Norman Pollock Award in Canadian studies. Today she resides in a seniors' complex in Toronto.

She began donating her collection in early 2000. The first 188 audio cassettes containing interviews with Jewish musicians, homesteaders, merchants and professionals who were part of the rural farming communities in Saskatchewan has been processed and is available in the archive catalogue. Part two of her collection is still being processed.

"In terms of Jewish cultural expression and settlement in Saskatchewan, this collection is foundational," Klassen says. Partly, that's due to Feldman's skill as an interviewer. "She's very pointed in her questioning and very thoughtful in how she asks questions. She allows her subjects to talk about their background and interests but guides them so she covers the key areas she is interested in. In the breadth of her fieldwork and interviews, you get a nuanced perspective on the experiences people had – for example, on anti-Semitism, but also on mutual respect. You see there's a broad spectrum of opinions even within the particular settlement. That's one of the really unique things about this collection."

A list of the material catalogued thus far is available on the museum's website at catalogue.civilization.ca. Search by author Anna Feldman to find a description of the material in each box, as well as a list of the subjects interviewed.

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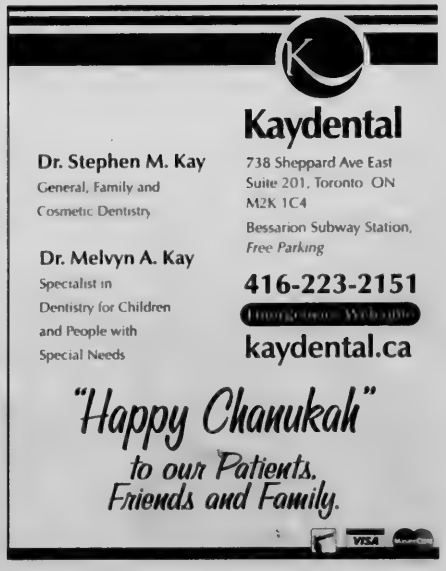

'Where is the big honking menorah for the front lawn?'

Toronto 32 Division now has its own menorah

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Every holiday season, when Toronto Police Service (TPS) Sgt. Lawrence Sager noticed his colleagues adorning the police station with Christmas decorations, it hit a nerve.

"As you know, around Christmas time, you have so much representation of the Christian faith, be it a nativity scene, or a Christmas tree or wreath," said Sager, one of three or four Jewish officers at 32 Division.

He said when he would vocalize his wish for Chanukah to be represented alongside Christmas, he always faced a little resistance from his colleagues.

"For years, at every division that I've worked at, they've never had a menorah up," said the 49-year-old Montreal native, who will be celebrating 25 years with the TPS in May.

"Years ago, I was a constable in this division. I would print out and hang up menorahs and type 'Happy Chanukah' under them. They would let me do that, but I would get comments like, 'Lawrence, what are you trying to do?'"

Sager, who says he's a Conservative Jew who observes Jewish holidays and sends his children to Jewish day school, said it was important to him that his community be represented at 32 Division.

Of Toronto's 5,400 police officers, Sager estimated that only about 50 are Jewish.

"Because we have so few [Jewish] policemen on our service, I have to do something for the Jewish community. We police these people, we serve these people, and a little bit of education goes a long way."

Toronto Police Service officers, from left, Insp. Myron Demkiw, Sgt. Lawrence Sager and Supt. Selwyn Fernandes stand proudly in front of a menorah at 32 Division.

Last year, when his division's Superintendent, Selwyn Fernandes, hung a Christmas wreath in the office, Sager presented him with a challenge.

"He was hanging up this huge wreath, and I said, 'What are you doing?'

"He said, 'Lawrence, it's Christmas time. Do you have something against Christmas?'

"I said, 'I have nothing against Christmas, but where is the big honking menorah for the front lawn?'"

Sager pleaded his case, telling Fernandes that 32 Division – which serves the community bordered by Steeles Avenue to the north and Lawrence Avenue to the south, and by the CN Rail line (near Dufferin Street) to the west, and Bayview Avenue to the east – has a larger Jewish population than any other TPS division.

"I said to my boss, 'We serve these people, yet we're polarized [this time of year] because we only have Christmas decorations. If you have Jewish people coming in, and they're in distress, or they're having problems, they can see that at the very least, we're recognizing their community. It might give them a little more comfort that they're talking to a policeman who may be little more sympathetic to them rather than someone who has no idea where they come from,'" Sager recalled.

Fernandes agreed to take up the challenge and said, "'I'll get you a menorah.'

"I said, 'OK, yeah, I'd like to see that.' I challenged him, but I didn't think he'd be able to deliver."

Fernandes called two men, David Stein and Michael Kuhl, with whom he'd established a connection through Gesher Canada, an organization that lobbies government agencies on behalf of the Orthodox community.

"Last year, he called and he said, 'We need a menorah to be supportive of the Jewish community and we want to be able to display a menorah for Chanukah.' They wanted a sizable menorah so it would make an impact," Kuhl said, adding that he was "pleasantly surprised," by the request.

He said he and Stein reached out to Chabad Flamingo founder and spiritual leader Rabbi Mendel Kaplan, who happened to have a six-foot, electrical menorah at his disposal.

Continued on page B 32

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Menorah displayed in front of police station

Continued from page B31

"Someone else was supposed to purchase it, but it fell through. So we saw the opportunity and we purchased it," Kuhl said.

It took just two weeks for Fernandes to meet Sager's challenge, and Sager was thrilled.

"But, once again, there was some eye-rolling. Before, it was just a bunch of paper menorahs that I would put up. Now there was a big one, and no one had ever heard of having a menorah at a police station anywhere in Canada, maybe even North America," he said.

"I started to get a little self-conscious because everyone knew I was behind it, and I didn't want anyone to think I was trying to infringe on Christmas. Now we've got this big menorah, bigger than a Christmas tree."

Not wanting to force his traditions on any of his colleagues who weren't interested, Sager told his boss that he would make the effort to come in every Chanukah evening to light the menorah.

"But he said, 'Lawrence, everyone has got to learn about everyone else's holiday. I don't want you to come in. I told the staff sergeants in charge that if they don't want to light it, they need to get someone to light it, and that it needs to be lit after sundown.'"

He said some of the people who seemed wary at the beginning, started to warm up to the idea.

"They got into it big time. They were interested to know how to light it, whether from left to right or right to left, because they didn't want to offend the Jewish community."

He said some of his colleagues began to ask him what Chanukah was all about, and he would try to frame it around the same message attached to Christmas.

"I told them Chanukah is the festival of light and represents a time when good prevailed over evil, resulting in a miracle. The presence of light... also represents peace and hope for all mankind," he said.

"I've had officers come to me and say, 'I used to have this view that Chanukah was competing with Christmas'... But they soon learned about it and they were asking me when we'd be putting it up again."

The menorah, currently displayed in front of the station near Yonge Street and Finch Avenue for the second time in as many years, has elicited an "incredible and very positive" reaction from the Jewish community.

"The Toronto Police Service is very dedicated to the community, and this is just one example of how they go out of their way to ensure that our community is well taken care of, along with the general public," Kuhl said.

"I hope this will encourage other organizations to show the same sensitivity."

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Sun, sea and a synagogue – exploring Curacao

Maureen Littlejohn
Special to The CJN

Curacao, a speck of rock 63 kilometres off the coast of Venezuela surrounded by crystal blue waters and famous for an aromatic liqueur, is not your average Caribbean destination. What really makes this Netherlands Antilles island special, though, is its deep Jewish heritage.

Mikve Israel-Emanuel Synagogue, built in 1732 and located in the capital city of Willemstad, is the oldest synagogue in continuous use in the Western Hemisphere. Enter and you might be surprised by what's underfoot. The floor is carpeted in soft, white sand.

"Some say the synagogue is patterned after the Tabernacle which our forefathers used in the Sinai desert during their 40 years of wandering there," explains Emlyn Peters, a Curacao tour guide and member of the congregation.

"Others say that during the Inquisition the 'Conversos' or Jews who took the Catholic faith to hide their belief, placed sand on the floors of their secret rooms to muffle the sound of their worship services."

The last explanation is the one Peters likes best.

"God commanded Abraham, 'Go forth and multiply like the grains in the sand and the stars in the sky.'"

This sand is not trucked in from a nearby beach. It is imported from the riverbeds of Suriname and Guyana and at one time even came from Israel. Why not use the stuff on Curacao's shores? Sea sand contains salt that would eat into the synagogue's lovely mahogany furniture. Curacao has no fresh water rivers. In fact, its drinking water is desalinated sea water.

Mikve Israel-Emanuel Synagogue's congregation was Sephardic Orthodox until 1964, when there was a merger with Temple Emanuel (Reform). Now Sephardic Reconstructionist, the congregation of 190 is led by American Hazzan Avery Tracht.

"In the old days my great aunts and grandmother would never sit together with the men," recalled Peters, adding, "men and women all sit together now."

Although Curacao's Jewish population is only 350 (a fraction of the island's 150,000 inhabitants), the number of visitors to Mikve Israel-Emanuel Synagogue is huge. Last year 22,000 people arrived, many coming from the docking cruise ships.

Visitors approaching the synagogue will first see a scalloped-roofed, lemon-yellow façade. Made of coral and limestone, the walls are filled with sea sand and plastered with lime mortar. Inside, the atmosphere is ancient, almost timeless. Light filters softly through blue windows and between four pillars representing the matriarchs (Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah) hang four 24-arm chandeliers molded in the Dutch porpoise pattern. They are lit on special occasions such as Kol Nidrei. It takes several hours to install the candles and three men to carry the heavy brass centre section for cleaning and polishing afterwards.

Mikve Israel-Emanuel Synagogue. Although Curacao's Jewish population is only 350, the number of visitors to the synagogue is huge. *(Maureen Littlejohn photo)*

Adjacent to the synagogue is the Jewish Cultural Historical Museum.

"We still use items you see in the glass cases," explains Myrna Moreno, the museum's welcoming curator. "For Chanukah we use a silver menorah from Amsterdam that dates from 1716. The cups are filled with olive oil and lit with a wick by one of the youngsters in our congregation."

Other prized possessions include the 350-year-old silver tray that is used for smashing goblets at wedding ceremonies, and a Sephardic Torah written in 1320, smuggled out of Spain before the Inquisition. Pictures of the Dutch royal family hang on one wall.

"The Netherlands was the first country to give us freedom of religion. Every rabbi here does a prayer in Portuguese to thank them," says Moreno. Nodding at a wooden Chair of Elijah in the corner, she notes, "That is 150 years old and people still ask to borrow it for the brit milah, circumcision ceremony."

How did Jews first come to Curacao? The island was settled by the Spanish in 1527 and taken over by the Dutch in 1634. (Britain and France owned it for small stints as well). Samuel Cohen was the first Jewish person to step foot on the island in 1634 when he accompanied Dutch explorers there as an interpreter. Twelve Jewish colonizing families arrived from Amsterdam in 1651. They were later joined by Jews fleeing Brazil after capture by the Portuguese. The Jewish settlers were involved with the Dutch West India Company and played a major role in shipping, importing supplies from Europe and

Continued on page B 34

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Distillery started by prominent Jewish family

Continued from page T 33

exporting tropical produce. As the community grew, they assisted other communities in Suriname and St. Eustatius and helped finance early synagogues in New York (Shearith Israel) and Newport, R.I. (Touro). Curacao's Jewish population peaked at 2,000 in 1780.

One prominent family, the Seniors (Sephardic Jews of Spanish and Portuguese descent), started the Curacao distillery more than 115 years ago. The plant, a big tourist destination, produces five colours and four flavours of Kosher certified Curacao liqueur. In the financial sector, the Jewish Maduro family is half of the Maduro-Curiel Bank, one of the largest private sector employers in the Dutch Caribbean. Their 19th century plantation house has been turned into a museum and the Mongui Maduro Library boasts an extensive collection of Antilles history and Judaica dating from the 17th century.

If you want to go to Curacao to enjoy the tropical climate and explore the island's Jewish history, transportation has recently gotten easier. WestJet introduced non-stop flights from Toronto in October and in December SunWing will begin offering all-inclusive vacation packages.

Although Curacao's Jewish population has dwindled, its legacy is massive. Unravel the threads of time on this delightful island and you'll embark on a fascinating spiritual journey.

The entrance post to the synagogue. [Maureen Littlejohn photos]

Inside the synagogue.

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Jewish links to West Africa buried in time

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

In the popular imagination, Timbuktu is a remote outpost, an almost mythical destination somewhere at the ends of the Earth, beyond which there be dragons.

As a trading centre in central Mali on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, Timbuktu is real, not legend, and not so remote that a community of Jews could not find it, settle there and do business for generations.

At one time in its history, a thousand years go, Timbuktu was an important caravan destination – a place where gold and salt were traded. Today the town's Jewish community is no more, its members long ago assimilated into the predominant Muslim population. But the elders among the Jewish descendants still possess unique documentation – marriage contracts, burial information – attesting to the vitality of that long ago Jewish community, according to Israeli Ambassador Gideon Behar, who served in the region from 2006 to 2011.

Timbuktu is not the only West African location to play host to a vital Jewish community. In The Gambia, Senegal and Cape Verde, traces of Jewish life can still be found, said Behar, who was in Toronto recently in his capacity as Israel's ambassador directing the department for combating anti-Semitism.

Behar said he was somewhat surprised to find a Jewish presence across Western Africa. Though he was posted in Senegal, his duties took him to Cape Verde, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Mali, where he found "there was a Jewish presence and there is still a Jewish presence in this area."

Israeli Ambassador Gideon Behar, second from left, is seen here with Gambians who have taken up Judaism on their own, including a local "rabbi," second from right.

"I saw it as a professional and a Jewish mission as the ambassador to find Jews in these places and to learn about Jewish history, the Jewish people and to discover cemeteries and ancient Jewish tombs," he explained.

"Timbuktu was the home of quite a large Jewish community in the Middle Ages," he said.

According to Kulanu ("all of us"), an organization dedicated to finding and assisting lost and dispersed remnants of the Jewish people, Jews there had been an important part of the caravan trade from Morocco, dating back to the 1500s.

In 1492, the same year as the expulsion from Spain, the local monarch in Timbuktu gave Jews the option of departing or converting to Islam. Most gave up their Judaism, but that did not mark the end of Jewish life. The Jewish population continued to be replenished for years afterwards by a small number of Jewish merchants from Morocco.

Interest in the Jewish roots of local Malian Muslims, who may number as many as 1,000, was initiated in the 1990s by a local historian, Ismael Diadie Haidara. He noted that Hebrew script could be seen on old trading documents. He also reported on local family names that had a Jewish origin and he cited the remains of synagogues and graves. In addition, a local tradition identified the residents of three villages near Timbuktu as "the Jews."

In Cape Verde, a small island country in the Atlantic off the coast of Senegal, "the interesting Jewish story there is that many of the inhabitants who came from Portugal, the colonial power, were Jews," said Behar. "They intermarried with the African population" and today you can still find many locals with the Jewish surnames of "Cohen," "Levi," and "Ben Shimol", as well as "Oliviera," which translates as olive tree.

"Today they're Christian but some of them do feel connected to Judaism and Israel and the Jewish people," he said.

One of the main cities on the islands is called "Synagoga," and the ruins of the house of worship there can still be seen.

During his tenure as ambassador, Behar organized a Rosh Hashanah service along with a meal, which was attended by many local people. "They are still interested in Jewish tradition and they want to connect to Israel and the Jewish people," he said.

Still, they aren't actually Jewish, so Behar took it upon himself to perform a mitzvah that had not been done in many years. Visiting the local Jewish cemetery, he recited kaddish, the prayer for the dead.

"I saw this as a Jewish obligation for me. Some had not had prayers for them in decades. It was important for me and their Jewish souls," he said.

Continued on page B 36

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Descendants of the children of Israel

Continued from page B 35

In Senegal, when he opened the official ambassadorial residence, he extended invitations to Jews temporarily in the country, as well as local dignitaries. Of the Jews who attended, some hailed from France while others traced their origins to North Africa. "But there were a few ethnic groups who claimed to be descendants of Jews. Today they are Muslims."

In eastern Senegal you can still find people who call themselves "Bani Yisrael (sons of Israel). They believe their ancestors came from the east ... 1,500 years ago. They were Jews."

During his sojourn, Behar heard stories of a Jewish kingdom in Senegal or Guinea in the 18th century.

In The Gambia, Behar found a small community "who started to adopt Judaism, to live Jewish lives." They maintain a synagogue, have a sefer Torah, wear kippot and adorn their homes with mezuzot.

And they read the Torah in a house of worship – on Sunday.

"They belong to a larger movement that originated in Nigeria in the 1960s that operates hundreds of these kinds of synagogues. They're growing in popularity," he said, adding that, "They don't claim Jewish descent, but according to them, Jewish traditions are closer to God."

They are evangelical Christians who are trying to get closer to Judaism. "They're great supporters of Israel and the Jewish people. They love Bible stories and want to learn more about Judaism."

Similarly, in Sierra Leone, he found a great interest in Israel and Jewish spirituality.

"It is everywhere in Western Africa," Behar said, adding that "self-proclaimed rabbis from the Caribbean" have come to Sierra Leone to teach locals about Jewish traditions.

Beyond the settled communities of western Africa, there's another group of nomadic herdsmen who may or may not have Jewish roots. They're called the Peul, Fula or Fulan people.

With a range that extends as far east as Chad and Sudan, the Fula numbers could be as high as 35 million. "They have a tradition that their origin is from Egypt, that they came from the east and are descendants of the children of Israel," Behar said.

Some scholars believe that they could be of Judaeo-Syrian origin, but others say they descended from nomads from North Africa and from sub-Sahara Africa.

Locals in Cape Verde celebrate Rosh Hashanah at a dinner hosted by Gideon Behar, Israel's former ambassador to the West African island nation.

As is the case for so many of the peoples of Africa, their origins, if not lost, are so obscure that they will be contested and discussed for generations to come as the stuff of legend.

Timbuktu was for generations an important trade centre in western Africa.

FUN AT THE BEACH

Two little children play in a plastic tub at Dor Tantura beach, between Haifa and Hadera. *[Flash90 photo]*

Tourists at Kibbutz Misgav Am see a different kind of view

Bernie Bellan
The Jewish Post & News

TIBERIAS — "You see that fence over there?" asks 73-year-old Aryeh Ben Yaakov. "Beyond that fence is 'La-la land'. That's where Hezbollah has thousands of rockets stored. Oh sure it looks peaceful enough now, but don't kid yourself. They're there all right."

The setting was Kibbutz Misgav Am, situated directly on the border with Lebanon, and overlooking the controversial Shebaa Farms, also the scene for a vicious terrorist attack in 1980.

I was there this particular day participating in a mission sponsored by Shurat HaDin (Israel Law Centre). On this, the fourth day of the mission, the 20 of us who were participating in it got our first glimpses of the kinds of views that most tourists who come to Israel do not have occasion to see.

We saw quite a bit more than merely the spectacular views of both Syria and Lebanon. We also heard the sound of artillery fire coming from Syria and looked down on the very houses that shielded Hezbollah fighters during the harrowing Israeli "operation" in Lebanon in the summer of 2006 – it was quite the experience, to say the least.

Looking out over the Golan Heights from Mount Bental. The green fields belong to Israel, everything brown belongs to Syria. In the distance lies a Druze village on the Syrian side whose inhabitants are loyal to the Assad regime.

There are so many ironies abut the turn of events that has occurred in this area of the Middle East, not the least of which is that Israel is a relative oasis of calm while so much of the Arab world is locked in deadly internal struggles.

But what might happen if some of those struggles resolve themselves? That was the question posed to our Israel Defence Forces guide in the Golan Heights, a young officer whose first name was given as Jonathan, and who gave us a detailed analysis of what might happen in the not-too-distant future, at least as far as Syria is concerned.

"You see that village down there?" he asked our group as we stood on the top of Mount Bental, which gave us a sweeping view of the Golan Heights extending far into Syria. Jonathan was pointing to a small village in the valley that lay beneath us. That village is called Majdal Shams, he explained. It's a Druze village that used to be in Syrian hands. Now it's under Israeli control.

"But over there," he said, pointing to another village, "that's also a Druze village, but it's in Syrian territory under Syrian government control and loyal to Bashar Assad's regime." Surrounding that village though, Jonathan explained, are two rebel-held villages.

At some point, the officer explained, "the rebels may attack the Druze village" which could lead to quite a bloodbath. It's likely then that those Druze villagers would ask for sanctuary in Israel as their backs would be to the wall with no other place to run. If that were to happen, the officer told us, Israel would allow them in. But by no means is Israel interested in becoming a large-scale refuge for Syrian refugees, he noted.

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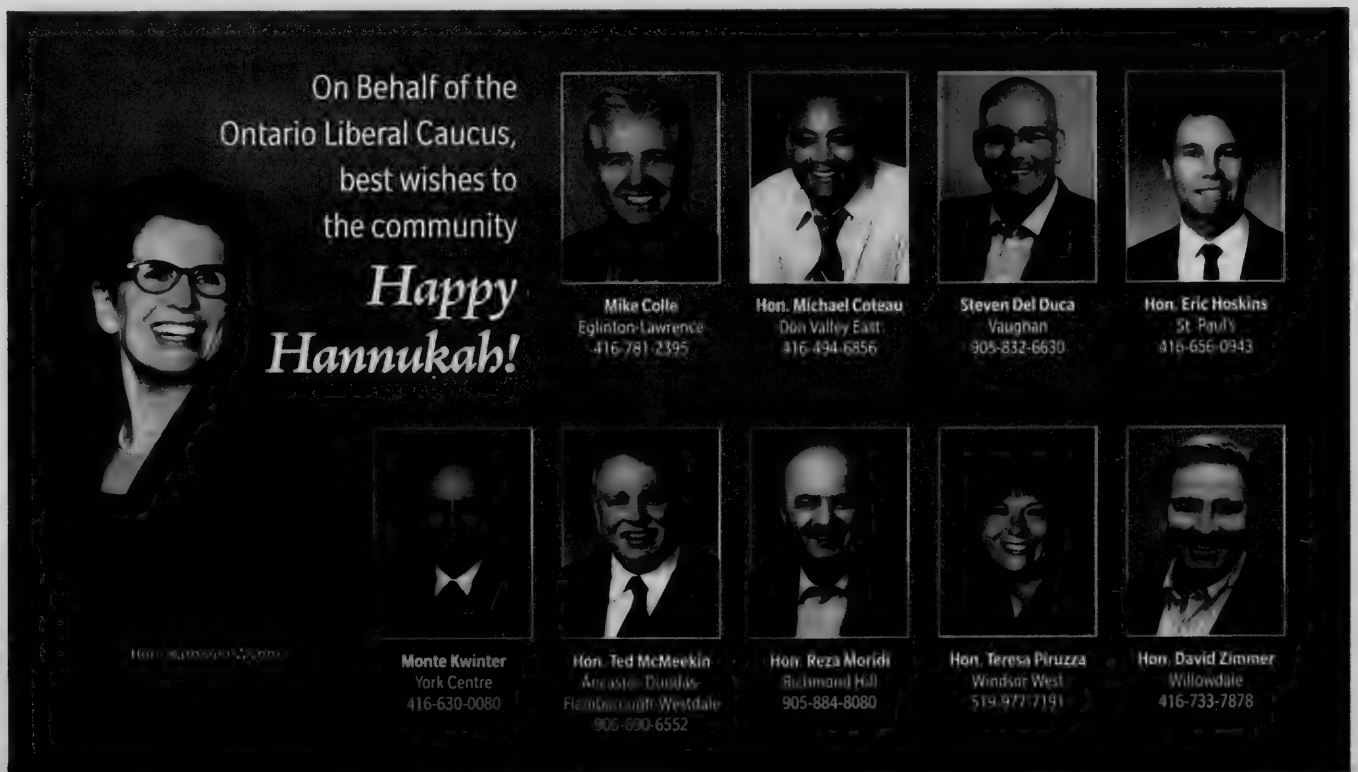

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Residents profess loyalty to Assad

Continued from page TB 37

Interestingly, but not all that surprisingly, he also remarked, there haven't been any refugees seeking sanctuary in Israel, other than wounded civilians and combatants who had sought medical help occasionally – and always received it from Israelis.

The officer suggested that after more than 60 years of demonizing Israel it's really no surprise that Syrians simply reject the idea of turning to Israel for sanctuary – no matter how dire the situation may be.

Jonathan went on to explain that the residents of Majdal Shams also still profess loyalty to the Assad regime even though their standard of living has improved immeasurably under Israeli control.

"I was walking through the main street of the village," he related, "when I saw a shop flying the Syrian flag. I asked the shop owner why, in spite of all that Israel has done for him and the rest of the villagers, he was still flying a Syrian flag.

"That shop owner explained it to me this way: 'Look,' he said. 'There have been four different Israeli prime ministers who were ready to give the Golan Heights back to Syria at one point or another. What do you think would happen to us if we suddenly found ourselves back in Syrian hands and the government knew that we had shown support for Israel?'"

The view of Lebanon from Kibbutz Misgav Am, on Israel's northern frontier. This picture gives a fairly good idea just how close Hezbollah is to Israel.

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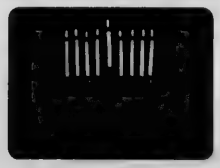

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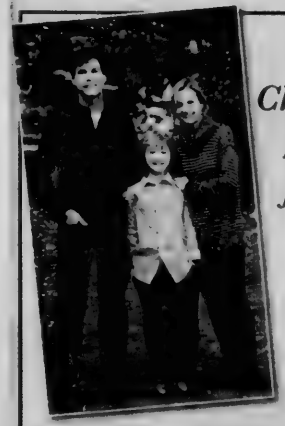

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Wishing you and your family a Happy Chanukah and a healthy New Year!

חג חנוכה שמח!

Border with Syria remains quite, but for how long?

Continued from page TB 38

As we stood on Mount Bental Jonathan pointed to an impressive looking array of towers and antennae situated on the peak of the adjoining mountain, Mount Avital. "That's one of several 'weather stations' we have around here," Jonathan noted. "They'll tell us 'whether' the Syrians are coming or not."

Such are the vagaries of the situations that all of Israel's neighbours face as they ponder what lies ahead – who will be in control and how much bloodletting there might be if someone is perceived to have been on the wrong side.

Pointing further south, Jonathan went on to say that while the rebels near where we were standing belonged to the Syrian Free Army, further south they're all jihadis.

"The jihadis have spelled out what their goals are," Jonathan said. "First they want to overthrow the Assad regime; second they want to establish Sharia law over all of Syria; and third they want to come after Israel.'

So, for the time being, as the Syrians continue to wage their bloody civil war, the border with Syria remains quiet – as it has for the past 40 years. But no one knows whether that will continue or for how long and, as a result, Israel continues to prepare for every contingency.

The situation along the Lebanese border is much the same. Hezbollah has remained quiet ever since the brutal conflict in the summer of 2006, during which Hezbollah fired thousands of missiles at Israeli targets.

Kibbutz Misgav Am is the only spot in Israel where you can see Lebanon, Syria and the Mediterranean Sea all from the same vantage point. It lies just metres from the border with Lebanon and even today its residents remain on heightened alert for a terrorist attack from Lebanon. As Ben Yaakov (who looked like an old American biker and spoke with a Midwestern drawl) showed us around the kibbutz, he constantly made ironic references to how little lies between his kibbutz and the lethal forces of Hezbollah, hidden for the moment but most assuredly there, Ben Yaakov insisted.

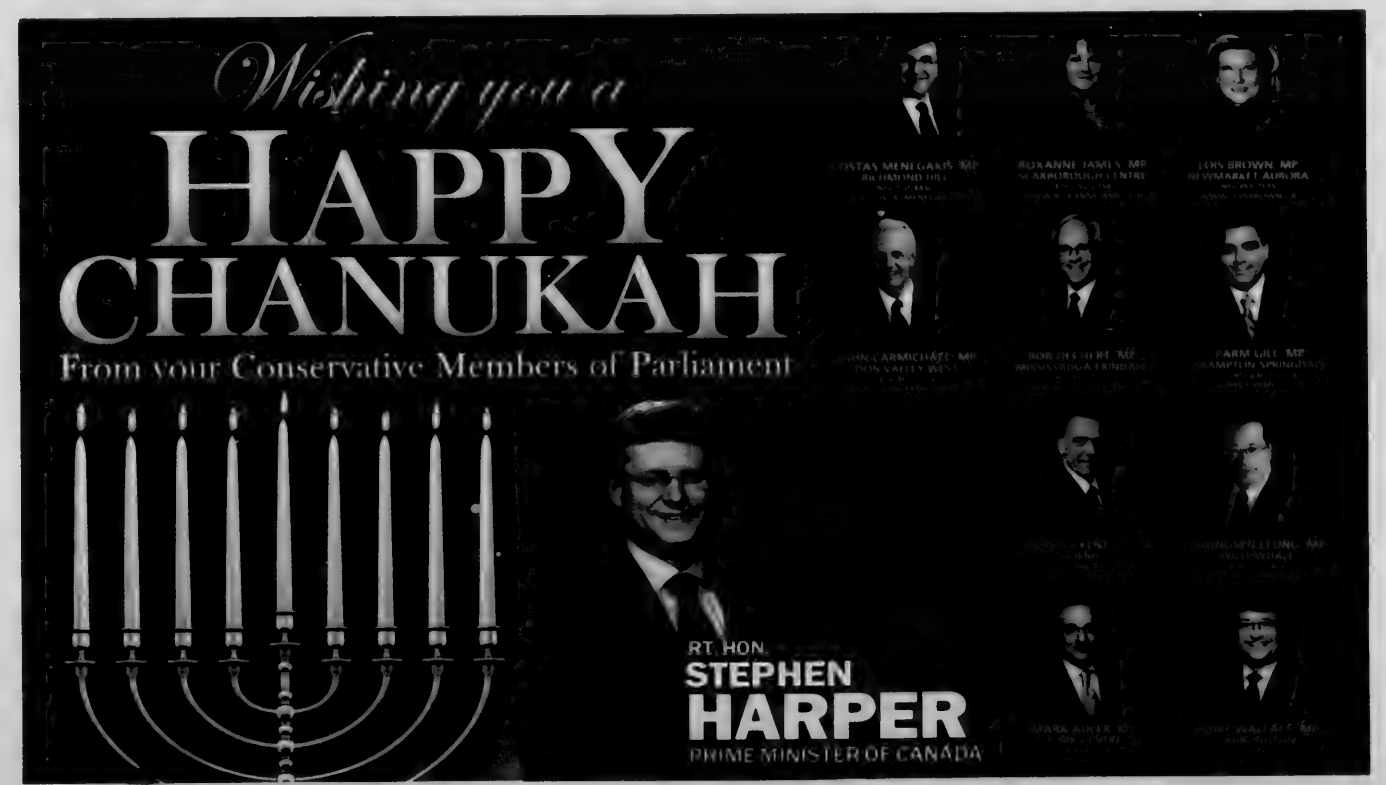
"You see this handgun?" he asked us, pointing to his holstered pistol. "I always walk around here with this gun." It may not do much to stop a whole band of men, Ben Yaakov noted, but in 1980 three terrorists snuck into Misgav Am in the middle of the night.

"They saw a light on in one building. It was the nursery. They broke in and took control," he told our group.

That incident eventually led to the three terrorists being killed, but only after two Israeli soldiers were also killed, along with one baby whose brain was bashed in because, as Ben Yaakov told us, "the baby wouldn't stop crying."

Ben Yaakov also noted that it is only in the past seven years that tourists have been allowed to visit Kibbutz Misgav Am. Before that time it was simply considered too dangerous to allow tourists that close to the border but, ironically enough, for the past seven years Hezbollah has been absolutely silent insofar as attacking Israel. Again that has more to do with the problems Hezbollah is now facing as its two main benefactors – Iran and Syria – find themselves quite preoccupied with their own domestic situations. But no one should lose sight of the fact that, while Israel has simply moved off the radar screen for the moment, at least as far as Syria and Hezbollah are concerned, that could change quite quickly. The truth, though, is that many in Israel wouldn't mind if the current internecine battle being waged in Syria were to continue indefinitely, offering Israel, as it has, an unprecedented respite from attacks.

This bullet-riddled wall is where Israeli soldiers were lined up and shot by their Syrian captors in the Yom Kippur War. The building is the former Syrian headquarters on the Golan Heights .



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Harper announces first trip to Israel

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Just before serenading 4,000 guests at Sunday night's annual Jewish National Fund (JNF) Negev Dinner with a selection of rock'n'roll hits, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced he will visit Israel next month.

A playful and relaxed Harper, the gala's honoree, predicted "a great trip" to Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian territories, and reminded the rapt crowd of his staunch and unabashed support for the Jewish state.

Noting that "these are dark days. I just wanted you to know that I understand where you're coming from on this," said Harper.

Calling Israel "a light of freedom and democracy in what is otherwise a region of darkness," he added: "We understand that the future of our country and of our shared civilization depends on the survival and thriving of that free and democratic homeland of the Jewish People in the Middle East.

"And I tell you friends, we understand that. And that's why Israel will always have Canada as a friend in the world," the prime minister said to wide applause and cheers from the crowd at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

Continued on page 11

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his wife, Laureen, arrive Sunday evening at the Jewish National Fund of Toronto's 2013 Negev Dinner, where he was honoured for his support of Israel and the Jewish People. *[Jason Ransom/PMO photo]*

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Netanyahu meets with Pope at Vatican

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gives Pope Francis a chanukiyah. *[Amos Ben Gershom/GPO photo]*

Lazar Berman
The Times of Israel

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with Pope Francis at the Vatican on Monday, his first encounter with the current Pope.

Pope Francis has previously met at the Vatican with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in October and with Israeli President Shimon Peres in April. Netanyahu met with the previous pope, Benedict XVI, in 2009, and with Pope John Paul II in 1997.

Citing an anonymous official Israeli source, *CNN* reported last week that the Pope was scheduled to make his first visit to Israel in May. The Vatican has not confirmed that report.

Six government ministers joined Netanyahu on the trip to Rome and were set to meet with Italian ministers.

The Pope and the prime minister reportedly discussed negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, security threats Jerusalem faces in the region from Iran and elsewhere, as well as recent European legislation banning circumcision and kosher slaughter,

Continued on page 21

Vayigash
Candlelighting: 4:24
Havdalah: 5:27
Greater Toronto Area

Broadway star says goodbye Spider-Man... hello Beautiful
Heebonics — page 31

Olmert says Israel has 'declared war on U.S.' — please see page 20

CANADA

Szegedi Opposed

MONTREAL — Opponents of a controversial Dec. 9 visit to Montreal by a former Hungarian neo-fascist leader who has embraced his newfound Jewish roots have been unable to sway organizers from Chabad of Westmount to rescind the invitation. Hungarian-Jewish Holocaust survivor Paul Herczeg and fellow countryman Peter Sipos met with Chabad's Rabbi Yossi Shanowitz, to no avail, they told *The CJN*. Opponents say the about-face by Csanad Szegedi, 31, is insincere and that he only embraced his Jewish identity after trying unsuccessfully to suppress the news through bribery. Chabad believes he's proved himself, including undergoing ritual circumcision and following Jewish practices under Chabad tutelage.

WORLD

Maccabi Head Dies

MIAMI — Global Jewish leader Guiora Esrubilsky, who presided over last summer's Maccabiah Games in Israel, died Nov. 26 in Miami of a heart attack at 66. The Argentine-born Esrubilsky was elected Maccabi World Union president in May 2010 and was planning to run for re-election of the Maccabi World Union next year. A prominent Argentine businessman based in Florida, he was elected a vice-president of the World Jewish Congress at the World Jewish Congress Plenary Assembly in Budapest in May 2013.

Brit Milah Ordered

JERUSALEM — Jerusalem's rabbinical court upheld a ruling requiring an Israeli mother to circumcise her son or pay a fine of $140 a day. Following the Nov. 24 ruling, the mother said she said would take the case to Israel's Supreme Court, which is a secular court. A Netanya rabbinical court ruled Oct. 29 she must have her son circumcised within a week. The baby, who was born a year ago, wasn't circumcised on the eighth day, as per Jewish custom, due to medical problems, and the father decided to insist he be circumcised when the couple began divorce proceedings in rabbinical court. The Jerusalem court judges indicated the mother could be withholding the procedure as leverage in the divorce, but she told *Ha'aretz* that after reading about circumcision, "I realized that I couldn't do that to my son." The Jerusalem judges noted the public and legal wrangling against circumcision in the United States and Europe. "The public in Israel stands united against this phenomenon," they wrote, "seeing it as another aspect of the anti-Semitic acts that must be fought."

English School Board To Defy Charter

MONTREAL — The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) has decided it will not comply with certain key provisions of Bill 60, the proposed charter of Quebec values, including the ban on overtly religious wear, if it becomes law.

Syd Wise

On Nov. 27, the public board approved a resolution, moved by commissioner Syd Wise, declaring that it will not adopt any policy to implement any of the related elements of the proposed legislation.

"The EMSB values the diversity of its students and staff and respects their personal and religious rights which are guaranteed both by the Canadian and Quebec charters of rights," Wise stated. "We cannot be party to a proposed legislation, which if passed, runs contrary to what we teach our students insofar as tolerance, respect of individual rights and religious freedoms are concerned."

Bill 60 states that public institutions must adopt policies to implement the charter and post those policies on their websites. The EMSB intends to present a brief at hearings in early 2014.

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Iran deal all trust and no verification, critic says

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Rafael Barak's bags hadn't even arrived from Jerusalem before the new Israeli ambassador to Canada took part in a conference call sponsored by the Centre for Jewish and Israel Affairs (CIJA) on the Iranian nuclear deal.

Echoing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's words, Barak, who officially took up his new post late last month, said that although many consider the Iranian nuclear deal a historic agreement, he considers it a historic mistake.

The hour-long conference call featured Barak, Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird, CIJA CEO Shimon Fogel, and Mark Dubowitz, executive director of the Foundation for Defence of Democracies.

The six-month-long interim deal, which was agreed to by the P5+1 and Iran on Nov. 24, freezes parts of Tehran's nuclear development program in exchange for a decrease of sanctions. Iran will not be allowed to enrich uranium beyond five per cent and must stop its development of the Arak plant. The International Atomic Energy Agency will also get more access for inspections.

"Skeptical" was a word used many times throughout the discussion of the deal.

Baird said the Canadian government would like to see the agreement succeed, but "we believe that countries earn the benefit of the doubt." Iran has not done so, he said, thus he remains "deeply skeptical."

Rafael Barak

Dubowitz, too, said he was wary of the agreement, especially since there's no way to truly ensure that Iran doesn't continue to develop nuclear weapons. The deal may set the program back, but physicists can continue to research other aspects of nuclear development.

If Iran continues its research on weaponization, once the deal expires in six months, the country may not be far from attaining nuclear warheads, he said.

"Geneva is all trust and next to no verifying, which is a very concerning issue," Dubowitz said.

It's not just about nuclear weapons, he added. Through sanctions relief, Iran has saved itself from a financial crisis, and he expects to see "billions of dollars flowing into the country" over the coming months.

Although sanctions relief has been estimated to be worth $7 billion, Dubowitz said if it's factored in that Iran will surely exploit loopholes, $20 billion is a more accurate figure.

Fogel said he worries that Iran is interpreting the agreement as a sign of weakening resolve in the West, and that it's important to distinguish between inducements and incentives. The deal offers the former more than the latter, he said.

"It's effectively trying to coax through concessions and undeserved relief, rather than driving home the point that there is a way for Iran to climb back into the family of nations – that is, coming into the compliance with and adhering to its international regulations," he said.

Despite the agreement, Canada and other countries that are dissatisfied with the deal can continue to pass anti-terrorism legislation, Dubowitz said, and Fogel said Canada should continue to enforce its existing sanctions against Iran.

Barak emphasized the importance of the sanctions, thanking Canada for its support of Israel.

"Iran is a country that is threatening us, and we feel it's something we have to deal with," Barak said, adding that the sanctions have had a positive effect, and thus should not be weakened.

The interim deal "is putting a lot of question marks on the future."

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THERE WILL BE NO JANUARY 2 EDITION

We will resume printing in the new year with the January 9 edition.

The CJN offices will be closed the week of December 23 and will re-open on December 30.

Meaning of Iranian nuclear deal is at best unclear

In his Nov. 25 blog post for the American Interest, Walter Russell Mead, an unusually shrewd analyst, reflected on the nuclear agreement reached in Geneva the day before between the P5+1 powers and Iran:

"[C]olour us unimpressed, both by the agreement and by much of the commentary around it. On the one hand, while we don't rule out a miracle, the chances are stacked against the interim deal producing a final settlement of the Iran nuclear issue. The White House would greatly prefer that nobody think about this for a while, *but nuclear deals with countries whose leaders actually want nuclear weapons tend to flop.* American negotiators have a long and virtually unbroken record in such cases of bringing home carefully worded agreements, hammered out in difficult meetings, that somehow don't stop the onward march of nukes" (emphasis added).

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On the other side, a number of commentators, such as Roger Cohen of the *New York Times*, expressed "hope" that the deal would work and bitterness toward Israeli leadership for raising profound concerns that the deal would almost certainly, and dangerously, flop.

With some exceptions, Canadian editorials expressed skepticism or raised questions about whether the agreement – a six-month interim plan constraining parts of Iran's nuclear program in exchange for limited sanctions relief – would result in the West's long-sought goal: a final, comprehensive agreement guaranteeing that Iran's nuclear program would be confined solely to peaceful civilian use – that is, no nuclear bombs.

"Can Iran's mullahs be trusted?" asked the *National Post* (Nov. 26). "The world has every reason to be skeptical… Iran has defied the United Nations Security Council, it has defied the International Atomic Energy Agency. Simply put, Iran has not earned the right to have the benefit of the doubt."

The same day, the *Globe and Mail* expressed more agnosticism than outright skepticism: "The interim deal reached on Iran's nuclear-weapons program is just that: interim. It's a way station on the way to somewhere else. Where? It's still too early to say.

"We know what the West wants out of these negotiations. What's unknown is what the Iranians want, or how much they're willing to give up…

"[Israeli Prime Minister] Benjamin Netanyahu…fears that this means Iran will be able to keep sufficient facilities to build a bomb, just on a slower timetable. The Obama administration believes that it is close to achieving the end of Iran's nuclear-weapons program. Who is right? We don't yet know. But in a few months' time, we will. It's a risk worth taking."

The very next day the Obama administration's guarded optimism that a deal with Iran could be achieved (with stringent controls and an intrusive inspection regime of Iran's nuclear facilities) encountered a serious setback when Iran accused the U.S. State Department, which had posted an analysis of the deal, of misrepresenting what had been agreed to in Geneva.

That was followed by a State Department admission that, despite all the prior wrangling over the terms of the agreement, the Americans couldn't even specify when the six-month interim period was to begin. The failure to have pinned this down allowed Iran a "window" of time to keep enriching fuel as before – that is, toward a weapons-grade level uranium.

The State Department spokesperson, Jen Psaki, was left in the embarrassing position of having to admit that, after more technical details were worked out, it was her "guess" that "the clock would start." (Only at that point would Iran be required to limit its enrichment to five per cent.)

Just how the Americans and the Europeans could not have confirmed the start time of the agreement left a lot of people shaking their heads and pondering what other loopholes remained to be discovered.

To say the least, it was not a promising start.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations at the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

CHANUKAH GIVING: Children from Torah Tots Preschool Nursery class pose with the Chanukah gifts they gave to the children of Chai Lifeline who have terminal illnesses. With the children are preschool director Goldie Plotkin, left, and teacher Michelle Parham.

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A first step?

When the deal on Iran was announced, Amos Yadlin quipped that the official reaction in Israel might lead one to think Iran had been given a green light to develop nuclear weapons. The head of the Tel Aviv-based Institute for National Security Studies (and former chief of military intelligence) was responding to comments like Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's "the deal is a historic mistake," former National Security Council head Yaakov Amidror's, "a failure of diplomacy," and Israeli Intelligence Minister Yuval Steinitz's "the deal is based on "deceit and self-delusion."

Skeptics are right to be concerned. But there's lots of daylight between Israel's official, heavy-handed and scornful position and sober analysis of the deal's positive and negative elements. That discussion is ongoing in Israeli security forums and shouldn't be ignored.

To begin with, the interim deal is just that – a framework that allows negotiations to continue. At best, it freezes Iran's capabilities and rolls back several egregious aspects, but doesn't destroy them. Clearly, a permanent deal will have to be far tougher.

This leads to the unresolved debate over the end game. Israel wants to destroy Iran's capability to develop nuclear weaponry and so far has insisted on removing all enriched uranium. (Iran can enrich its low-grade civilian use uranium to nuclear-weapons levels within a few months.) But the interim agreement implicitly acknowledges that Iran will continue to enrich civilian-use uranium in future, giving it more leeway than previous UN Security Council resolutions. This critical question will have to be addressed.

There are numerous other issues to consider and forthcoming negotiations may well fall apart. If the West stays firm, then failure will clearly be Iran's fault. But if the Geneva negotiations had failed, Iran would have forged ahead with construction of its heavy water plant for plutonium enrichment, uranium enrichment would have continued, sanctions might have cracked and Israel would be blamed for pressing for a deal that would bring Iran to its knees.

The issue of trust has been invoked frequently in the last 10 days. When it comes to Iran, assume it can't be trusted, but wants to ease the crippling burden on its economy. That's why the sanctions regime must hold tight now without further reductions and why monitoring mechanisms must be strictly executed by the International Atomic Energy Agency and adhered to by Iran during the interim period.

At core, though, is the question of Israelis' trust in U.S. President Barack Obama. They know his (and the American public's) aversion to military action and don't believe his assurance that all options remain on the table. To make a permanent deal happen, Obama has to work hard with hardliners in Washington who oppose the interim deal and may try to undo even what's already been agreed to and, most importantly, to assuage Israeli concerns.

Finding common ground depends on Israel, too, and one can only hope that rhetoric is quickly replaced by substantive, co-operative dialogue. Because so far, at least, a deal is better than no deal, and it's certainly better than a risk-fraught Israeli strike. And if successful, it might be a first step toward defanging Iran as the key destabilizing force in the region.

Shira Herzog

Dry Bones

IRAN THREATENING TO DESTROY ISRAEL AND MORE WORRIED ABOUT
THE POSSIBILITY OF ISRAEL STOPPING IRAN FROM DOING SO!
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Synagogues need to be relevant

While it is gratifying to note ("Conservative shuls wrestle with non-Jews in pews," *The CJN*, Nov. 21) that rabbis recognizing that the Conservative movement is in trouble are "being challenged to rethink positions that in the past we accepted almost as dogma," the focus on how to involve or integrate intermarried families into shul rituals is, with the greatest respect, missing the bigger challenge. The real question is, "How do we make the synagogue experience relevant once again to any and all of its congregants and attendees?"

While it is true that the length of the service, who can or cannot take part in the service, and how, ought to be examined, what the rabbis ought to be really debating is the role of the clergy and the synagogue itself in the lives of the people they are trying to reach. If the synagogue is no longer the only place where Jews can safely gather and say, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival or Aroma seem to be viable alternatives, clergy have no choice but to see themselves in a different light.

Synagogue leadership must find ways to make their "house" the primary gathering place for Jews once again, a place where intimacy and spirituality can together be sought or found with both clergy and fellow Jews. Programs that create intimacy, warmth, a welcoming atmosphere with increased spirituality as a goal, and that attract our young people, must be explored and tried, because a "talk to you service" in a language that many do not understand, that requires silence unless voices are joined in prayer and that was copied from the church is simply not working for us anymore.

Ron Hoffman
Toronto

Mulcair's policies criticized

It's nice to know that NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair would make Canada a real "player" in the peace process if, God forbid, the NDP would form a government ("NDP gov't would be Mideast player: Mulcair, *The CJN*, Nov. 21). It's no secret which geopolitical interests and constituencies Mulcair must cater to in order to maintain his party's status as Her Majesty's "loyal" opposition. Canada's Jewish community, regardless of which faction he considers most sympathetic, isn't one of them.

His Quebec electoral base has been historically indifferent to foreign relations at the best of times and very cool to Israel's position vis-a-vis the Palestinians, according to countless polls over many years. Quebec's overrepresented contribution to UN officialdom and the attitudes of Quebec's many personnel in Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs are hardly a secret. Any skillful interview with Mulcair should de-emphasize the Middle East, but ask him about his position on the Boundaries Extension Act, should Quebec decide to separate unilaterally. Then we'd all see where he really stands.

Norman L. Roth
Toronto

Iran continues funding violence

It is interesting that with the recent agreement supposedly slowing down Iran's program to build atomic weapons that there has been no comment about the negative effects of lifting many of the sanctions against Iran.

For starters, Iran now has more funds available to support terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas and to continue funding the murderous regime of President Bashar Assad of Syria. I guess in diplomatic circles it would be considered impolite to raise those issues throughout the many hours of discussions that led to this dubious interim accord. Presumably, the handshakes at the conclusion of the meeting failed to take note of the blood on the hands of the Iranian representatives.

Bert Raphael
Canadian Jewish Civil Rights Foundation
Toronto

Shul memorabilia sought

In 2014, the First Narayever Congregation, downtown Toronto's traditional egalitarian synagogue, will celebrate its 100th anniversary. In preparation for our centennial, we are seeking memorabilia (photos, documents, programs, newsletters, etc.), as well as memories and stories from families who were connected with the shul or the surrounding neighbourhood during its century of history. If you can help, please contact the synagogue office at 416-927-0546 or centennialcelebrations@narayever.ca.

Janet Horowitz
Toronto

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Rob Ford and the dangers to kosher speech

Dave Gordon
Special to The CJN

After months of allegations and suspicions, several weeks ago, Toronto's embattled Mayor Rob Ford ignited a media firestorm by admitting to smoking and buying crack cocaine while serving as mayor.

Reports of Ford's behaviour circulated around the globe, punctuated by late-night television satire, but two experts on kosher speech say there are limits to how much information we should consume, and how much we ought to share at the water cooler if we are to be sensitive to gossip and its perils.

There's a difference between freedom of speech and kosher speech, says one authority, even when what's being said is true.

"Lashon hara [literally, bad language] by definition has to be true. Yet just because it's true, doesn't give you the license to tell other people," said editor and publisher Danny Levy of Mazal Elul Congregation in Brooklyn, N.Y.

"If everything is hearsay, and nothing's proven factually, you can't report on it even if it's commonly heard. You have to have your hands on the proof before even talking about it."

Levy is publisher and editor of a series of books by the early-20th-century Polish rabbi Israel Meir Kagan. Rabbi Kagan – also known as the Chafetz Chaim – developed renown for his elucidation and clarification of the laws of lashon hara. Levy is the first to translate a complete series of Rabbi Kagan's books in English.

The Chafetz Chaim, Levy noted, says there is no victimless talk when one speaks degradingly of another person.

"[This is] especially true when any language evokes financial harm, physical harm, fear, conflict or anguish. It doesn't touch on the concept of true or not true," Levy says, quoting the Rambam.

"The Torah outlines a real structure for what's permitted to speak and listen to."

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford [Dave Gordon photo]

The Torah tells the Jewish people not to be talebearers and gossipmongers (Leviticus 19:16).

Despite good intentions, when Miriam critiqued Moses to her brother Aaron, she is punished by God with a serious skin condition.

Unkosher speech can be seen in daily life in various forms.

One example is telling an otherwise uninvolved third-party about a quibble you had with another.

It can be a facial expression when discussing another person.

It can be forwarding, or CCing to another, an email with incriminating or potentially embarrassing information.

In a work setting, human resource professionals must dodge the conversation when hearing about personal issues from others pertaining to an applicant.

Ethically and halachically, discussing these issues in an interview setting is strictly forbidden.

Lashon hara, after all, is considered by the sages to be one of the worst sins committed, equal to murder, adultery, and idol worship combined (Tractate Peah 1:1 and Talmud Arachin 15a).

That's because it can destroy reputations, tear apart relationships and humiliate victims.

A victim of ruinous speech doesn't have to forgive the speaker of lashon hara, since the harm cannot be undone, according to the Jerusalem Talmud, "because the damage just goes on and on," as Rabbi Joseph Telushkin says in an online video from SinaiLive.

"They can't reach all of the people they spoke to... so you've suffered irrevocable damage."

Rabbi Telushkin is author of several books on Jewish ethics, including a book on the topic of gossip, *Words That Hurt, Words That Heal: How to Choose Words Wisely and Well.*

"All human beings have things in their lives they want hidden," he told *The CJN.*

"It is wrong to go around unearthing secrets in other people's lives, knowing there are secrets in our own lives that would be embarrassing if they became known."

In terms of the public's right to know scandalous information about a politician, Rabbi Telushkin, however, draws a distinction between the personal and the public.

"Let's say you uncover the fact that a politician is committing adultery. I don't think that's the public's business," he said.

"But if he says adultery is fine, or makes no effort to hide it, then he's flagrantly showing his lack of respect."

In terms of politicians, holding public office generally means adhering to society's behavioural standards.

"If someone is flouting them, as from what I understand Ford is, then he is in a sense introducing it into the public discourse," says Rabbi Telushkin.

"With public drunkenness and boorishness, if you present yourself that way and do so consistently... common sensibly, you lose the right that people are going to keep those secrets for you."

Levy agreed, saying that "it's out of the bag. It's out in the open."

Still, he said, "water-cooler discussion" about politicians' indiscretions often do devolve into character-maligning gossip, even if unintentionally.

That risks causing the listeners to become desensitized to gossip. As well, the speakers will tend to associate the subject only with negative traits.

"Even when one speaks negatively about him, one should not lose sight of the things that are positive about him... you don't have to speak about the person in a particularly demeaning way," Rabbi Telushkin said, adding that one should not talk about a person's flaws excessively or read about the minutiae of each scandal.

"One of the ideas behind lashon hara is that the person [discussed] becomes exclusively identified with the nasty things in their lives."

Dave Gordon is a freelance journalist whose work has appeared in some 40 publications worldwide and who has co-edited a volume of the Chafetz Chaim's work dedicated to lashon hara.

Kosher speech: some definitions

Shmirat halashon – laws of kosher speech

Lashon hara – true speech about someone that could change a listener's perspective about the person, usually for the worse, and causes damage to the person (in reputation, finances, emotional anguish or otherwise)

Rechilut – sharing information about a person in a way that causes hatred toward the subject, or between the listener and the subject.

Motze shem ra – negative speech about another person that includes a fabrication

Source: Torah.org and www.tinyurl.com/LASHONH

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A coalition of conscience must denounce Quebec charter

Gil Troy
in Montreal

In politics as in engineering, subtleties count. Just as you can't make a workable machine based on approximate measurements, because nothing will fit, you can't function effectively with sloppy terminology and blurred distinctions, because nothing will make sense. Unfortunately, Quebec has recently witnessed an epidemic of slackness and Orwellian absurdity that has inflamed tensions and darkened the collective mood, within the Jewish community and beyond. Misleaders take note: sponsorship is not censorship, and oppression is not freedom.

In November, the decision my Montreal's Federation CJA to disinvite harsh anti-Israel critics from Le Mood, the festival of Jewish learning it sponsors, triggered a predictable – but hypocritical – outcry. The speakers violated the mainstream Jewish consensus by rejecting Israel's right to exist and associating with organizations that spread the lie connecting Israel to the discredited South African apartheid regime. Inevitably, their supporters yelled "censorship."

Pulling sponsorship isn't censorship. In open societies like Canada, it's hard to censor – meaning ban – speech. Governments shouldn't suppress speech; that would be censorship. But why should a communal organization underwrite, sponsor or pay for speakers who reject the community's consensus values? Do feminists host male chauvinists at their conferences, or do gays host opponents of gay marriage so that everyone learns all points of view?

Moreover, cries of suppression are hard to believe when Israel's ideological enemies make their case in so many forums – on campus, in the blogosphere and through the media. Federation CJA sponsors, underwrites and pays for a much broader and diverse range of speakers than many other communities do. Hopefully, in the future, the many people who represent the Jewish community will beware inviting Israel-haters to communal events to avoid the messiness of disinviting them. But Federation CJA was justified in defending its core values and refusing to bankroll Israel-haters.

At the same time, we've recently seen a growing distortion in the debate over the Parti Québécois' authoritarian charter of values, which should be called the charter that devalues diversity. This initiative concerns possible government actions where the bias should favour maximizing freedom and individual autonomy.

In their desperate attempt to justify this unjustifiable assault on freedom, individualism and religious liberty, separatist extremists are committing acts of historical hijacking. In their Nov. 18 letter to the *New York Times*, Quebec's minister for democratic institutions, Bernard Drainville, and its minister responsible for the Montreal region and international affairs, Jean-Francois Lisée, invoked one of America's patron saints of liberty, Thomas Jefferson, to rationalize the Quebec government's current onslaught against religious freedom.

Demonstrating shocking ignorance of Jefferson and America's liberal democratic philosophy, the two mentioned Jefferson's commitment to building a "wall of separation between church and state" to support the Parti Québécois' proposed ban on public employees wearing "conspicuous religious symbols on the job," in a province where even librarians and doctors would be defined as public employees.

What they missed is that America's founders wanted separation of church and state to protect church *from* state. Jefferson defended liberty and individualism throughout his career, including religious freedom. Invoking Jefferson to justify this illiberal, authoritarian law is like invoking Albert Einstein to support medical quackery.

I invite the two ministers – along with the Jewish community's "Le Mood" critics – to enroll in one of my U.S. history courses at McGill University to learn who Jefferson was, what the United States stands for, and what freedom and tolerance, pluralism and autonomy, truly are.

While studying, they'll learn that Quebec is now demonstrating a classic pathology. Demagogic politicians started this initiative to win votes among those more motivated by anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiment than anti-Semitic sentiment per se. But we're seeing a monster being unleashed. In stirring fears of the "other," we're seeing difference demeaned, individuals menaced and true oppression looming.

These political demagogues are to blame for every act of harassment, physical or verbal, directed against any hijab-, sheitel-, kippah- or turban-wearer. In an act of cynicism and shortsightedness, leaders played to the worst instincts of their most extreme supporters, thus validating ugly behaviour from the top. Leaders in a democracy are supposed to appeal to our better angels. We let dictators do the kind of damage now being done to Quebec's delicate social fabric.

We need a coalition of conscience throughout Canada – but led by our French Canadian brothers and sisters – to stand strong and denounce this, in the name of democracy, pluralism and not that word I hate, tolerance, but rather real, respectful acceptance of each other's freedom to be different.

Rob Ford and the lessons we teach our kids

Urban Writer
Avrum Rosensweig

It's difficult to understand the motivations behind the lessons we teach our children.

When I was little, I was told by parents and teachers that name-calling is wrong. The lesson I digested was that it's inappropriate to speak disparagingly of others, particularly if my words act like slings and darts and cause great pain. As Jews, we're instructed by our sages to speak cleanly, to use *lashon nakee* (pure speech).

Although it was said that "names can never hurt you," the truth is they can. We've all felt the sting of verbal affronts. It can be agonizing to be called an idiot, a fool or a loser.

Yet when Toronto Mayor Rob Ford's life began teetering, that lesson – not to partake in name-calling, the one we continue to teach our children today – completely faded away for so many, almost as if it never existed.

Barrages of invectives and abusive tirades began showing up, without excuses, in newspaper headlines, email threads, online articles and interviews, and in conversations between individuals.

Ford was regularly referred to as a buffoon and fat. For some reason, it seemed to be open season on our mayor's weight, as if his fall from political grace was tied to his generous girth. Late-night television shows labelled Ford the younger brother of an overweight comedian who passed away a few years ago.

Ford has been called "scum" in conversations I've heard, a name generally reserved for the lowest of the low in our society, like bikers or individuals who rip off the elderly. The shine of our mayoralty has dropped like concrete falling off a cliff, and Ford has revealed the cracks of his character in a way that few of us want to see.

I think this husband and father has done something that's truly anathema to the Canadian way – he has shown his weakness, and the wretched side of his spirit. While we felt sick to our stomachs, we called him names – the exact thing we tell our children not to do – and we did so because we felt compelled to tuck Ford's fat away, back into his pants, so we couldn't see it, and perhaps fool ourselves into believing it was no longer there.

Ford has made many Torontonians and Canadians wriggle in their seats. The fact he's a large man who doesn't follow the rules of this culture embarrasses us, because we do our ever-best to avoid seeming, feeling or looking fat.

The Canadian way is to hide the blemishes under layers of defensiveness and never mention this "hideous" physical defect. So when Ford's tie is undone and his waist prominent, we turn red with disgust, because within his extra poundage, we see our own cellulite and lumpiness. We are a judgmental society that leaps at opportunities to take a pound of flesh from someone else, particularly if they're in the public domain. So we call them scummy and useless, even though we know their children, and ours, are hearing these epithets.

Why? Because it makes us feel better about ourselves.

I believe Ford should leave his position immediately, because he's under police investigation, has admitted to doing very illegal things and simply is not living up to the expectations of a "moral mayor." I think it does matter what a mayor does in his private life, and it certainly makes a difference that the man in charge of our budgets and police force drives while inebriated.

I think an apology should be forthcoming, however, from the people of our city and all of those on-air hosts who made fun of this man with no concern for his reputation or theirs, and what we refer to as fair play.

I think, too, that we should be introspective and dig deeply to determine what it is about Ford and his actions that has turned much of the public into a mob, unconcerned with the societal ramifications of verbally tearing this man apart, cutting him into pieces through name-calling.

Why do we really care if our children call each other names?

Avrum.rosensweig@veahavta.org

UJA Federation CEO plans to step down

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

By next year at this time, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto will have a new CEO in place, Ted Sokolsky, federation's president and CEO, announced last week at the organization's annual general meeting.

"The clock is ticking and this is an organization that plans for the future... Since I turned 62, I knew it was time to press the clock, and accordingly, the board will now begin a search for a new CEO to replace me. If all goes well, a year from now, we'll have a new CEO," Sokolsky said, adding that he plans to help his replacement transition into the role.

"This September marked my 27th year at UJA Federation and my 10th year as CEO. This is also the month I turned 62... I had always planned to retire at 65," he said.

Following his announcement, Richard Venn, the chair of the board of directors, thanked Sokolsky for his years of leadership and highlighted some of his major accomplishments.

"Looking back, over Ted's leadership, the annual campaign has doubled to over $60 million," Venn said, adding that throughout Sokolsky's tenure, federation built the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life at the University of Toronto, as well as the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus and the Schwartz-Reisman Centre in Vaughan; completed the expansion of the Lipa Green Centre, and renovated and reopened the Miles Nadal JCC.

"The infrastructure that UJA Federation will enjoy for generations to come is certainly Ted's legacy for all of us. We will be forever grateful for his perseverance and determination," Venn said.

Ted Sokolsky

Morris Perlis, the federation board of directors' senior vice-chair, is heading a search committee that will begin its search in the next calendar year, "with the expectation of having a new CEO fully engaged by the next AGM," he said.

"We want to maintain the momentum of the fundraising projects and programs that are underway," Venn added.

One of federation's biggest priorities is the continued development of the Sherman Campus, on Bathurst Street between Sheppard and Finch avenues.

As of last March, federation had raised $100 million for the campus and still needed to raise another $35- to $40 million.

Its family of buildings will replace the old Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Leah Posluns Theatre, which were demolished in 2009. So far, only the Lipa Green Centre and the Gales Family Pavilion have been completed.

"The federation has a huge and daunting agenda ahead in the year to come just to continue to deliver on the promises and commitments we have undertaken to date," Sokolsky said.

He said the goal is to break ground on the next phase of the Sherman Campus development in late 2014 or early 2015.

According to a handout at the meeting, the start of Phase 2 depends on "sufficient donor funds, municipal approvals and approval by UJA Federation's board of directors. The project will take approximately 24 to 30 months from the start of construction to completion of these new facilities."

Throughout the meeting – which featured a keynote address by Irvin Studin, editor-in-chief and publisher of *Global Brief*, an international affairs magazine – federation leaders highlighted the organization's programming and financial successes throughout the past year.

According to the handout, federation's total revenue from all sources increased to $142.7 million in 2013 from $87 million in 2012. The value of its assets increased to $462 million, from $445 million, and the return on foundation investments was 10 per cent this year, compared to 0.3 per cent last year.

"The current year shows a significant increase primarily due to one-time donor-designated gifts," said federation council member Jeff Cohen.

"Combining annual revenue for the year of $142 million is a significant leap from the prior year due to an increase in one-time designated gifts, an increase in annual campaign gifts, an increase in gifts to the Jewish Foundation [of Greater Toronto] and a significant increase in income from securities."

From the $60 million raised during the 2012 UJA Campaign, $52.5 million has been allocated to programs including Israel/overseas and national programs, which received nearly $17 million, formal Jewish education, which received $12 million and social service programs, which received $6 million.

Despite the financial successes, Sokolsky said the Pew Research Centre survey of U.S. Jews that reported high intermarriage rates reminded him to "never rest on your laurels and you can never stop tapping into the passions of the next generation."

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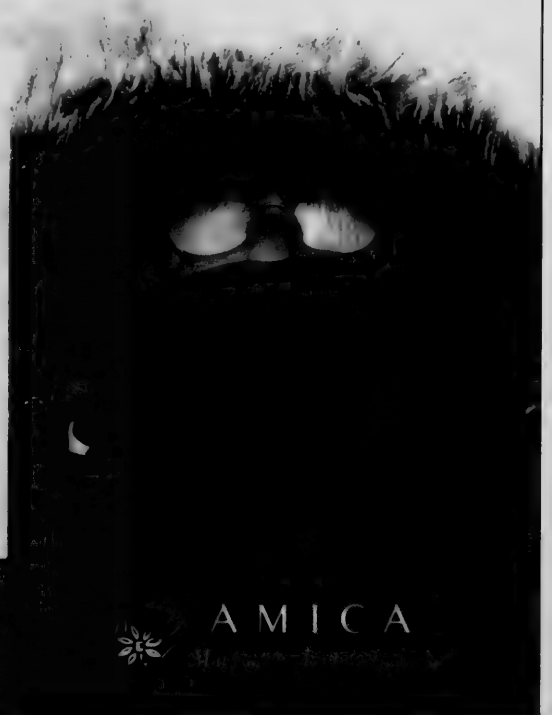

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Trudeau backs Israel, slams Quebec charter

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Days before Prime Minister Stephen Harper was feted by the Jewish National Fund at its annual Negev Dinner, Liberal Party Leader Justin Trudeau appeared before a friendly audience in a Toronto synagogue to present his vision as a potential future prime minister of Canada.

His message was one of steadfast support for the State of Israel as a fellow democracy, backing for international negotiations with Iran to curtail its nuclear program, opposition to the proposed Quebec charter of values as an attack on minorities, including Jews, and an economic approach that would tackle income inequality with a policy for growth, education and international trade.

Trudeau also took part in a Chanukiyah-lighting ceremony at Beth Tikvah Synagogue during his Nov. 28 visit. He was the first speaker in the shul's Visions for Canada series, which will feature representatives of the three main national political parties speaking on issues of concern to the Jewish community.

In a brief interview with *The CJN*, Trudeau was asked how the Liberals could recoup some of the political support within the Jewish community that the party has lost in recent years to the Tories, in part due to the latter's backing of Israel.

Trudeau acknowledged Harper's "strong and steadfast support for Israel," but he said the Tories have used that support as a "competition point" to attract voters.

"I feel all parties should be equal in our support of Israel, the only democracy in a very challenging region," Trudeau said.

Later, during a public question-and-answer session, when asked by Beth Tikvah spiritual leader Rabbi Jarrod Grover about support for Israel, Trudeau said, "No question that Canada must always be a strong, true friend of Israel," and he accused the Conservatives of turning that support into "a divisive political issue."

Justin Trudeau

Harper and the Tories aren't the only ones to back the Jewish state, he noted. Former Liberal prime minister Paul Martin had shifted Canadian policy on Israel to one that was more supportive at the United Nations, he said.

As for the Iranian nuclear program, Trudeau said it "poses an existential threat to Israel, but goes far beyond that. It poses an existential threat to the Middle East and to the world."

"It is clear that a nuclear-armed Iran is unacceptable."

The recent agreement negotiated by the P5+1 countries, a group that includes the United States and several western European nations, "is a positive step," he said.

But, he cautioned, "it will require an awful lot of vigilance and attention to make sure Iran lives up to its obligations in the next six months."

As for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's concerns that the deal is a mistake, Trudeau said, "While I understand the skepticism of the Israeli prime minister, I choose to be optimistic."

Asked about Quebec's charter of values, Trudeau called it an attack on the province's minorities.

If you focus too much on its effects on fundamental freedoms, "you already miss the point," he said. It's not about values and solidifying a secular state. "It's about politics."

The Parti Québécois, which governs Quebec, is faced with a poor economy, he said. "They don't want to fight a battle on the economy. So they do what they do, fall back on identity politics, us versus them."

Trudeau called it "a deeply cynical exercise. This is an invented problem by people looking to change the channel."

Questioned on income inequality, Trudeau described it as "the great challenge of our time."

In the past 30 years, the economy has expanded by 110 per cent while median incomes have risen by 14 to 15 per cent. From the 1950s to 1970s, 100 per cent economic growth was matched by 50 per cent income growth, he noted.

Trudeau said he would focus on the importance of education, preparing young people for the new economy, whether in universities, colleges or trade schools.

He also advocated global investment and support for trade initiatives. Companies that engage in international trade pay wages that are 50 per cent higher that those that do not, he said.

"The best way to grow the economy is from the middle out and not the top down," he added.

With the microphone open to the audience, Trudeau was asked his views on issues such as Senate reform – he's against another round of constitutional talks like Meech Lake; the national anthem's French lyrics, which call on Canadians to carry the cross and guns – it's not a priority at this time; free trade – "the Liberal Party is a pro-free trade party," and public health care – he's for it, but it needs "a comprehensive rethink."

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Harper honoured by JNF

Continued from page 1

"As long as we are there, Canada will hold firm."

Canada and Israel, he said, share common values as well as common threats – "the same threats that we face in Canada and throughout the western world."

Details of Harper's trip were unavailable at *The CJN*'s Monday morning deadline.

A statement from Harper's office said Canada "recognizes the importance of building inclusive and stable societies underpinned by democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law. Our government will continue to take a strong, principled stand internationally, including at the United Nations, on all matters related to Israel and the Middle East.

"I look forward to visiting the Middle East early next year to explore ways of strengthening peace and security, stimulating sustainable economic growth, and promoting essential Canadian values, such as tolerance and human rights, across the region," Harper said in the statement.

He called the dinner "a show of affection, of love, and I really appreciate that. And I want to show you a little bit of affection and love in return."

To the surprise of attendees, Harper then introduced Herringbone, the Ottawa-based rock band in which he plays keyboards and sings. With the prime minister on lead vocals, the band played a series of rock classics, including Neil Diamond's crowd-pleasing *Sweet Caroline* and the Beatles' *Hey Jude*.

Many in the crowd left as Harper was still singing.

In September, the JNF announced that a project in Israel would be named after Harper.

The Stephen J. Harper Hula Valley Bird Sanctuary Visitor and Education Centre will be located in the northern Hula Valley, a wetlands region that serves as a passageway for migrating birds.

The project calls for a 4,000-square-metre visitor's centre bearing Harper's name to be built in the Hula Lake Nature and Bird Park. *Canadian Press* called it "a sure-fire photo-op for Harper's eventual trip to Israel."

JNF Canada has raised nearly $6 million for the project. "I'm glad to say this will be our best campaign in our 65-year history," Josh Cooper, JNF's national CEO, told *CP*.

"The project will bring jobs to the region. It will be an epicentre for environmentalists, for birders from all over the world, to learn and study birds together in Israel," Cooper said.

In 2000, Jean Chrétien became the first sitting Canadian prime minister to visit Israel.

Serving as MCs at the dinner were Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird and Employment and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney, who called Harper's Conservatives "the first and only Canadian government to acknowledge" Canada's "shameful" none-is-too-many policy on admitting war-era Jewish refugees from Europe.

To cheers, Kenney said the government is building a national Holocaust monument in Ottawa, and has invested $100 million in a human rights museum in Winnipeg, where the Holocaust will be front and centre.

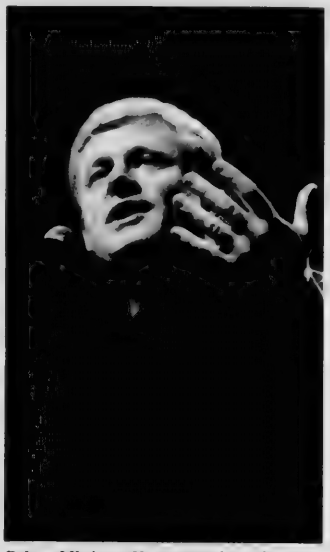
Also in attendance was Israel's new ambassador to Canada, Rafael Barak, who praised Harper.

"Your friendship is just not talk, but is evident in your actions on the global stage," Barak said prior to Harper's speech. "We are truly touched by your friendship and we admire your integrity."

Sending regards via videotape was Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who lauded Harper for "unabashedly, unapologetically," standing up for Israel.

Harper is "a real leader who stood up for Israel time and again," Netanyahu said. "He doesn't want to be politically correct. He wants to be correct." For his "clarity of conviction and thought, I salute you, Stephen."

Dinner co-chairs were Sen. Linda Frum and her husband, businessman Howard Sokolowski.



Prime Minister Harper took to the stage to entertain guests after the formal part of the program. *(PMO photo)*

Linitzer Benefit Society turns 100

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

The Linitzer Benefit Society started up in 1913 as a relief society for immigrants from the town of Linitz in Ukraine.

Now, 100 years later, the society, which has about 370 members ages 35 to 90, concentrates on helping others.

Morris Manna, honorary president, and a member for 35 years, said when Linitzer started up, all society members came from Linitz.

"These people came to Canada as strangers, and they turned to each other for support. The society helped out when a member got sick, had to make a funeral for a loved one, or lost their job. It helped relieve financial pressures," Manna said.

"It was also a place to meet up with each other. Linitzer was the glue that brought loose people together."

As the society grew, he said, it invested in its first group of plots at Dawes Road Cemetery, and eventually bought into Bathurst Lawn Cemetery, where it's now the largest landowner.

"Burial rights have become a very important part of the society. Originally, only men joined, and women were entitled to burial rights. As the society became more progressive, however, women became equal members. It also started accepting those without a connection to Linitz.

From left, Linitzer members Morris Manna, Andy Mayer, and Arthur Shlanger with Sara Gabriel, Canadian director of Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind

"Now we look for members who can assist the society with its goals: helping support Israel, standing behind the Jewish community and fundraising."

Over the years, he said, the society has raised money for a number of charities, including an endowment for a student to attend Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a $25,000 donation to Shaare Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem on Linitzer's 50th anniversary, "and as far back as World War II, we assisted Canada by donating a mobile dental clinic."

In honour of its 100th anniversary, the society held a gala dinner and donated $25,000 to the Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind.

Andy Mayer, who joined Linitzer 57 years ago, said the organization is as active now as it's ever been.

"We try to get in there and help out the community. For 45 years, we have been running a bingo with proceeds aimed at underprivileged children. We're currently working on a casino night, which will help out Autism Ontario and the Canadian Diabetes Association."

He is the society's "hospitaler," he said. "I phone or visit any member who becomes ill, and I report back to the other members."

The secret to the group's success over the years, said Jeffrey Leuchter, a "newcomer" who joined Linitzer 20 years ago, is that members are determined that it should be more than a burial society.

"We have Sunday-morning breakfasts with speakers, holiday parties, card nights and barbecues. Everything is subsidized by the society, because we want to make sure everyone can come out."

The group runs events that attract young families, Leuchter said, because "many of them can't afford synagogue dues, and are looking for organizations that are family friendly. This is where we come in."

He said the social aspect of the society is crucial. "Too many societies charge annual dues and offer nothing but a cemetery plot."

Mayer said the Linitzer has been approached by other societies that are interested in amalgamating, "but we're growing on our own and we're looking for young blood."

When he joined, he said, he was 30 years old "and the original Linitzers were dying off. I was the second generation. I'm happy to see new generations join us."

Their challenge, he said, is to train the young members to eventually take over. "They will need to handle the finances and protect our dynamic organization."

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Teen who 'Roared' passes away at 16

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

The teenager who touched the hearts of more than one million people passed away Nov. 25 after two years of fighting an inoperable brain tumour.

Olivia Wise was just 16 years old.

Olivia Wise

In early October, shortly after finding out there were no other options for treatment, the teenager recorded a cover of Katy Perry's song *Roar*, and six weeks ago, it was posted to YouTube. More than one million people have since watched the video, and many commented on her spirit, singing with such strength even in the face of a terminal illness.

The video's popularity soared and even reached the pop star herself, who responded to Wise via video and later tweeted after Wise's passing.

"Olivia Wise, I can hear you singing with the angels now. Your spirit and strength has inspired me and so many others... May you rest in peace," Perry wrote in he tweet.

Hundreds of high school and university students took part in an initiative organized by Hillel of Greater Toronto in which they paid tribute to Wise through a video and physical scrapbook with messages of hope for her.

The family has released the cover of *Roar* on iTunes and CD Baby, as well as an original song, *Simple Girl*, that Wise wrote when she was 11. She sang the songs in a Toronto studio with producer Jon Levine, who later added music behind Wise's voice in *Simple Girl*.

Proceeds from both songs will go to the Liv Wise Fund, which her family set up through the SickKids Foundation and which will donate money to support children with cancer, as well as brain cancer research.

The Liv Wise Fund has raised more than $158,000, surpassing its goal of $150,000. It's new goal is $250,000.

Wise's cousin, Jeff Kassel, told the *The CJN* that Wise died peacefully in her home surrounded by her family.

The Liv Wise Fund can be found at LivWiseFund.com.

Students collect baby food at Sobeys in Thornhill, Ont. From left are Rina Volovich, Tracy Lynch, Ariella Markus, Shelly Pistienko and Allysa Moses, Hillel's York Region program co-ordinator.

Baby food collected for food banks

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Members of Hillel of Greater Toronto ran a two-day baby food drive after York University student Ariella Markus, learned that it was the most needed product at food banks.

"[Food bank users] can't afford to buy it at the store, but they also can't get it from a food bank," she said.

Since people typically don't have baby food sitting in their homes ready for donation, Hillel members sat outside two Thornhill, Ont., grocery stores on Nov. 21 and Nov. 26 to ask customers for food and cash donations.

This is Markus' third year running the drive and her second year working with Hillel and the Children's Studies Students Association at York, where she is a fourth-year student majoring in both Jewish studies and children's studies.

In total, the students collected more than 500 baby food items, which were donated to the Richmond Hill Food bank and to Chasdei Kaduri, a local kosher food bank for Jewish families in York Region. They also collected $200 in cash, which was donated to the Richmond Hill Food Bank and will be allocated for baby food purchases.

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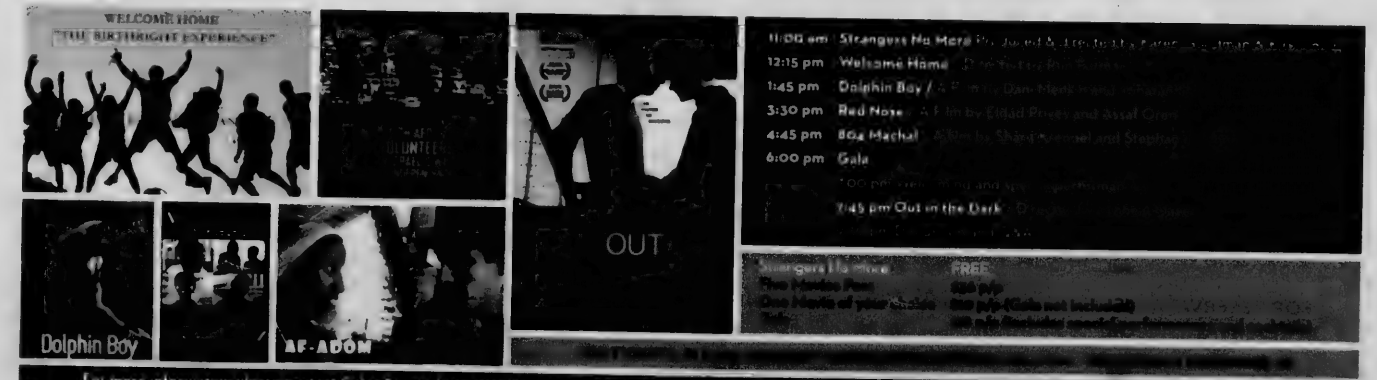

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SHALOM TORONTO
Hillel
CONAIR

Charter debate has cross-Canada implications

Joe Oliver

As a Quebecer in my youth, it's more with sadness than anger that I consider the proposed charter of Quebec values. This is a painful and complex subject, but I will provide an overview of its content and then its political implications.

My concern, shared by many other Canadians, is that the charter would undermine freedom of religious expression and make religious minorities feel unwelcome in Quebec. It would force the most devout to leave the province, as for example a Sikh or Orthodox Jewish physician who would not be able to wear his turban or kippah while attending in a hospital. It would also foster social divisiveness, when inclusiveness is so important in a diverse society.

Bill 60, the version tabled in the National Assembly, goes further than the original proposal, threatening practices the Jewish community has taken for granted for as long as memory serves. For example, Jewish public school students who take a vacation on Yom Kippur may be targeted. Matzah served at a public school during Passover would be problematic, since one of its functions is clearly to teach a religious lesson. Contractors doing business with the provincial government will not be able to wear religious headgear or "other adornments which, by their ostentatious nature, overtly indicate a religious affiliation."

These restrictions offend a fundamental Canadian value: everyone living here, whatever his or her race, religion or country of origin, should be treated respectfully and have an equal opportunity to be a fully contributing Canadian. I am proud that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has promised that if the legislation is passed and is clearly discriminatory, the federal government will take action.

So what is the political context?

Diminishing the right to religious expression is a serious issue. Clearly, it should not be exploited as a pre-election appeal to a political party's base at a time when difficult economic conditions may be eroding its popular support. Nor should it be employed to advance identity politics in the guise of an attempt to delineate reasonable accommodation in a secular society.

At the moment, it appears unlikely the minority Parti Québécois government will attract the votes it needs to pass the bill. That raises the possibility that bitterness flowing from its defeat would propel the government to an electoral majority. With the elusive "winning conditions" apparently achieved, a referendum to separate could follow, with all the disruption and existential risk that would entail for Canada.

Reasonable accommodation of minorities has been extensively debated in Quebec. Still, changing demographics are clearly keeping this debate very much alive. How the charter issue is resolved could have profound implications not only for Quebec, but for the rest of Canada. Let us hope that Quebecers opt for a result that reflects their best values and the interests of all Canadians.

Joe Oliver is the MP for the Toronto riding of Eglinton-Lawrence.

Cotler honoured by Shaare Zedek

Sheila Dropkin
Special to The CJN

Liberal member of Parliament and former justice minister Irwin Cotler was the recipient of the Kurt and Edith Rothschild Humanitarian Award at the recent annual Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation's From the Heart gala.

"Irwin was the unanimous choice, in recognition of his outstanding leadership and vision," said Bernie Abrams, who, with Norman Bacal co-chaired the event, this year co-sponsored by Beth Tzedec Congregation of Toronto.

"My father taught me the imperative of righteousness, justice and charity, the three English words for *tzedec*," Cotler said on accepting the award. "My mother taught me that, in order to pursue justice, one must feel injustice. We have a duty of remembrance of the horrors. Not all the victims of the Shoah were Jewish, but all Jews were affected by it."

Irwin Cotler

In addition to teaching law at McGill University and his parliamentary work, Cotler has been a leader in pursuit of justice for such causes as Soviet Jewry, Nelson Mandela, the late Argentine journalist Jacobo Timerman and victims of the brutal uprisings in Darfur and Rwanda.

Cotler's wife, Ariela, is a former director of the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation office in Montreal, and his mother-in-law, a Jerusalem resident, has been a volunteer at the hospital.

Proceeds from the gala will support the hospital's Israel Defence Forces clinic and the renewal of the synagogue.

"In Israel, every hospital has to prepare for war," said Jonathan Halevy, Shaare Zedek's director general. "During wartime, the IDF takes over."

The presentation to Cotler was made by Senator Linda Frum before an audience of several hundred supporters.

"Irwin has directed his intellect and energies to promote human rights around the world," Frum said. "He is a gifted teacher, whose moral courage taught and inspired me. Everything that I've done for justice, I've learned from Prof. Cotler."

Gideon Raff, executive producer and director of the TV series *Homeland* was interviewed on stage by *National Post* editor Jonathan Kay to conclude the evening. Born in Jerusalem, Raff is a former paratrooper with the Israel Air Force. He was the originator of the Israeli hit TV series *Prisoners of War*, on which *Homeland* is based.

The first season of the Israeli series was written from the perspective of the returning prisoners, and the second was more about those who are still imprisoned and gave insight to the captors, Raff said. "It makes people cry... *Homeland* is more of a thriller."

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Ex-coach to look at Jews' contribution to basketball

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Check the rosters of the 30 NBA teams, and you'll find only a couple of Jewish guys among them.

It's surprising, if not mind-boggling, that at one time, Jews were everywhere in professional basketball.

The first basket ever scored in the NBA was drained by a Jewish player for the New York Knicks – Ozzie Schectman – in the first ever NBA game in November 1946, right here in Toronto versus the Huskies, no less.

The decline in Jewish participation in the sport since those heady days has been pretty dramatic, about as significant in the dropoff in other sports like boxing. Yet Jews continue to play an important role in the sport, at least at the coaching level.

One of the most successful hoops coaches that Canada has ever produced will discuss the Jewish involvement in the sport at an evening program at the Beth Tzedec Congregation on Dec. 4., 7:30 p.m.

Titled, "The First Basket; Jews and Basketball," the lecture is part of the synagogue's "Jews in Sports" series.

The program includes the screening of the film, *The First Basket; A Jewish Basketball Documentary*, followed by a discussion led by Mike Katz.

Katz coached the University of Toronto for seven years, where he won both OUA and CIS coach of the year honours in 2007-08.

Prior to joining the Varsity Blues, Katz led the Humber College men's basketball team for 19 seasons, amassing a record of 503-175. He led the Hawks to seven provincial championships and five national titles.

Along the way he was named Ontario Colleges Athletic Association coach of the year four times and Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association coach of the year three times. He was inducted into the Humber Varsity Hall of Fame in 2004.

He also served as assistant coach of the Canadian basketball team at the 1994 and 2002 world championships and the 2000 Olympics, which many will remember as NBA point guard Steve Nash's coming-out party.

Katz acknowledges the Jewish connection to the sport is varied and longstanding, but he'll focus on three aspects in particular.

The first is the rather colourful rivalry between two New York City players, Art Heyman and Larry Brown. Currently head coach at Southern Methodist University, Brown also coached championship teams in both the NBA (Detroit Pistons, 2004) and in the NCAA (University of Kansas, 1988).

Heyman was a standout college player at Duke who went on to a eight-year career in the NBA and ABA.

"They never really liked each other," Katz said, right from their days in high school in New York. In college they clashed again when Duke played North Carolina, Brown's team. In a famous incident in 1961 that can still be seen on YouTube, Heyman fouled Brown under the net. Brown retaliated, one thing led to another and a court-wide donnybrook broke out.

Mike Katz

A second point of focus for Katz will be the influence on the sport by Tal Brody. A native of New Jersey, Brody was a star player at the University of Illinois who was picked in the first round of the NBA draft, 12th overall. But after leading the United States to a gold medal in the 1965 Maccabiah Games, he decided to forego an NBA career and instead signed with Maccabi Tel Aviv. He led the team to a European Cup Basketball Championship, defeating a Soviet Red Army team.

"He really put Israel on the map in terms of basketball," Katz said.

A third aspect of the Jewish connection to basketball will be the unfortunate "role that Jews had in a not-so-positive way in the point-shaving scandal of the 1950s."

The scandal involved Jewish gamblers and several Jewish players for New York-area college teams.

Back in the day there were plenty of Jewish players in U.S. colleges and the pros as well. These days not so much. Check the rosters of NBA clubs today and you'll find just a couple of players, Israeli Omri Casspi (Houston Rockets) and American Jordan Farmar (Los Angeles Lakers).

Katz can't say for sure why the numbers have changed so dramatically. It might be that when Jews were closer to their immigrant roots, there was greater incentive to excel than today, especially in a sport that has never required a big outlay of cash to play.

It's hard to believe that at one time, Jews had such an influence on the sport that coaches taught their players the strategies of "Jew basketball," and that was more of a compliment than a pejorative term, Katz said.

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Judge orders Lev Tahor kids' removal

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A Quebec judge ordered the immediate removal of 14 children from the Lev Tahor Jewish sect and their placement in foster care for at least 30 days.

The Nov. 27 ruling by Quebec Youth Court Judge Pierre Hamel followed the opening that day of a youth protection hearing in St. Jérôme.

A publication ban has since been placed on evidence presented.

The children, ranging in age from two months to 16 years, are from two families. The parents defied an order to show up for the hearing, remaining with the rest of the community, which has settled in the Chatham area of Ontario, near Windsor.

The 14 children were still in Ontario late last week, and youth protection officials from that province and Quebec were conferring on what to do next.

The more than 200 Lev Tahor members, comprising about 40 families, left Ste. Agathe, where they had lived for almost a decade, overnight Nov. 17-18. The community had been under investigation by the Youth Protection Department for months.

Spokespeople for Lev Tahor have denied that the community's children, who number about 130, are abused or neglected, and say the group complied with any requests from child-welfare authorities. The local YPD director Denis Baraby said it was concerned about the children's hygiene and health, both physical and psychological, as well as lack of education. The children were being home-schooled, according to Lev Tahor's extreme religious beliefs.

Lev Tahor says it left Quebec because it does not want to teach its children the province's prescribed secular curriculum.

Meanwhile, the Ontario government was investigating allegations of neglect among the community there.

"At this time no children have been apprehended, and the families have provided access to protection workers for the ongoing investigation," Child and Youth Services Minister Teresa Pirruzza's office said in a statement Nov. 26. "They will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that child safety remains a foremost priority."

In Israel, a parliamentary committee has been hearing horrific stories of abuse from ex-members and relatives of current Lev Tahor followers.

The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, which conducted an in-depth investigation of Lev Tahor in Ste. Agathe 1-1/2 years ago, reported on Nov. 26 that families in Israel have since filed complaints with police of mistreatment of children, including forced marriages of girls as young as 14 to men, and the use of psychiatric drugs to control members.

Lev Tahor was founded and is led by Israeli-born self-styled rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, who was convicted of the abduction of a boy in the United States in 1994. He was granted refugee status in Canada on the basis of his claim that he would be in danger if he returned to Israel due to his anti-Zionist views.

Since moving to Ontario, the normally reclusive group has welcomed the media to hear its side of the story and has been posting regular updates on its website, dismissing allegations of wrongdoing as "blood libel."

They say they wish to settle permanently in Ontario, where they believe the education laws will offer them a better chance of schooling their children the way they wish.

Jewish groups were quick to distance themselves from Lev Tahor, while expressing concern for the children's welfare. Both the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and B'nai Brith Canada denounced Lev Tahor as practising a "perversion of Judaism."

Federation CJA's social service agency Ometz has received complaints about what went on in Ste. Agathe over the years and reported them to youth protection, said CIJA spokesperson David Ouellette. Ometz has also offered its assistance in trying to find foster homes that suit the children's fervently Orthodox upbringing.

Years ago, several chassidic communities formally renounced any association with Lev Tahor and Helbrans, 51, who was raised in a secular family in Israel, where he founded the sect. They left for the United States in 1990.

Ombudsman raps Radio-Canada for Israeli-Palestinian coverage

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Radio-Canada's ombudsman says the network should improve its coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian coverage after his office received 75 complaints, almost all from those who felt the reporting was inaccurate or biased against Israel.

In his annual 2012-2013 report, Pierre Tourangeau says the complaints, which concerned the television, radio and online services, were not trivial and, in fact, were well substantiated. He recommended that corrections or clarifications be made in response to 12 of them.

He recommends that the French-language public broadcaster examine its attitude to this long-standing and "thorny" issue.

"There were, this year again, very real problems in the coverage of the Israeli-Arab disagreement with regards to the Palestinian question," he states.

Tourangeau cites a similar volume of complaints during 2011-2012, rising after the violence in November of that year between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

While improvements have been made since his previous report, Tourangeau advises, "It is necessary to do more, and maybe even change the attitude with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict…

"I have already invited the news department to reflect in this way. I reiterate this invitation, knowing that this is a continuous process."

Seminar highly critical of Iran deal

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The United Nations clearly betrayed Israel in Geneva in signing on to the interim "P5+1" deal with Iran, a country that remains intent on producing nuclear weapons.

That was the unquestioned consensus of panellists at a Canadian Institute for Jewish Research (CIJR) synagogue seminar on the "approaching nuclear showdown." The event was planned some time ago, and it was by sheer happenstance that it took place the morning after the deal was signed on Nov. 23. The uptake was that people filled the hall at Shomrim Laboker synagogue to standing-room-only levels – a rarity for CIJR events.

"The Jewish People are facing a severe crisis indeed," CIJR founding director Fred Krantz said. "The situation is now more dangerous in many ways [than] since 1947-48 [the War of Independence]. The U.S. is no longer [Israel's] most reliable ally."

MENORAH LIGHTING: The Jewish Russian Community Centre (JRCC) kicked off the start of Chanukah Nov. 27, with the lighting of a giant 13-foot chanukiyah at Mel Lastman Square. The event was followed by live music, Chanukah foods and a fire show. Pictured, from left, are JRCC board of governors chair Igor Korenzvit, Vaughan Councillor Alan Shefman, MPP Todd Smith, Toronto Councillor James Pasternak and Toronto Mayor Rob Ford.

Celebrating Chanukah

DOWNTOWN CHANUKAH: In preparation for Chanukah, the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, the Libbie Cowan Childcare Centre and the Thomas and Marjorie Schwartz Preschool Centre at the Miles Nadal JCC planned a special newsletter for families highlighting the many ways the older and younger students are connected. The children pictured range from the toddler program at the child-care centre through Grade 6 at Paul Penna – from left, Asher Helfand, Ari Hunziker, Shana Colman-Peck, Alex Prashkovsky, Lily Schnoor, Jett Kafka, Lilian Edney, Jonathan Alter, Ella Arnold, Raffi Winters and Dalia Piatigorsky-Roth.

Clarifications/Corrections

The article "Plan limits day school tuition to 15% of income" should have made clear that while anyone is welcome to enrol at Robbins Hebrew Academy, only families new to the Jewish day school system can take advantage of the iCAP pilot program.

***

The Travel Talk item on Crystal Cruises (Nov. 28) incorrectly identified the mashgiach for the company's two kosher cruises for 2014. In fact, the mashgiach will be Rabbi Stewart Weiss and Malcolm Green will be the on-board chef. We apologize for the error.

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The Ahziv connection

Past Forward
Alex Gropper

Ahziv is one of those little-known archeological sites along the coast of Israel, just north of Nahariya. There are a number of things that set it apart from other tells. Its major excavator more than 20 years ago was Eilat Mazar, granddaughter of the legendary Benjamin Mazar, one of the first heads of the Institute of Archeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who would also become the president of the university in the 1950s.

The senior Mazar was one of the most celebrated Israeli archeologists in the early years of the state. He first made his reputation at Beit Shearim in the 1930s, but his most famous endeavour was heading excavations of the Temple Mount after the liberation of the Old City in the Six Day War.

It was while working in Jerusalem on the City of David excavations with my students from the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s that I met and became friends with Eilat Mazar. Eilat impressed me with her scholarship, insight and charismatic personality. I was excited in 1988 when she told me that she was heading a new excavation at the Phoenician site of Ahziv in northern Israel and invited me to join her.

The Phoenicians had fascinated me for a long time, even more so once I became president of the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies at St. Michael's College at U of T. The Phoenicians were the first to circumnavigate the Mediterranean and establish trading posts and colonies along its shores as far as Libya and Spain. One of their colonies, Carthage, would fight Rome for mastery of the Mediterranean world in the Punic Wars. Under its famous general Hannibal, Carthage almost won.

The Phoenicians established a presence in northern Israel at places such as Ahziv. Their language was closely related to Hebrew, and their script was adopted by our ancestors. That script was the alphabet.

The Phoenicians maintained close ties with ancient Israel. Their craftsmen and renowned cedars were used to build the Temple in Jerusalem. The daughters of their rulers often married into the royal house of Israel.

At Ahziv, we found a Phoenician cemetery that gave us an insight into their daily lives. Among some of the graves we found statues of a number of mounted horsemen. It showed us that the Phoenicians did not use the more advanced chariots of their neighbours. Regardless, it would not have prevented them from being overrun by the deadly Assyrians, who destroyed Ahziv in the eighth century BCE when they conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and deported many of its inhabitants, giving rise to the legend of the 10 lost tribes.

Eilat Mazar is following in her grandfather's footsteps and is now in charge of the excavations at the Temple Mount. Her most exciting discovery there is a monumental building that's being touted as the palace of King David!

A woman for the ages

Midrashic Moments
Rachael Turkienicz

Another Chanukah is ending and we've had a chance to light our candles, fry our food and sing of miracles and victories. When we teach our children about Jewish heroes, we teach them that heroes are people who hold strongly to their values and don't give in to despair. Even if they're outnumbered, outgunned and seemingly powerless, the strength of their values and their commitment to what they know is right will carry the day. Chanukah stands as the historic example of that truth.

We are invigorated by this holiday. It rejuvenates us, and perhaps even redefines us. It's the holiday when we celebrate our determination to face those who threaten us and know for certain we will prevail. We teach our children songs of bringing light into darkness and the courage of a Jewish soldier.

Interestingly in our modern world, we neglect to put emphasis on a part of our community that the sages and rabbis throughout Jewish history have emphasized: the women. According to Jewish tradition, the women were the heroes of Chanukah. Whether it's the description of the behaviour of the women in the books of the Maccabees or the figure of Judith and her attack on Holofernes, the women stand out in their bravery.

According to our ancient records, if not for the women, circumcision would have stopped. The faith and culture of Judaism would have disappeared and, according to a medieval midrash, there would have been no Maccabees at all.

There's another midrash from the Middle Ages that speaks of the daughter of Matityahu who shocked her family and her community on her wedding day. She was facing the "right of first night," which decreed that all Jewish brides would be forced to lose their virginity to the foreign ruler and not their husbands. This young woman challenged her brothers, the Hasmoneans, on the day of her wedding. She ripped off her clothing and yelled at her brothers, shaming them for not ending the humiliation of all Jewish women. "How can you not learn from Shimon and Levi who protected their sister?" she cried.

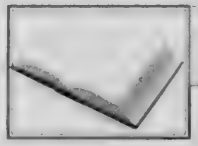
The midrash states that it was her actions and words that united her brothers under the leadership of her father and formed the Hasmonean revolt and the Maccabees. If not for this brave young woman, there would be no Chanukah.

Jewish tradition so values all these women that we are taught that women must rest while the Chanukah candles are burning. It's sad how many Jewish families are unaware of this very important detail of our candle lighting. As we light the last candle of Chanukah this year, wouldn't it be wonderful if every Jewish woman could feel how much Jewish history values her strength, her bravery and her courage?

Rachael Turkienicz is director of www.rachaelscentre.org.

The value of Jewish high school

Rabbi Lee Buckman



Rabbinic Reflections

One of the frequently discussed topics in the Jewish community is day school affordability. The high price of day school education, it's argued, is the main reason why more families don't send their children to Jewish day school. Allow me to shift the conversation from price to value and explain why a Jewish day high school education, for example, is indispensable.

First, a Jewish day high school education demonstrates to teens how Judaism addresses complex issues. A Jewish day high school teaches Bible with the same level of sophistication as biology. It teaches the laws of tzedakah with the same intellectual rigour that it teaches the laws of physics. A day high school education ensures that students are equally literate in two civilizations: western and Jewish.

I often hear students in middle school say that they don't want to continue in a day high school because they already know enough Hebrew and Judaics. Jewish parents don't accept this argument when it comes to math or English and should not when it comes to Hebrew and Judaics, either. A young child simply does not understand that deep questions lie ahead, and they need to be Jewishly equipped to grapple with them.

Second, a Jewish day high school education helps children create meaning. Adolescence is a turbulent time, and a Jewish day high school provides a Jewish context for children to travel through adolescence. Teenagers reject, challenge, question, and doubt their Jewish identity. A Jewish day high school education places them in an environment where peers are asking the same questions under the guidance of teachers who can help them find meaning.

Finally, a Jewish day high school education empowers students to contribute something unique and valuable to society around them. I sometimes hear critics say that if you send your child to Jewish day high school, he or she will never survive in the "real world." The argument often sounds like this: "How will my child ever be able to deal with the open diverse world of the university if he/she is sheltered in a day school all his/her life?" A former high school students of mine once responded to this question saying, "When I get to university, I will have developed such a strong sense of who I am as a Jew that I will be able to contribute to that diversity. And that is only because of my Jewish day school education." What a profound insight!

Most children aren't so perceptive, which is why the choice of a high school is a parenting decision. It's too important a decision to leave up to a child. We do not ask our children whether or not they want an immunization or a dental appointment. Likewise, we should not hand over to a 13- or 14-year-old child the decision where to go to high school.

Yes, day school affordability is an issue. However, becoming a passionate and committed adult who loves his or her Judaism is priceless. That's where the discussion needs to be focused.

Rabbi Lee Buckman is head of school at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

Avoiding shivah-lite

From the Bimah
Rabbi Philip Scheim

Two months ago, I used this space to comment on the recent trend of family speeches at funerals. Another development in the past few years has been the posting of visiting hours in shivah listings.

Having been there myself, I know that full days of observing shivah can be extremely taxing. One would hope that people would not choose to visit during meal times, late at night or early in the morning (unless a morning service is taking place), but that's not always the case. Thus, I understand when mourners feel the need to limit visits so that they'll have the breaks necessary to rest and tend to personal needs, without feeling obligated to "host" visitors at all hours of the day and night while coping with the loss they have experienced.

In designating hours for visitation, I would encourage families not to be too restrictive in the parameters they set. More often than not, a total of four hours a day is designated for visits, two hours in the afternoon and two at night. Those able to time their visits to those very limited hours usually confront extremely crowded houses or apartments, with little opportunity to speak to the mourners, because so many are trying to approach them at the same time. More relaxed hours allow for more intimacy, more quiet moments together, more time to offer real consolation and quality visits.

I totally understand the need for breaks during the day while observing shivah. I wish that all visitors had the sensitivity to know when not to visit, so as to prevent the need to list hours. Since, unfortunately, that's not always the case, I suggest that families, when choosing to designate hours, allow closer to eight hours, rather than four or five hours, for visits, in order for the mitzvah to be less rushed and more meaningful at all levels, without over-taxing the mourners.

Of course, there's the larger issue of shortened shivahs, which seem to becoming more frequent in recent years. A full shivah (meaning "seven") in practical terms, is rarely more than 4-1/2 days of actually "sitting," when one factors in the first day only beginning after the funeral and burial service, Shabbat, and the seventh day ending in the early morning. Thus, observing the entire shivah is less onerous than it may appear to be on the surface.

In all my years in the rabbinate, I've never experienced a family that observed the full shivah and expressed regret over not having curtailed their observance to a three-day or even shorter period. Rather, they have found comfort in those who unexpectedly turned out to visit them, sometimes rekindling long-lost relationships, a true comfort during a time of loss. When shivah is curtailed by hours or days, those opportunities are limited, or lost altogether.

Of course, restoring shivah to its rightful place as a meaningful component in the bereavement process isn't the responsibility of the mourners alone. Those who visit have a responsibility to ensure that their visits are timed appropriately, not overly lengthy, without expectation of social niceties, but solely for the purpose of assisting in the minyan, offering words of comfort and a listening ear to those coping with the pain of loss.

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Peres addressed Arab, Muslim foreign ministers

Spencer Ho
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — In an unprecedented event, Israeli President Shimon Peres spoke via satellite from his office in Jerusalem to 29 foreign ministers from Arab and Muslim countries at the Gulf Security Conference in Abu Dhabi two weeks ago.

None of the attendees left the room when Peres spoke, and some even applauded his remarks, according to Israeli daily *Yedioth Ahronoth*, which reported Monday that Peres talked about how Israel can be a contributing factor in the Middle East and said there's an opportunity for dialogue between Israel and its neighbours about their common concerns, including the fight against Islamic extremism and Iran's nuclear program. Peres also presented his vision of global peace.

"There was a lot of excitement from both sides about [Peres' address]," said an official who was involved in organizing the event. "Everybody understood that this was something historic: the president of the Jewish state sitting in his office in Jerusalem with an Israeli flag and [the foreign ministers] sitting in the Persian Gulf discussing security, the war on terror and peace."

Shimon Peres

Peres, who was chosen by the summit's organizer, the United Arab Emirates, to open the conference, was interviewed via satellite by UN Under Secretary-General Terje Rød-Larsen. As per the conditions for Peres' appearance, the president and the foreign ministers spoke only through Larsen, and none of the content was leaked to the press.

Among the countries represented were Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Yemen, Qatar, Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

New York Times columnist Tom Friedman, who was at the Abu Dhabi event, initially noted Peres' address at the conference in an article two weeks ago.

While Israel and much of the Arab and Muslim world are generally at odds, they have recently found some common ground in their opposition to Iran's rogue nuclear program and concerns about U.S.-led negotiations to thwart that program.

Timesofisrael.com

Olmert to Netanyahu: stop slamming U.S.

JTA

JERUSALEM — Former Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert accused his successor, Benjamin Netanyahu, of declaring war on the United States for its policy on Iran.

"We've declared war on the American government. You can't deny this," Olmert said Sunday at a panel discussion during a conference at the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv, according to Israeli media. He was referring to the recent agreement on Iran's nuclear program.

Olmert said Israel should not be leading the international effort against Iran's nuclear program, adding that this role should be left to the United States.

"Israel should be a partner in this fight, but cannot and should not lead the international fight," Olmert said. "This was the [Ariel] Sharon government's position and the position of my government as well."

Netanyahu has publicly called the agreement arrived at between Iran and the world powers in Geneva last month a "bad deal" and a "historic mistake." The deal provides some sanctions relief for Iran in exchange for rollbacks in its nuclear program.

Ehud Olmert

"I hope this will not be perceived as an attack on the prime minister," Olmert said, "but the State of Israel should cease to criticize the policy of the U.S. and the policymakers of the United States."

Netanyahu, in Rome for an audience with Pope Francis, responded to Olmert's barbs. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, he said, "When I see that our vital interests are at stake, I will not shut up."

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Anti-Israel group fined in France

JTA

PARIS — A French court imposed a $1,300 fine on members of an anti-Israel group who called on supermarket shoppers to boycott Israeli products.

The Court of Appeals of Colmar near Strasbourg fined each of the group's 12 members individually last week for their participation in a pro-boycott activity in 2009-2010, which the court qualified as "provocation to discrimination." The court also gave the activists a suspended jail sentence, according to a report by CRIF, the umbrella group for French Jewish communities.

The ruling reversed a 2012 verdict by the Correctional Tribunal of Mulhouse, which found the defendants not guilty. Prosecutors filed the appeal, CRIF said in a statement.

The actions for which the defendants were sentenced took place in 2009 in a supermarket in Mulhouse and again in 2010. Some of the defendants received a double fine for each action, CRIF reported.

The perpetrators were sentenced in accordance with strict anti-discrimination laws, including one passed by the French Parliament in 2003 known as the Lellouche Law, after the lawmaker who drafted it, Pierre Lellouche.

In September, seven activists were given a $650 fine for a similar action in 2010 in a supermarket in Alençon.

Yet the Court of Cassation – France's highest criminal court of appeal – on Nov. 19 acquitted several anti-Israel protesters who staged a boycott action in a supermarket in Evry near Paris in 2009.

In a separate ruling, a French court of appeals last Thursday slapped a $36,000 fine on the comedian Dieudonné for "inciting racial hate" in films in which he ridiculed the Holocaust and expressed anti-Semitic views. It was Dieudonné's seventh conviction related to anti-Semitism.

Peres, Abbas have invited pontiff to Israel

Continued from page 1

said Murray Watson, a Christian-Jewish relations expert.

"The Vatican's support for the Jewish community in various European countries, where either kosher slaughter or circumcision have recently been called into question or forbidden by law" would likely have come up as well, said Watson, a co-founder of the Centre for Jewish-Catholic-Muslim Learning at King's University College at the University of Western Ontario.

"I suspect that this is an issue where the Pope would want to demonstrate his active solidarity with Europe's Jews, and to use whatever diplomatic and moral influence he has to reject those trends, which are sometimes indicative of a larger, more worrisome xenophobia or marginalization of those deemed to be the other," he said.

The two were likely also discussing the recently brokered nuclear deal in Geneva between Iran and six world powers, he said.

Attempts to bring about a meeting between the two leaders have not always gone smoothly. In October, Netanyahu's office issued a statement announcing that the prime minister would be meeting with the Pope at the Vatican shortly thereafter to discuss nuclear talks with Iran and the ongoing peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

However, it later emerged that the PMO's announcement was premature, as there were no confirmed plans for a meeting with the Pontiff, which typically has to be scheduled further in advance.

Peres and Abbas both invited the pontiff to Israel and the Palestinian territories, and Pope Francis has said he would like to visit the Middle East.

Rabbi Abraham Skorka, who is closely affiliated with the leader of the Catholic world, said in October that the Pope aimed to visit Israel in March 2014. Rabbi Skorka said that Francis' "lifelong dream" was to visit the Holy Land and "to embrace" the rabbi in front of the Western Wall.

Around that time, Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein met Pope Francis in the Vatican, and invited him to Israel and to the Knesset.

Pope Francis replied emphatically, "I'll come! I'll come!"

Pope Francis' visit would coincide with the 50th anniversary of Pope Paul VI's visit to Jerusalem in 1964, which took place before the Vatican recognized the State of Israel.

The future trip would mark Pope Francis's second visit to the Holy Land. He arrived here in 1973, just as the Yom Kippur War broke out. As the *Times of Israel* revealed in April, Jorge Mario Bergoglio (as he was then) spent six days confined to his Jerusalem hotel, studying the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

TimesofIsrael.com

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had his first audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican and personally invited him to visit Jerusalem. *[Israel Sun photo]*

U.S., Israel to hold military exercise: report

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel and the United States will hold a joint military training exercise in May, just as the interim agreement with Iran on its nuclear program will be expiring.

The exercise "is going to be big," an unnamed Israel military officer told *Time* magazine, who identified the officer as "high ranking."

"The wind from the Americans into the Israeli sails is, 'We will maintain our capability to strike in Iran, and one of the ways we show it is to train,'" the officer told *Time*. "It will send signals both to Israel and to the Iranians that we are maintaining our capabilities in the military option. The atmosphere is we have to do it big time, we have to do a big show of capabilities and connections."

Israel and the United States routinely hold joint exercises.

The exercise scheduled for May was planned independent of the Iran deal and other current problems in the region, a spokesperson for the U.S. European Command told *Time*.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called the deal signed by six world powers and Iran on Nov. 23 "a historic mistake."

Under the deal, Iran will freeze some nuclear activity in exchange for some sanctions relief. Netanyahu likely will continue to decry the deal and work to make sure it doesn't become permanent.

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CMDA National President, Joseph Bitton (L), congratulates Wolf Bronet on the dedication of the Wolf Pack's 11th Ambulance.

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Temple Mount closed after Jews, Muslims clash

A man walks at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound during prayers on Nov. 9.
[*Sliman Khader/Flash90 photo*]

JTA

JERUSALEM— The Temple Mount in Jerusalem was closed to visitors after a fight broke out between Jewish visitors and Muslim worshippers.

The Jews visiting the site Sunday morning reportedly began singing Chanukah songs and praying. In response, a group of Muslim worshipers attacked them, Israeli media reported.

Two Jews and two Muslims were arrested in the incident.

Jews generally are not permitted to pray or bring any ritual objects to the Temple Mount, which is considered Judaism's holiest site, in order to avoid confrontation with Muslim worshipers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site. The site is overseen by the Muslim Waqf, the Muslim religious administration charged with managing the Temple Mount site.

The Temple Mount was closed to non-Muslim visitors during this year's Sukkot holiday over fears that Muslims would be incited to violence by the crowds.

Days later, on Oct. 14, the Temple Mount was shut down to visitors after police removed 10 Jewish men for praying and singing. The men were detained after praying and bowing on the Temple Mount, then singing *Hatikvah*, the Israeli national anthem, waving an Israeli flag and dancing.

About an hour before the incident, police detained three other Jewish men for questioning after they prayed and bowed during a tour of the Temple Mount.

Israel experiences dry start to winter

Spencer Ho
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel has recorded its lowest rainfall levels so far this winter compared to the national multi-year average, according to figures released Sunday by the Israel Meteorological Service.

"Compared to the past, it must be emphasized that the variance of rain in November is quite great, and there are quite a few years where there is very little rain [in November]," the Meteorological Service said, according to *Walla*. "However, the almost complete lack of rainfall in the month, as happened at some of the stations, is uncommon."

The Meteorological Service said that in some parts of Israel, the winter of 2013 has so far been the driest in 55 to 70 years.

Most measurement stations around the country recorded less than 10 millimetres (2.54 inch) of rainfall for the month, compared to averages of 80 to 110 millimetres in the northern mountains, 70 to 85 millimetres on the coast and 50 to 60 millimetres in the hilly centre of the country and the valleys in the north.

Most of the stations recorded less than two millimetres, and some recorded no precipitation at all. And while some areas recorded good amounts of rainfall, in most cases it came all at once in one or two days at the beginning of the month.

The lack of rain was most pronounced in the north, where levels like those of this year have only been recorded three times: in 1946, 1962 and 2010.

In October and November combined, levels in most of the country are at about one-third of the multi-year average and in some parts less than 10 per cent.

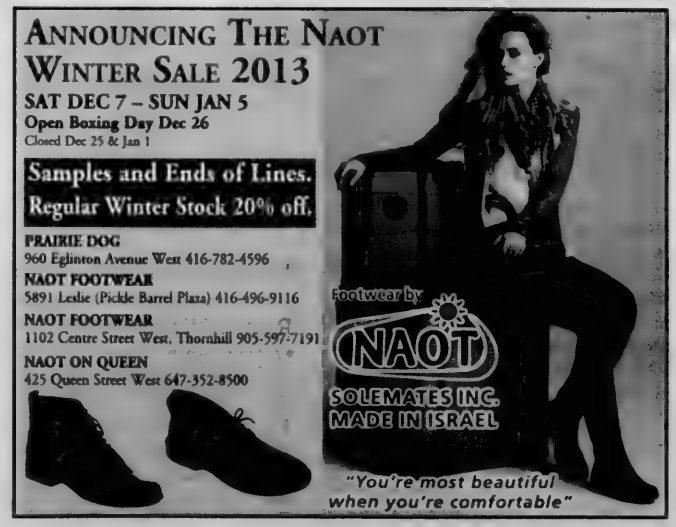
For instance, in Kibbutz Kfar Giladi in the north, levels are at their lowest since 1943, when rainfall reached only six per cent of the average, and in Kibbutz Kfar Blum, it has been the driest year since 1949.

Along with the dry weather came warmer temperatures, as most days of November recorded a higher temperature than average, and the lowland coastal plain in particular experienced the hottest November in 60 years.

Israelis protect themselves in central Tel Aviv, Nov. 19 during the first rain of the season. [*Roni Schutzer/Flash90 photo*]

However, on a more positive note, despite the shortage of rain, as of Dec. 1 the waters of the Sea of Galilee are a whole metre higher than they were on the same date in 2012. This can be attributed to the relatively high precipitation last winter compared to the year before.

TimesofIsrael.com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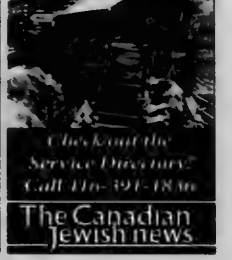

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Sigma Phi an affiliate of Alpha Epsilon Pi

Jews form new fraternity at U of Manitoba

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — After an absence of about 40 years, Jewish fraternity life has returned to the University of Manitoba.

In early September, five friends and fellow U of M students formed Sigma Phi, an affiliate of Alpha Epsilon Pi.

"We felt that Hillel is largely for Jewish-related activities," said Alex Dashefsky, one of the chapter's founders. "We perceived a need for an organization strictly for social activities like BBYO at the high school level."

Along with Dashefsky, a second-year science student, the other founding Sigma Phi members are fellow science students Harrison Katz and Daniel Kroft, actuarial student Bradley Abells, and Simon Garfinkel, who is taking a mix of arts and science subjects.

The first step they took was to contact AEPi's head office in New York and have a representative of the international fraternity come to Winnipeg. Dashefsky noted that AEPi has branches at several other Canadian universities.

"We are slowly growing our membership," Dashefsky said. "We currently have 11 initiates and four more potential members."

The chapter held its first public program – a kick-off social – in mid-November. The "foam party" at a local night club, featuring a foam-making machine, attracted about 150 people.

Dashefsky said fraternity members are using the profits from the event as seed money for future chapter activities.

Up next is a gathering at the Metropolitan Centre in downtown Winnipeg in mid-December to watch a Winnipeg Jets hockey game on the Met's big screen.

"We also want to do a lot of philanthropic programs," Dashefsky said. "For example, on Halloween, we went door to door collecting cans for Winnipeg Harvest [the city's largest food bank]. We collected over 200 cans.

"We are also planning an ice hockey tournament outdoors that will be open to anyone. Our goal will be to raise money to buy hockey equipment for kids who can't afford to buy the equipment."

Back row, from left, Alex Dashefsky, Harrison Katz, Ben Waldman, Max Learner, Daniel Kroft, Josh Goldstein, Bradley Abells, and Ian Baruch, and front centre, Drew McGillawee.

Dashefsky talks as well about joint programs with other fraternities and sororities on campus.

And some of Sigma Phi members are planning to attend AEPi's national convention in Toronto in August, he said.

Recalling my dear father,
Leo Berman ל"ז
on the 43rd Anniversary of his passing, on December 5, 1970.
May his memory ever be for blessing.
Gail Karen Berman, Daughter

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Schayer, Charles	Nov. 21/13	21 Marisa Court
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Rachel Abramowicz	Nov 18/13	370 Ridelle Avenue
Daniel Gross	Nov 19/13	35 Trailwood Drive
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Canary District project brings developers together

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

For more than 40 years, the Canary Restaurant served truckers, film crews, cops and an assortment of commuters the traditional fare you'd find in a "greasy spoon."

While the once bustling commercially vibrant West Don Lands around it deteriorated into vacant "brownfields," the restaurant kept dishing out home fries, right up until it served its last meal in 2007.

Gone but not forgotten, the landmark cafe is now lending its name to a new development that is aimed at revitalizing the West Don area. A partnership of Dundee Kilmer Developments and the Kilmer Group is busily constructing the Canary District Condominiums, an ambitious project that will see the creation of a new neighbourhood just to the east of the Distillery District.

The project will begin life as an athlete's village for the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. Two of the principals behind the project, Jason Lester, president of Dundee Kilmer, and Ken Tanenbaum, vice-chair of the Kilmer Group, say the project is on schedule and on budget. That marks something of a departure from the city's Pan Am efforts, which are reported to be experiencing cost overruns. Opposition critics are charging the provincial government of misleading the public when it announced the bill for the Games would come in at $1.4 billion, an amount that did not include the cost of the athletes' village.

One of multiple bids on the project, Dundee and Kilmer set a goal of "building something that Toronto could look back on and be proud," said Lester.

To prepare their bid for the Pan Am housing project, they studied failed projects to learn what had gone wrong. Their takeaway, Lester said, "is being late is not an option."

They put together a large team of architects, designers, finance experts and marketing mavens, and hired Ellis Don to handle the construction. As a result, "it's on time and on budget," Lester said.

Jason Lester, left, and Ken Tanenbaum sign their names and leave their hand prints in the cement on the top floor of a condominium building in the Canary District development. *[Arthur Mola photo]*

Expect the first buildings to be completed in March or April 2014, more than a year before the Games. The last of the buildings should be completed about a month before the opening ceremonies.

The project itself, which Lester said will come in at around $800 million, will feature 808 market housing units, including condominiums, town homes and lofts, 253 units of affordable housing in a variety of styles, 30,000 square feet of retail, with a focus on health and wellness, a 500-bed residence for students attending George Brown College, an 82,000-square foot YMCA with a pool, gym, fitness centre and community facilities, pedestrian networks, an 18-acre Don River Park and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes.

The project has already raked in several awards, including the 2012 Canadian Architect Award of Excellence as well as a variety of marketing and branding accolades.

It's being marketed as an urban village that is "open, inclusive and welcoming" with an emphasis on green spaces, walkability, health and wellness.

About 80 per cent of the first condominium has been sold; sales for a second building will be launched soon. "We have more end users than other condo developments," said Lester, referring to the expectation that purchasers will actually live in the units and not merely view them as an investment.

"That mix of buyers makes for a great neighbourhood," said Tanenbaum. "Here people are moving in to live long term."

The neighbourhood, which is bounded by Old Eastern Avenue, Cherry Street, Mill Street and Bayview Avenue, is attracting young people and empty nesters who want to be downtown and enjoy the amenities, Lester said.

Units range from $250,000 for a 400-square-foot residence to $800,000 for a 1,400-square-foot home.

Canary marks the first collaborative project for Lester and Tanenbaum. "We each brought a set of skills to the table that were valuable to the project," Tanenbaum said. "Dundee brings absolutely superb world class real estate management and development. Kilmer has its roots in construction and construction materials and is involved in public/private partnerships."

While the partnership on the Canary project is a first, it doesn't figure to be the last. "Everything is leading to a very successful project and it makes business sense to pursue other opportunities when we can leverage our skills," said Lester.

As for the building that gives the project its name, it'll still be there once the Games conclude and people start moving in. The exterior is being rehabilitated, but as to the building's long term future, that's a big unknown. Waterfront Toronto is expected to call on developers and operators to make proposals for the site after the Games.

Just don't expect to wander in and order a plate of fries.

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
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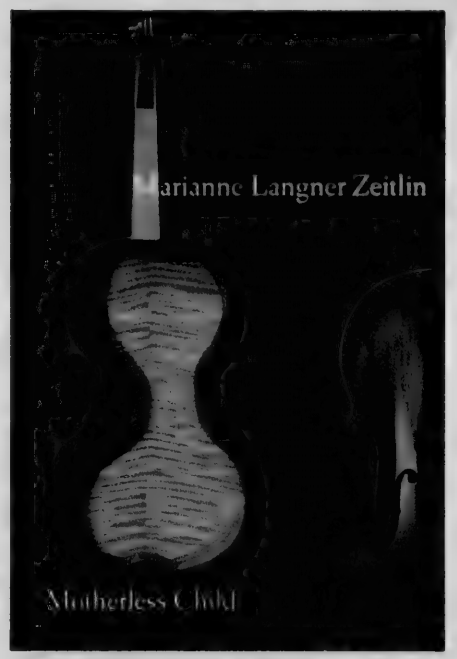
Motherless Child
Marianne Langner Zeitlin
Zephyr Press

Motherless Child, Toronto-born author Marianne Langner Zeitlin's third novel in as many decades, is a superbly wrought romantic page-turner that has elements in it of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, with more than a touch of the latter's gothic essence.

Set during a snowy New York winter in the 1970s, the story is essentially an identity quest by its heroine, 26-year-old Elizabeth Guaragna, a "snippet of a girl" and a gifted musicologist who is not afraid of speaking her mind. Elizabeth needs to know more about her mother, who left her family for a new lover and died a few years later while Elizabeth was still a toddler.



Elizabeth grew up in "a house of silences upon silences, with knowing looks exchanged among the grownups; with the children left to figure everything out for themselves." Her father, a brilliant concert pianist, died without ever speaking to her of the matter, and now she felt "the unsleeping blood of her father still cried out for vengeance from the black earth."

From an aunt and others, Elizabeth heard whispered stories that painted her mother as callously indifferent to her children, and Alfred Rossiter, her mother's lover, as a monster who had sabotaged her father's career out of pure malice.

Loaded with these prejudices, she applies for a job with Rossiter, an accomplished manager of musical talent who has just started his own agency. To her enormous surprise, she wins the high-level position solely on the strength of her knowledge and personality: she had been unable to supply credentials because she had applied under the pseudonym of Lisa Sullivan. Still bearing her secret antagonisms, she serves as a capable Girl Friday to the increasingly kind and likeable Rossiter, who puts up with Lisa's frostiness because she is superb at what she does.

Scene by scene, Langner Zeitlin always seems to find the emotional centre of her characters as they express themselves in excellently rendered dialogue and action. Witness, for example, the exchange between Lisa and Rossiter on her first day of work after she tries to correct what she sees as his lack of sensitivity toward artists.

"Rossiter's eyes blinked spasmodically behind his reading glasses. 'You've got quite a bit of sass, girl. Ease off. First day on the job and already you're telling me how to handle an agency.'

"Pulling herself up stiffly, she said: 'Mr. Rossiter, I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't call me 'girl.'"

"Two large crimson spots appeared on his cheeks as he took off his glasses and stared. For a moment, she thought he was going to fire her then and there – to give her her walking papers, as she had once heard her aunt express it when her father was let go by the Royal Conservatory... But Rossiter was going to do no such thing. His eyes were as washed out as sheets hanging on a line and he suddenly looked very old. 'All right, then, I'll try to remember. I'll call you Sullivan then, okay?'

"Just call me Lisa."

Like the hit TV show *Mad Men*, which brilliantly recreates the inner world of a leading Manhattan ad agency in the 1960s, *Motherless Child* takes us inside a powerhouse musical management firm in Manhattan in the 1970s and presents utterly realistic behind-the-scenes glimpses of the world of professional music. Langner Zeitlin's dialogue crackles with reality and her characters burst with energy and purpose.

George Wentworth, a highborn newspaper reporter writing an authorized biography of Rossiter, is the symbolic chivalrous knight who falls in love with Lisa and attempts to unravel all of her mysteries and secrets. Lisa loves him too, but, entrapped by her own ruse of falseness, prepares to run away to her native Toronto rather than risk her real identity being discovered. It is left to George to penetrate the obstructing maze and brambles of Elizabeth's defences.

Gothic stories often contain some or all of the following elements: a crumbling house or castle in partial ruin, a degenerate family line in need of restoration, dark secrets, hidden chambers, family crypts, a mad person in the attic, the sharp tug of the dead upon the living. In a gothic romance, these elements of decay and decomposition are usually swept aside by the power of true love, a transformation represented by winter turning into spring.

Several of these elements are evident in *Motherless Child*. A key scene occurs in a cemetery. Visiting her mother's grave with her mother's favourite flowers in hand, Lisa rushes to hide in a nearby crypt as another visitor – Rossiter – arrives with a similar bouquet of gladiolas.

Lisa also seems at times on the verge of a sort of madness as she struggles to revise her long-held prejudices and impressions. A masterful writer, Langner Zeitlin provides a satisfying and unexpected ending to the story – which, as she explained in an interview last month, came partly from her own life experience.

Born in Toronto, the author is the daughter of the late Rabbi Mordecai Langner, who was rabbi of the Junction Shul on Maria Street in the 1920s and 1930s. She moved to New York City in 1947 and married acclaimed concert violinist Zvi Zeitlin. During her own longtime career in the musical field, she worked as an orchestra manager and an employee in one of the largest music management firms in the United States.

Along with her husband, she worked with and befriended many legendary musicians including Igor Stravinsky, Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Jascha Heifetz and Itzhak Perlman. *Motherless Child* benefits tremendously from its author's wealth of inside knowledge about the international classical music industry.

The novel was initially released in 2012, but Langner Zeitlin ceased all promotional efforts after the death of her husband, a former professor at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. She moved recently from Rochester to Las Cruces, N.M., to be near her daughter. She has given readings of *Motherless Child* in both cities as well as in New York and Toronto.

Her previous novels are *Mira's Passage* (1981) and *Next of Kin* (2000). The latter is based on her upbringing in the Junction and was nominated for a City of Toronto Book Award.

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Netanyahu among singer's mourners

JTA

JERUSALEM — Arik Einstein, an iconic Israeli singer as well as a songwriter and actor, died last week.

Einstein died Nov. 26 at a Tel Aviv hospital, where he was rushed after suffering an aortic aneurysm. He was 74.

Israeli television channels halted their regular programming to broadcast clips and remembrances of the singer, considered the godfather of Israeli rock, whose first recordings were released in the 1960s.

Fans holding a vigil outside the Sourasky Medical Center cried when the hospital's director general, Dr. Gabriel Barbash, announced Einstein had died.

Fellow veteran Israeli singer Shlomo Artzi, who was playing a concert in Tel Aviv when news broke of Einstein's death, halted the show after playing his song *Ha'ish Hahu* (*That Man*) as a tribute. He said later that he'd played the whole show knowing Einstein was in the hospital, and started crying on stage when the news came.

"He was one hell of a person," said Artzi. "We lost a piece of ourselves."

Thousands of people, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, gathered in Tel Aviv Nov. 27, the day of Einstein's funeral, to pay their last respects. Einstein's body lay in state in Rabin Square on a platform decked out in mourning black, at the centre of which his coffin, draped in black, stood surrounded by red flowers.

Arik Einstein

Led by Einstein's friend, Shalom Hanoch, musicians staged a concert in his memory for the thousands who had crowded into the square.

Einstein had not performed in front of an audience since the early 1980s following a road accident in which he was seriously injured.

His first album, *Shar Bisvilech*, or *Singing for You*, was released in 1966. He was part of the rock band The High Windows with Shmulik Kraus and Israeli-American Josie Katz. He also formed the Lool, or Chicken Coop, comedy troupe.

Among his well-known songs were *Ani Ve'ata*, or *You and Me*; *Atur mitzchech zahav shachor*, and *Sa Le'at*, or *Drive Slowly*.

"We all grew up on his songs. The words of Arik Einstein were the words of the land of Israel," Netanyahu said in a statement posted to Facebook. "Arik was a wonderful musician and a wonderful man... I loved him very much. Israel bids farewell with great sadness to a giant of culture who will be missed. My wife and I are greatly pained by his passing."

With files from Timesofisrael.co

Exodus Decoded: Emmy-winning director Simcha Jacobovici will be in attendance at the screening of his film *The Exodus Decoded*. Produced with Oscar-winning filmmaker James Cameron, the film argues that the archeological proof of the Biblical exodus is hiding in plain sight in museums around the world. Adath Israel Congregation (37 Southbourne Ave. Toronto), Dec. 8 at 7:30 p.m. For tickets call 416-635-5340

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EYE ON ARTS

By BILL GLADSTONE

SOPRANO DENISE WILLIAMS PERFORMS CHANUKAH CONCERT FOR FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Denise Williams, a classical soprano who has performed recently in some of Toronto's top concert, opera and theatre venues, is the featured performer at the Friends of Yiddish annual Chanukah Freylekhs. She will be joined by her son, **Ben MacDonald** on the clarinet and **Brahm Goldhamer** on the piano in a program that includes songs of labour and love, as well as Ladino, spiritual, contemporary theatre and Chanukah songs.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. (between Sheppard and Finch), Sunday Dec. 8, 2 p.m. $15, FOY members $8. Please RSVP asap to Sandy, 416-458-1440 or yiddish18@yahoo.ca

• • •

Brian Katz at Mezzetta: Guitarist-composer **Brian Katz**, who recently released a new CD of original compositions at a sold-out concert in the Heliconian Hall, performs selections from the CD (*Leaves Will Speak*) at Mezzetta Restaurant, 681 St. Clair. Ave. W. on Dec. 11, 9 to 11 p.m. Reservations, 416-658-5687.

• • •

More Chanukah Concerts: The Toronto Jewish Folk Choir celebrates the holiday season in two concerts with **Alexander Veprinsky** conducting and **Lina Zemelman** at the piano. The songs are mainly in Yiddish but also in Hebrew and English. Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W., Dec. 9, 3 p.m. $10, Betel Centre members $5; tickets available at the door. 416-225-2112, ext. 103, www.betelcentre.org. The choir also performs at the Barbara Frum Library, 20 Covington Rd. Free admission. Dec. 11, 7 to 8 p.m.

• • •

The United Jewish People's Order of Toronto (UJPO) is screening *Conversations With Lee Lorch*, a 46-minute documentary by **Rachel Deutsch**. The film is based on a series of interviews with Lorch, a human rights activist and mathematics professor who "was hounded out of the United States for his activism." He moved to Toronto, taught at York University until his retirement, and remains an UJPO member. The film also explores that aspect of Jewish culture that is rooted in socialism and communism and the struggle for social justice and civil rights. **Chandler Davis**, another transplanted American social activist in Toronto, will deliver introductory remarks; bagels and coffee will be provided. 918 Bathurst St. Sunday Dec. 8, 11 a.m. www.ujpo.org, 416-789-5502.

• • •

New in Print: Howard Rotberg, head of Mantua Books, recently announced the release of: *The Vatican Against Israel -- J'Accuse*, by **Giulio Meotti.** The book details the Vatican's antagonism towards the historic idea of a Jewish homeland, and its non-recognition of Israel for 60 years after 1948 – "a policy fitting to Israel's Arab-Islamic enemies." Mantua's mandate is to "go beyond political correctness and moral relativism to enlighten our readers on the great ideological issues of our times." www.mantuabooks.com

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Arts in Brief

• Toronto Jewish Film Society and Koffler Centre of the Arts present two documentaries on Jewish music in South America: *Tango, A Story with Jews*, and *Rio Klezmer. Tango* uses archival footage and interviews with musicians young and old to transport you through the rhythms of this rich tradition. *Rio Klezmer* draws you into the heart of Buenos Aires' vibrant contemporary klezmer scene. With guest speaker **Eric Stein**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Sunday Dec. 8, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets $15, $10, available at the door 15 minutes before screenings.

•Syrinx Concerts Toronto presents Israeli pianist **Ishay Shaer,** playing a program of **Beethoven** and **Somers**. $25, $20. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. Sunday Dec. 8, 3 p.m.

• Critic **Kevin Courrier** examines how film director **Robert Altman** tackled many genres and redefined the genre picture. *Tragi-High Comedy and Conclusion: Gosford Park and A Prairie Home Companion* is his next topic at the Miles Nadal JCC, Dec. 9, 7 to 9 pm. $11.25 drop-in, students $6.

• ABC TV has purchased 10 episodes of the popular Israeli talent show *Rising Star* in which viewers rate performers in real time via phone or social media, with results updating instantaneously during the live performance.

• • •

At the Galleries: Amarynth Gallery presents an exhibition of mid-century Czech Art Glass Masters, showcasing internationally acclaimed artists (**Libensky, Vasicek, Klinger, Exnar, Visner, Novak**) who often were forbidden to sign their art works while the Czech Republic was under Soviet rule. On view at 161 Cumberland St. until Dec. 20. 416-515-9191.

• *The Great Upheaval -- Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Collection, 1910-1918* has opened at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Organized chronologically by year, the exhibition presents enormously important works by enormously important artists, and helps you understand each particular artistic innovation. Artists include **Brancusi, Cezanne, Chagall, Duchamp, Kandinsky, Leger, Matisse, Modigliani, Mondrian** and **Picasso.** Their works mirror the intense dynamism of that fertile period as artists hurtled toward abstraction and the world hurtled toward the "great upheaval" of a catastrophic war.

Brian Katz plays at Mezzetta Restaurant

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Thu, July 3	Cruising the Baltic Sea	-	-
Fri, July 4	Klaipeda, Lithuania	8:00 am	5:00 pm
Sat, July 5	Riga, Latvia	8:00 am	4:00 pm
Sun, July 6	Helsinki, Finland	9:00 am	6:00 pm
Mon, July 7	St. Petersburg, Russia	8:00 am	-
Tue, July 8	St. Petersburg, Russia	-	-
Wed, July 9	St. Petersburg, Russia	-	6:00 pm
Thu, July 10	Tallinn, Estonia	8:00 am	5:00 pm
Fri, July 11	Stockholm, Sweden	8:00 am	-

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Tony Award-winning comedy stars Canadian actors

Marvin Glassman
Special To The CJN

Despite decades of acting in film, stage and television, Montreal-born actor Linda Kash is best known as the Philadelphia Cream Cheese angel in Kraft television commercials, for the past 11 years.

Kash, 52, trades in her halo to be a funny mother in the Studio 180 Theatre comedy *God Of Carnage*, now playing through Dec. 15 at the Panasonic Theatre.

Originally written in French by Yasmin Reza in 2006, the comedy was translated into English by Christopher Hampton and won a 2009 Tony Award for best play while on Broadway for two years. The plot centres on a schoolyard fight between two boys and the two sets of parents who meet to resolve the problem between the boys.

"The play has the four adults who aim to have peace and friendship. But, as the story evolves, the adults put away the masks of civility and start to lose their tempers and behave like children. We end up sparring about issues centring on racial prejudice, homophobia and women's issues in ways to provoke the audience to laugh because the characters go to such extremes," Kash said.

"My character, Veronica, is liberal, wrote about Darfur and is so much fun to play. One may think of the play as an update of television situation comedy series such as *All In The Family* or *The Simpsons*, because the audience has no idea what the characters are going to say."

Also starring in *God Of Carnage* is Sarah Orenstein, a veteran actress who has played at the Shaw Festival for 13 years. Orenstein plays Annette, a woman who lives off the financial success of her husband.

"Annette is hilarious, and has some funny scenes that the audience won't forget. It's an honour to work with our cast, and working with Linda is so much fun," Orenstein said.

Kash has been adept at comedy for decades, starting as part of the famed Second City comedy troupe in Toronto, working with Eugene Levy and Andrea Martin.

As is the case with many Canadians who excelled in comedy, Kash went to Hollywood for seven years to fast track her career in 1993. She portrayed funny characters in many highly acclaimed television situation comedy series, including *Ellen*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Seinfeld* and many others.

Surprisingly, Kash left Hollywood in 2000 when her career was blossoming and returned to Toronto to resurrect her career.

"It was a personal choice for me to return to Canada. I could have continued in Hollywood, but felt that I would have more of a family life back in Toronto. I have no regrets and am lucky to have continued my career here."

Kash may have been born to be onstage, being the daughter of famed Canadian opera singer Maureen Forrester and conductor/violinist Eugene Kash.

"My four siblings found it normal to be travelling and to have parents in show business. My mother performed all over the world and would do over 100 concerts each year. It was natural for my brother Daniel [an actor] and for me to have a strong desire to be on stage."

Forrester, an acclaimed Canadian opera singer, was named to the Order Of Canada and the Canadian Hall Of Fame, and was awarded 20 honorary degrees from the most prestigious universities in the world, among other citations.

Forrester converted to Judaism to please her in-laws when she married Kash in 1957.

"My father and mother fell in love soon after they met. Their life together was like a tale from a romantic movie. However, my father's family would have been against the marriage if she did not convert to Judaism. She was concerned about being Jewish enough to raise us as Jews, and we know everything about our heritage," Kash said.

Among her many roles, Kash relished playing memorable Jewish characters over the years, among them Sarah Glick in the television series *Max Glick*, Carol Goldstein in *Robson Arms* and Dr. Silverstein in *Less Than Kind*, a television series about a Jewish family in Winnipeg.

Being immersed in performing has also helped Kash cope with tragedy. She was a caregiver for her mother, who suffered from Alzheimer's disease until her death in 2010.

Kash was starring in Neil Simon's *Lost In Yonkers* at the Jane Mallet Theatre on May 18, 2012, when she learned that her husband, actor Paul O'Sullivan, had died in a car accident that day near their home in Peterborough, Ont.

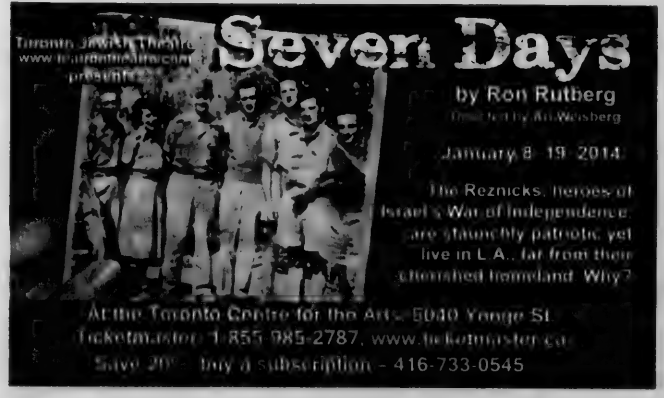
"It was a shock, as Paul was beloved by everyone in show business. We knew each other from our days with Second City and worked together in Peterborough, establishing a performing arts academy there."

Linda Kash, left, and Sarah Orenstein

Kash has three daughters and is raising them in the Jewish tradition, while living on a farm near Peterborough. She is also a co-host of a morning drive radio show there.

"There's a vibrant, if small, Jewish community there, and I enjoy living there, even if it is a long commute to Toronto," she said.

Linda Kash and Sarah Orenstein star in God Of Carnage, *a Studio 180 Theatre production, playing now through Dec. 15 at the Panasonic Theatre, 651 Yonge St., in downtown Toronto. For tickets, call 416-872-1212, or go to ww. studio180theatre.com*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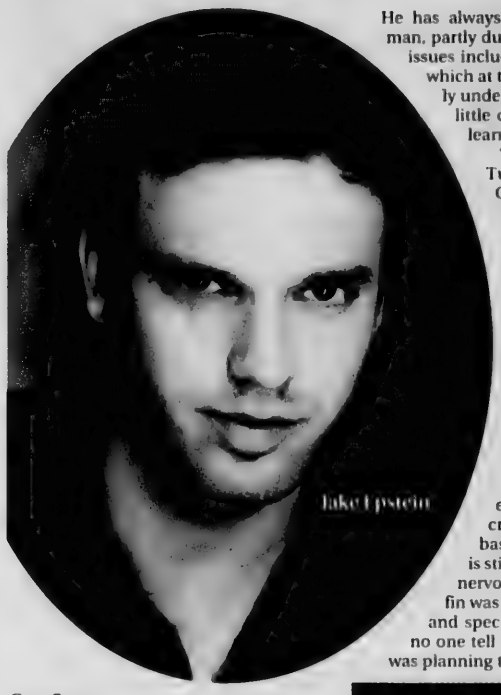


Gerry Goffin, left, and Carole King

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

When Jake Epstein moved to New York City 14 months ago, he had no clue that he would soon be swooping around the Broadway stage as Spider-Man.

In that debut performance, the 26-year-old Toronto-born actor donned the iconic red and blue spandex suit and starred in the most expensive musical production of all time: *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*.

But now, less than a year later, he's taking off that suit and heading to something with a little more gravity: *Beautiful*, a musical based on the life of songwriting legend Carole King, played by Jessie Mueller.

"It's about this factory of songwriters... all these Brooklyn Jews that started writing every single hit in America at the time," said Epstein, who plays King's songwriting partner and first husband, Gerry Goffin.

Goffin, who was inducted with King into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990, wrote a slew of hits with her, including chart-toppers *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow* and *The Loco-Motion*.

He has always been a very private man, partly due to his mental health issues including bipolar disorder, which at the time was not widely understood. That made it a little difficult for Epstein to learn how to act like him.

"There are no YouTube clips of Gerry Goffin," Epstein said. "A lot of my research came from conversations with the writers, who had spent a lot of time with Gerry."

That's how Epstein learned how to emulate Goffin's mannerisms, both in terms of how he spoke and how he moved.

Epstein called it a very strange experience to be part of the creation of a character based on someone who is still alive. He said he was nervous knowing that Goffin was going to see the show, and specifically requested that no one tell him which day Goffin was planning to attend.

"I was really worried about the way the play was interpreting this guy who is really alive," he said.

Goffin did attend a show when it was playing in San Francisco for a month prior to moving to the Stephen Sondheim Theatre on Broadway, and he called it exhilarating.

"While it's not quite me, I think Jake does a good job of capturing the essence of what I was going through at that time," he told *The CJN*.

But it's not quite accurate.

"Jake has more class in the show than I ever had," he said.

Epstein is no stranger to playing people with mental illness. One of his most famous roles was when he played Craig Manning, a musician with bipolar disorder, in *Degrassi: The Next Generation*.

Although he worried a little about being typecast in roles that involve mental illness, he said he realized the disorder was set in a completely different context, and he's approaching it in a very different way.

"When I shot those first episodes in *Degrassi*... I didn't know what bipolar was at the time, and I was learning about it," he said. "To go back to something I'd done a little research on as a teenager, as an adult on Broadway, it felt like looking at it from a different lens."

Epstein said although *Beautiful* is completely different from *Spider-Man*, there were still lessons he was able to take away from his experience there.

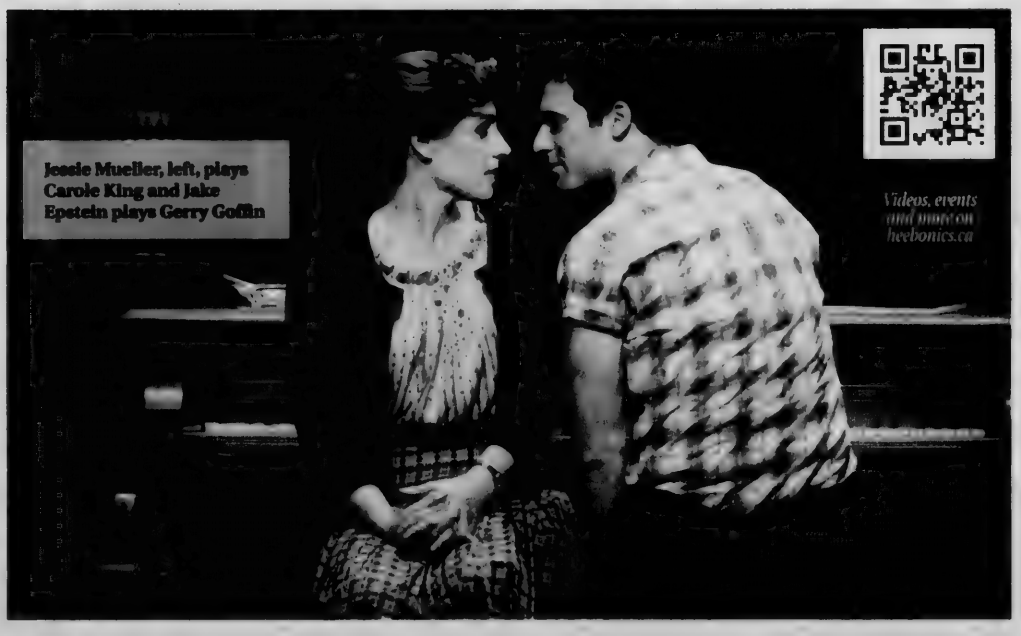
"Talk about what a way to get your feet wet on Broadway, to play the main part in the most expensive, biggest musical ever. Nothing will ever be bigger or scarier than that," he said. "That was a huge confidence builder for me to know I could carry a show."

He also learned what it takes to do a long run of a show, with eight performances every week.

Although it's a tough gig, he said the show is a really good fit for him, and it's an incredible feeling to be performing on Broadway.

"My whole experience here has been such a dream," he said. "It's so exciting and so unexpected. I feel like I was meant to be here."

Beautiful: The Carole King Musical is in its preview run until its official opening on Jan. 12.



Deadline reminder: Dec. 9 is the deadline for the issue of Dec. 19. Dec. 16 is the deadline for the issues of Dec. 26 and Jan. 9. *The CJN* is not publising an issue on Jan. 2. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Dec. 5

A NIGHT ON BROADWAY

Cantor Alex Stein performs songs from Broadway, 7:30 p.m., Adath Israel Congregation. $18. Call 416-635-5340.

YIDDISH VINKL

Elly Gotz reads Yiddish poetry with translations, noon, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 includes lunch. RSVP yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca.

CHANUKAH NASH & DRASH

Cantor David Edwards and **Klara Bagley** perform a musical "Nash and drash," Beth Emeth Synagogue, noon. $12/$15. Call 416-633-3838 to reserve.

Friday, Dec. 6

SINGLES ONEG SHABBAT

Shaar Shalom Singles (with the Intersynagogue Singles 50+) holds an Oneg Shabbat, 2 Simonston Blvd., 8 p.m.

FILM FESTIVAL

Temple Sinai shows the films *Neil Diamond: Solitary Man, Closed Season, Noodle* and *Zaytoun* Dec. 6-8. Advance registration only. Call 416-487-3281, or email programs@templesinai.net.

Saturday, Dec. 7

TORAH CLASS

Lionel Sharpe leads the weekly Torah class this week at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

YOUTH & SOCIAL MEDIA

A discussion on "Inspiring our Youth in an Age of Social Media," will be held at Or Chaim Yeshiva, 7:30 p.m., www.torahinmotion.org.

Sunday, Dec. 8

LEARN ABOUT WILLS

Phil Tinianov discusses how to create a will and mistakes to avoid, Temple Kol Ami, 36 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill at 2 p.m. 905-709-2620.

EXODUS DECODED

Adath Israel Synagogue shows the film *Exodus Decoded* with filmmaker **Simcha Jacobovici**, 7:30 p.m. $20. RSVP 416-635-5340.

SYRIAN JEWS

Judy Feld Carr discusses "The Secret Rescue of the Syrian Jews," 7:30 p.m., Beth Jacob Synagogue. $40. For tickets, call 416-638-5955.

MYSTERION

Mysterion, the mind reader, performs at Beth David Synagogue, 9:15 a.m. $8 includes breakfast. 416-633-5555.

FRIENDS OF YIDDISH

Denise Williams performs at the Friends of Yiddish "Chanukah Freylekhs" Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 2 p.m. $8/$15. RSVP **Sandy**, 416-458-1440, 416-736-8073 or yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

MINI GOLF

Beth Tikvah Synagogue plays mini-golf, at Putting Edge, 9625 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. RSVP btblazers@gmail.com

Monday, Dec. 9

ARCHEOLOGY OF JERUSALEM

Dan Bahat, former district archeologist of Jerusalem, discusses "The Western Wall and the Connection to the Jewish People," Beth Tzedec Congregation, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 10

LUNCH AND LEARN

Laya Crust discusses "Jewish Medieval Manuscripts," Temple Har Zion. Bring your lunch at noon, program begins 12:30 p.m. $3/$6.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Stephen Diamond and **Lisa Draper,** co-chairs of the 2013 UJA campaign, discuss giving charitably, part of Temple Sinai's young adult entrepreneurial series (adults 22-39), 6 p.m. For location or to register, email hayley@templesinai.net, or call 416-487-4161.

THE AGUNAH CRISIS

A panel discussion on "The Agunah Crisis: New Opportunities to Solve an Old Problem," will be held at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 7:30 p.m., www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770.

Wednesday, Dec. 11

JEWS AND HOCKEY

David Grossman discusses "Jews and Hockey," 7:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 225.

Continued on page 33

A Gala Tribute

An Evening to Honour
Rabbi Lawrence & Cheryl Englander

Solel Congregation of Mississauga is pleased to celebrate the career of a leader, mentor, teacher and friend

Date: May 25, 2014, 6:00 p.m
Location: Lakeshore Convention Centre, Mississauga, Ontario

For sponsorship information and to purchase tickets, please call **905-820-5915** or visit **www.solel.ca/tribute**
We hope to see you there!

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Solel Congregation
"... and all its paths are peace"

Please note: Charitable receipts for all gifts will be issued to the maximum allowable under CRA rules

CWH joins GivingTuesday

CJN Staff

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) has joined GivingTuesday, an international project that encourages charitable donations during the holiday season. Canada is a participant for the first time this year.

GivingTuesday was launched Dec. 3, the Tuesday after Black Friday, the big shopping day in the United States after U.S. Thanksgiving, and continues through the month.

CHW is asking donors, in the spirit of Chanukah, to join a growing network of Canadian philanthropists signing onto GivingTuesday.

Donors can choose to direct gifts towards any of the projects benefitting women, children or health care that CHW supports.

The organization is also asking its supporters to share their stories of giving via CHW's social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

"In solidarity with GivingTuesday, we are providing our supporters with the opportunity to 'choose their impact', and to make a gift to CHW that is meaningful to them," said national president Marla Dan.

"We are looking forward to joining with hundreds of other Canadian non-profits across the country to share the importance of the good work that we do, but, more importantly, to acknowledge that our success can only happen because of the generosity of Canadians.

"This is our chance to collectively say thank you, while raising awareness about the needs in our communities and beyond."

Her husband, Aubrey Dan of Toronto, has pledged a $10,000 matching gift in recognition of his 50th birthday and to honour her recent birthday.

Gifts CHW receives through GivingTuesday up to Dec. 31 will be matched dollar for dollar up to $10,000.

CHW is among 15 Canadian organizations that have so far joined GivingTuesday, which was initiated in Canada by CanadaHelps, GIV3 and several other partners.

Those who are interested in joining CHW's GivingTuesday initiative can visit www.chw.ca. For more about the GivingTuesday movement, visit www.givingtuesday.ca.

GivingTuesday was created by the 92nd Street Y, in partnership with the United Nations Foundation.

Continued from page 32

SPADINA SWEATSHOPS

Ruth Frager discusses "Spadina Sweatshops: Jews and Gender in Toronto's Labour Movement in the Early 1900s," at a meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society, Temple Sinai, 8 p.m. www.jgstoronto.ca.

CHANUKAH CONCERT

The Toronto Jewish Folk Choir performs Chanukah songs and other favourites, 7 p.m. at the Barbara Frum Library.

Thursday, Dec. 11

NETWORKING FORUM

Job seekers are invited to an employer panel and networking forum organized by JVS Toronto with representatives from Deloitte, Questrade, Royal Bank of Canada and CGA-Ontario, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Lebovic Jewish Community Campus. Pre-registration required, at hmartins@jvstoronto.org or 416-661-3010.

Other News

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for a female volunteer to assist during swim time at the Holland Bloorview Pool, Mondays, 6 p.m. The volunteer doesn't need to be a strong swimmer, but must be comfortable in shallow water. Call **Mille Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org.

VISIONS FOR CANADA

Chris Alexander, minister of citizenship and immigration, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Advance registration required. Email RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org or 416-221-3433.

NARAYEVER CENTENNIAL

First Narayever Synagogue celebrates its centennial next year and is looking for memorabilia (photos, documents, newsletters etc.), as well as memories and stories from people who were connected with the shul or surrounding neighbourhood. Call 416-927-0546, or email centennialcelebrations@narayever.ca.

MORASHA CLASSES

Barrie Wilson teaches a class on "Reading Paul's Letters through Jewish Eyes," 11:15 a.m., Jan. 8-Feb. 5, Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call **Loretta** to register, 416-789-7400.

TALLIT WORKSHOP

Temple Har Zion holds a one-day tallit-making workshop Jan. 19. Register before Dec. 20. Email lisarosefox@gmail.com.

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

Ella Burakowski, *The CJN's* Ask Ella columnist, has written a novel based on her uncle David Gold's experiences during the Holocaust. Ella will introduce Gold who will speak at Ayin L'Tzion Congregation, Netivot HaTorah Day School, 18 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, Dec. 15 at 7:30 p.m.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents in the early stages of separation. Dec. 10, 9:30 a.m.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m.

Dating in Mid-Life: A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for 2 or more years. Dec. 12.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

Circle of Care sponsors a 6-week workshop about community services, safety, financial and legal planning for seniors, Fridays, 1:30 p.m. to Dec. 13, 540 Finch Ave. W. Call **Anne Siciliano** 416-635-2900, ext. 462.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Dec. 18. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Wednesdays mah-Jong 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Dec. 10 **Annette Polzner** discusses "Using Handwriting Analysis and Kabbalah for Self-discovery," 10 a.m.; Dec. 12, **Allen Kula** discusses "Medication Use and Ask a Pharmacist," 1:30 p.m.

Active Seniors/Boomers Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. Email lisar@mnjcc.org. Dec. 5 **Jordan Klapman** performs songs by **Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Richard Rogers** and more. 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267.

Yiddish conversation, Mondays 1:30 p.m.

Try Nia, which combines martial arts, dance and healing arts. Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.

Shalom Singers are looking for both male and female singers. Weekly rehearsals and performances year-round. Thursdays, 10 a.m. No auditions required. Call 416-781-6066.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com. or ext. 4103.

Register now for winter programs: **Beverlee Swayze** discusses "The History of Symphony," Jan. 21, 1 p.m.

Iain Scott discusses "Great Canadian Opera Singers," starting Jan. 16.

Kevin Courrier discusses "Produced and Abandoned 111: Yet More Best Movies You Have Never Seen," starting Jan. 15.

To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Register now for winter fun and learning. Members registration opens Dec. 4. Non-members registration opens Dec.11. Pottery classes start Jan. 8; Klezmer ensemble begins Jan. 14; Hebrew Institute begins Jan. 20; Media Mondays looking at the work of Steven Spielberg starts Jan. 20; fiction and poetry workshops start Jan. 20.

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Kevin Courrier discusses the films of **Robert Altman** Mondays, 7 p.m. Dec. 9, Tragi-High Comedy and Conclusion: *Gosford Park* and *A Prairie Home Companion*

MNJCC Fitness Programs: Email joolip@mnjcc.org or ext. 574. Healthy breast yoga, Wednesdays 12:15 p.m. to Dec. 18.

Mapping Harbord Village: Stories of a Neighbourhood, developed by the Harbord Village Residents' Association and the master of museum studies program in the University of Toronto's faculty of information is on display in the gallery until Dec. 15.

The Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two documentaries on Jewish music in South America, *Tango, A Story with Jews* and *Rio Klezmer*, Dec. 8, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Guest speaker is **Eric Stein,** Ashkenaz Festival director. Tickets at the door, 15 minutes before screen times, $15/$10.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Got Shabbat? Shabbat program (songs, games and stories) for children ages 0-4 with an adult starts Jan. 10. Ext. 388.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Social club for singles 35-50, Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. $16/$20. Pre-registration required. Call ext. 3006 or email **Andrea**, adaiam@srcentre.ca.

Try a free class of PJ Plus, a program for children and parents to engage in active Jewish learning, Dec. 8. Ages 15 months-30 months 9:30-11 a.m.; ages 2 1/2 to 3 years, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. To register, call **Adina** at ext. 3258, or email adina@srcentre.ca

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FAMILY MOMENTS

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מזל טוב

Happy 22nd birthday Jordana. Have a wonderful day and may all your dreams come true in the year ahead. Love always, Mom and Dad.

Mazel tov on your bat mitzvah, Alexandra Gold. You make us very proud. Love, your family and friends.

Mazel tov Laura & Ben on the birth of your daughter, Rachel Lillian. Proud grandparents are Faye & Alan Shiner and Cindy & John Freeman.

Jennifer & Corey Snider announce the birth of Brody Liam. Grandparents, Shirley & Louis Greenbaum, Carole & Marshall Snider, great-grandparents Helen & Morris Greenbaum.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Parental perfection

Married With Kids
Lauren Kramer

One of the joys of being a parent is that for a short time, you epitomize perfection in your children's eyes. As you scurry around trying to do your very best, they look up at you with utter admiration. Before them stands an adult who can answer any question, resolve any problem, make everything that's wrong, right again. It's humbling to see that trust and belief from your kids, because it reminds you what a powerful figure you are in their eyes – for a short time, anyway.

In a distant memory that goes back 35 years, I'm sitting in the bathtub with my little sister and we're talking about our mother. "She's the most beautiful woman in the world," I say sagely, comparing her to other moms I know and to the women I've seen in James Bond movies. My sister agrees. To both of us, our mom is nothing short of a deity and we would do anything to win her praise and attention.

Walking past the bathroom door, my mother overhears this conversation and is filled with an overwhelming feeling of love for her two little girls. Beauty she doesn't care for – she knows that's something that comes and goes. But to be seen in such a light by the children who have invested all their trust, belief and hope in her is a special moment indeed.

It's a short-lived one, because as they grow past the ages of six or seven, kids become more inclined to see their parents with a growing degree of objectivity. Criticisms become scathing, doors slam in loud objection and rules are hotly contested. The parent moves from deity to dictator and walks a fine line between effective parenting and reasonable restrictions. There's a relatively short time to mould those kids into decent, respectful human beings, and as parents try to do so, the home can become a war zone of different viewpoints. Phrases such as "old-fashioned," "out of touch" and "just plain mean" are tossed like grenades around the kitchen. It takes strength and conviction to withstand the barrage without second-guessing your rules and decisions.

Which is why the years from birth to age five need to be cherished so dearly. In my experience, that's when parents are revered the most and the love they receive is at its purest and least adulterated.

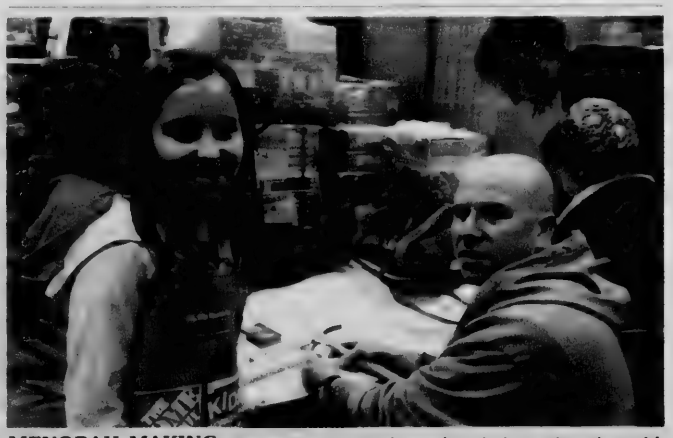
"Is there anything dad can't do?" my daughter, Maya, almost five, asked me recently. Her eyes were wide and her curiosity genuine. In her eyes, her dad is nothing short of brilliant, a man who can fix anything, soothe burning scratches and hurt feelings, eliminate hunger and lead with decisiveness.

Not sure what to say, I pointed to a few of his shortcomings. His cooking skills could be improved, I noted, and he's not that good at cleaning up his clothes. But those are small things, I added. In the areas where it counts, her dad is a real treasure.

She snuggled up to me on the couch, thrilled to have a few private minutes of cuddle time. "I love you to the moon and the sun," she declared. "Mom, I'm a big fan of you." I folded her in a close embrace, knowing how precious this moment is and how little time I have until she starts examining my imperfections.

Her love and admiration is like a large puddle of sunshine in my life, and I want to bask in its warmth as long as I can.

TYPHOON RELIEF: **Bialik Hebrew Day School's student council organized Toonie Tuesday at its northern and southern branches, which raised money for IsraAID to help with relief efforts in the Philippines. In total, the Bialik family raised $2379.33. Pictured is the student council executive, back, from left, Taylor S., Rebecca G., Mika S., Elah C.R., and Troy L., and front, from left, Alexa S., Daniel C., and Sam M.**



MENORAH MAKING: **Home Depot in Richmond, B.C., in conjunction with Chabad of Richmond, hosted a menorah-making workshop Nov. 24, creating menorah woodwork kits for some 93 Jewish children. Home Depot custom-designed the menorah kits, cutting lumber and using nuts donated by H. Paulin & Co., one of its vendors. "It's a great opportunity for us to give back to the community," said Josh Bliss, assistant store manager. "We're definitely interested in doing this again." Pictured is Ari Malowicki assisting Amy Aginsky in the art of menorah making.**

(Lauren Kramer photo)

Food and memories – an unbeatable combination

Barbara Silverstein
Special to The CJN

The laughter was loud and the nostalgia was palpable at Beyond Bubbie, an evening of storytelling that linked food and family lore.

Nine presenters, eight of them local foodies, served up memories of their grandmothers' and mothers' cooking to an audience of some 300 people at the Al Green Theatre.

Beyond Bubbie was presented by the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre; UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Ontario Jewish Archives; Shoresh, a Jewish environmental organization; and Reboot, a think tank and project incubator that grapples with issues of Jewish identity.

Rose Reisman Catering and The Pickle Barrel sponsored the event, which was held to promote, *Beyond Bubbie*, an interactive community cookbook (www.beyondbubbie.com). Award-winning food writer David Sax hosted the evening, and the Varsity Jews, a University of Toronto a cappella choir provided the musical entertainment.

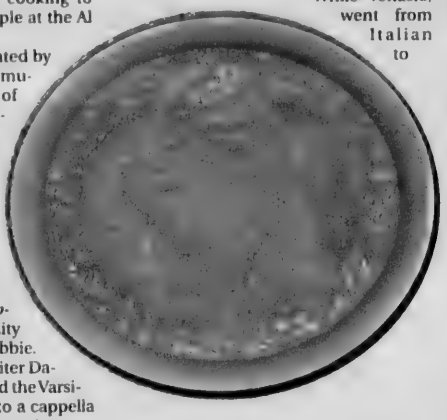
Celebrity chef Rose Reisman, an author, caterer and restaurateur, says her late mother, Mary Finson (Finkelstein), never encouraged her to cook. "She liked to cook fattening foods for me."

Reisman showed a clip of the cooking show, *Loving Spoonful* with host David Gale, which featured a bake-off between Reisman and Finson. Reisman prepared chocolate biscotti while Finson made mandelbrot. For Finson, the winning recipe was clear. When she tasted her daughter's biscotti, she politely said, "That's nice." But when she took a bite of her own mandelbrot, she told viewers: "These melt in your mouth."

Executive chef Anthony Rose of Rose and Sons spoke of summer weekends at his grandparents' cottage on Lake Simcoe, where, following an afternoon of fishing with his grandfather, Simon Gottlieb, his grandmother Esther would fry the freshly caught fish and serve it on toasted challah with slices of gefilte fish. Rose calls the dish Gefilte and Fish Schnitke.

Restaurateur Judy Perly, the originator of Klezmer Sundays at the Free Times Cafe, reminisced about her grandmother, Gertie Wasserman who was always worried the family didn't eat properly, because her daughter, Bella Wasserman Perly, worked at Perly Maps, the family business. Wasserman often phoned her daughter to ask, "Bella did you eat?" – which is how the Free Times Cafe Sunday brunch got its name.

Dino Venasio, owner of the kosher deli Ben & Izzy's (3513 Bathurst St.), said he learned to cure meat from his Italian grandmother. An observant Jew today, he can't eat any more of her cooking, but he shared fond memories of making pasta with his grandmother every Sunday. Venasio generously treated everyone in attendance to smoked meat sandwiches from Ben & Izzy's after the presentation.



While Venasio, went from Italian to Jewish cuisine, chef Alida Solomon of Tutti Matti learned to make pasta from her adopted grandmother in Tuscany. Her mother, Maureen Solomon, a retired teacher, helps in the restaurant. And now Alida Solomon has taught her mother how to make homemade Italian pasta.

Other presenters that evening included food writer and broadcaster Sarah Elton, playwright and novelist Sean Dixon and First Nations cultural co-ordinator Denise Booth.

BUBBIE MARY'S MANDELBROT
(Rose Reisman's mother)

3 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup oil
2 cups all purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1-1/2 cups corn flake-style cereal, crushed
1 cup chopped almonds
pinch cinnamon

Line a baking sheet with foil sprayed with oil. Preheat oven to 350.

In a mixing bowl combine eggs, sugar and oil until well mixed. Add flour, baking powder, cereal and almonds and mix well. Form 2 logs and place on baking sheet. Sprinkle with cinnamon and bake 30 minutes. Cool 10 minutes.

Reduce temperature to 300. Slice logs into 1/2 inch slices. Turn each piece on its side and bake another 40 minutes or until crisp.

ROSE REISMAN'S CHOCOLATE AND DRIED CRANBERRY BISCOTTI

2 eggs
1/3 cup oil
1 cup sugar
1-1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1-1/2 cups flour
1/2 cup cocoa
1/2 cup rolled oats
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/8 tsp. salt
1 cup dried cranberries
3/4 cup semi sweet chocolate chips

Line a baking sheet with foil sprayed with oil. Preheat oven 350.

Mix eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla. Add remaining ingredients and mix well, just until all ingredients are incorporated. Form dough into 2 long rolls or logs. Bake for 30 minutes.

Turn oven to 300. Slice log into 1/2- to 1-inch slices. Place cookies on their sides. Bake another 40 minutes or until done to your liking.

BUBBIE GERTIE WASSERMAN'S CHUNKY APPLE SAUCE
(Judy Perly's grandmother)

4 large apples (any kind but Macintosh), peeled and cored
1/2 lemon cut in eighths
1/2 cup white sugar
1-1/2 cups water
1 cinnamon stick

Cook apples, lemon, sugar and cinnamon stick in water on medium heat. Adjust sugar and water to taste. When cooked, mash apples or leave them chunky. This recipe makes enough apple sauce for 4 dozen small latkes.

A FESTIVE END TO CHANUKAH – FESTIVE POTATO PANCAKES

4 c frozen shredded potatoes • 2 lg eggs, lightly beaten • 1/4 c Panko bread crumbs • 1 c fresh cranberries • 5 raw Brussels sprouts, grated • 1/2 tsp pepper • 1/4 tsp salt • 1/4 c oil, for frying

Using paper or linen towel, squeeze as much liquid from shredded potatoes as possible; the drier, the better. Place potatoes into a large bowl; add remainmg ingredients, except oil. Mix until well combined. Add oil to large frying pan over medium heat. When ripples start to appear in oil, it is ready to be used. Form 2-3" pancakes or smaller if desired. Very carefully place patties into hot oil. Don't overcrowd which will prevent the pancakes from getting crispy. Cook over medium heat for 3 min. on each side. Place on cooling rack lined with paper towel to drain excess grease. Add more oil to pan for cooking additional batches. Drizzle with warm maple syrup, applesauce, or sour cream.

Recipe by "It's Yummi!", Chef Becca Heflin

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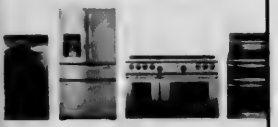
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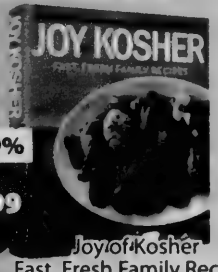

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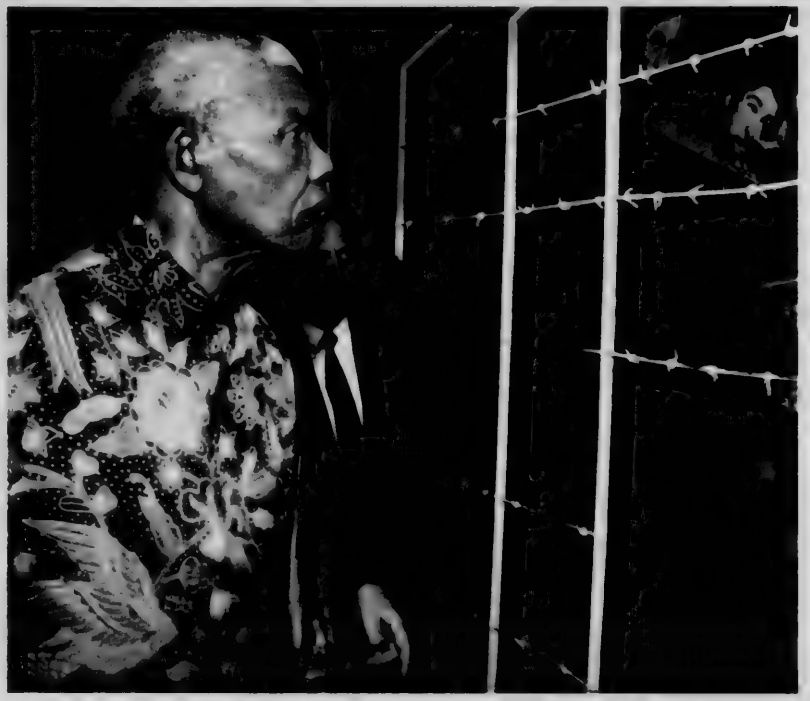

Nelson Mandela visited Yad Vashem during his 1999 state visit to Israel. [*RNS file photo*]

Mandela remembered for his great humility

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

At the request of one of Nelson Mandela's lawyers in South Africa, human rights activist and Liberal member of Parliament Irwin Cotler was part of Mandela's international legal team during his 27 years in prison.

But Cotler also got to meet Mandela twice, and in an interview with *The CJN*, remembered him last week for his indomitable spirit, great humility and complete absence of rancour or bitterness toward his jailers after he came out of prison.

Cotler met Mandela on a state visit to Canada by the South African president in 1998, and when Mandela became an honorary Canadian citizen in 2001.

"He embodied three great struggles," Cotler said the morning after Mandela's Dec. 5 death at age 95, "the march to freedom for black South Africans, the fight for democracy and the struggle for equality.

"He had a transformative impact to make, but there was no bitterness. He was a model for nation building.

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'Buycott' counters holiday boycott drive

United Church-linked group targets firms in West Bank

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Jewish groups are urging Canadians to buy goods from companies being targeted in a holiday boycott campaign endorsed by the United Church of Canada against Israeli firms that make products in the West Bank.

"[The goal is] to really send the message that when people try to isolate Israel by calling for a boycott of any product, the immediate consequence will be exactly the opposite," said Sara Saber-Freedman, executive vice-president of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which organizes what it calls "buycott" campaigns to thwart such efforts.

With the start of the Christmas shopping season, the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine/Israel (UNJPPI), which consists mostly of United Church members, is encouraging consumers to boycott products from Ahava cosmetics, SodaStream and Keter Plastic, which all have plants in the West Bank that employ both Jews and Arabs.

The group held a press conference Dec. 3 at Toronto's Metropolitan United Church to launch its drive.

Continued on page 15

Vayechi
Candlelighting: 4:24
Havdalah: 5:27
Greater Toronto Area

When I met Nelson Mandela
Guest Voice — **Page 29**

Jewish parliamentarians pass resolutions on Iran — please see page 26

CANADA

$15M Donation

TORONTO — Mount Sinai Hospital last week received a $15-million gift from board members Gerald Schwartz and Heather Reisman, which will see the significant physical expansion of the hospital's emergency department and a first-of-its-kind research institute that will drive new knowledge and innovation in the field of emergency medicine. The donation follows previous gifts totaling $13 million, bringing their total investment in Mount Sinai to $28 million. Schwartz is CEO of Onex Corp. and Reisman, is CEO of Indigo Books and Music. The expansion of the hospital's Schwartz/Reisman Emergency Centre to 28,100 sq.ft. will enable Mount Sinai to accommodate expected growth in emergency patient volume from 56,000 to an estimated 80,000 annually over the next few years. The new centre will encompass half of the main floor of the hospital.

Full Parole Denied

TORONTO — Garth Drabinsky, former chief executive officer of theatre company Livent Inc. was denied full parole last week, after appearing before a Parole Board of Canada panel. Drabinsky was convicted of fraud in 2009 and received a five-year prison sentence. After serving more than one-third of his sentence he was granted day parole. Since February he has been living at a halfway house. As a result of the Parole Board panel's failure to reach a unanimous decision on the matter, Drabinsky will receive a new parole hearing within the next two months.

WORLD

Kabbalah Centre Sued

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles-based Kabbalah Centre is being sued for over $1 million by former followers. In two lawsuits filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court on Nov. 27, claimants allege that the center pressured them "to give money until it hurts," in order to receive "the light" from its leaders. The late Rabbi Phillip Berg founded the Kabbalah Centre in Jerusalem. The first American operation was begun in New York in 1965. Since 1984, the center's worldwide operations, with 50 branches, have been headquartered in Los Angeles.

Hampstead To Defy 'Racist' Charter

MONTREAL — The Town of Hampstead will not abide by Bill 60, the secularism charter, should it become law, its council resolved on Dec. 2.

William Steinberg

Mayor William Steinberg, who proposed the resolution, said the municipality "will not comply with a racist and immoral law."

"The Town of Hampstead holds the right of religious freedom as a fundamental right for all human beings," he said in a statement. "In the event that the Quebec government passes this odious bill, which will force people to choose between their religious beliefs and their jobs, it will not be enforced in Hampstead."

About 80 per cent of the town's 8,000 residents are Jewish.

The resolution states that the wearing of religious symbols does not "harm anyone and [does] not interfere with the ability of employees to do their jobs."

The proposed charter, it says, has "already fanned the flames of intolerance and racism and led to attacks on minorities and this will only get worse if the charter becomes law."

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Senior choreographs her own dance routines

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

With a passion for dance, 93-year-old Marion Green lights up the Joseph E. and Minnie Wagman Centre at Baycrest with enviable grace and sunny *joie de vivre*.

Green was a former chorus girl in the late 1930s through the 1940s at the Casino Theatre on Queen Street in Toronto.

"I never had a dance lesson – ever. I just had natural rhythm and when I heard the music, I used to make up my own little steps. My parents used to say I had *shpilkes*," laughed Green.

"Step shuffle, step left, kick right," recalls Green, who told *The CJN*, "I was 17-years-old when I began to dance professionally. I would write everything down so I would remember and practice. At the time there were no Jewish girls dancing in a theatre. In fact, it was burlesque for the first year I was there. Every week we would learn three new routines. I did four shows a day. On Saturday and Sunday, there were five shows and during the war years, a midnight show. Once you hear applause, you're always coming back for more, and I loved it."

Andreah Barker, a dance and movement therapist at Baycrest, first met Green about two years ago.

"Marion thought I was going to teach her, but actually I wanted her to lead me and share her experiences and knowledge by choreographing something with me," Barker said.

With classes once a week for 45 minutes, Green choreographs and teaches Barker the moves right down to designing the costumes.

"We are dancing together, and it is a mutually fun thing for both of us. The creativity of being able to express oneself through movements in ways we can't with words is part of my dance movement therapy," said Barker.

Forty-three years ago, Green volunteered to assist seniors at Baycrest with a program called Arthur Murray's Dance Class.

"We would gather the seniors and dance to music from the old country. Even if they couldn't dance, and were in wheelchairs, we would hold their hands and dance in front of them," Green recalled.

Experts say that dancing improves gait and balance, and can decrease the risk of falling. It also encourages seniors to move in different directions from everyday movements, and it helps improve overall balance, stamina and walking speed, which are major risk factors in falling.

Continued on page 14

Marion Green (*Susan Minuk photo*)

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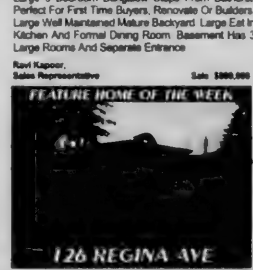
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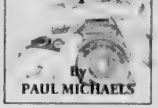
The reason Israel is worried

As mentioned in last week's column, according to the Geneva agreement, Iran is supposed to curtail some of its nuclear program in exchange for limited sanctions relief.

In just one of several widely differing interpretations of the deal, the Americans believe the relief amounts to only about $7 billion – a very small portion of the overall long-standing sanctions – while Iran believes the sanctions program has been dealt a major blow.

Indeed, as reported by the *Financial Times*, right after the agreement was reached, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani bragged that the sanctions regime "had been broken, whether others like it or not." American officials strongly disagreed. Yet, as the *Times* noted, "With the passage of time, [Rouhani] predicted, the cracks 'will widen.'" On that score a growing number of western observers argue Rouhani may well be proved right.

According to Reports



By PAUL MICHAELS

The Obama administration's "fact sheet" on the deal claims that the sanctions relief is "limited, temporary, targeted, and reversible," and that "the overwhelming majority of the sanctions regime, including the key oil, banking, and financial sanctions architecture, remains in place." Included in limited sanctions relief are commodities such as "gold and precious metals, Iran's auto sector and Iran's petrochemical exports."

Humanitarian transactions – those related to Iran's purchase of food, agricultural commodities, medicine, and medical devices – are already allowed by U.S. law and, according to the White House, "will not provide Iran access to any new source of funds."

However, as the *Times of Israel* reported on Dec. 3, "Several U.S. and European companies are preparing to cash in on the sanction relief that Iran negotiated in the nuclear talks last month, and they could be positioned to rake in billions of dollars. The opportunities come not so much from the removal of sanctions on products that the companies sell, but rather from the enabling of financial methods to pay for them."

While companies such as GlaxoSmithKline, Sanofi SA, Siemens, Procter & Gamble and Nestlé were able to sell humanitarian products, their sales were limited by restrictions placed on Iran's banking sector so that Iran couldn't pay for the transactions. Now, under the Geneva plan, a limited number of banks will be allowed to conduct transactions, thereby opening the door to a potentially vast increase in trade for American and European corporations.

This is just one way that a planned "limited" increase in business with Iran could quickly become something much larger.

In the December issue of the *Globe and Mail's Report on Business* magazine, Eric Reguly observed: "While Israel will never believe that Iran's uranium-enrichment activities are aimed at anything but bomb-making, businesses around the world can't wait for Iran to rejoin the global trading and banking system."

With a fitting touch of irony, the magazine's sub-heading on Reguly's column put it this way: "Iran and its opponents now seem to agree that they need to make a deal to end sanctions, because economic potential is a terrible thing to waste."

The American administration might try to keep the sanctions relief very limited while it works toward a comprehensive agreement, but, as Rouhani anticipates, the hunger of the international business community to re-engage with Iran could create what some analysts are calling a "psychological dynamic" that, even if Iran fails to live up to its commitments, would be hard to stem, let alone reverse.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu fears this very dynamic becoming the norm, which is one reason he spoke out so strongly against the interim plan.

As Herb Keinon noted in the *Jerusalem Post*, while in Rome on Dec. 2, Netanyahu charged that "[t]here [already] appears to be a general relaxation of sanctions, and a rush to accommodate Iran, and to make it legitimate, as if Iran has changed anything of its actual policies."

Keinon added: "If the sanctions regime against Iran collapses, Netanyahu said, that would signal the end of chances to peacefully stop Iran's nuclear program."

This is just a brief glimpse at why Rouhani is so confident: he sees real sanctions relief while Iran retains, despite temporary constraints, its nuclear breakout potential.

No wonder Israel is so worried.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

FOOD DRIVE

Bialik Hebrew Day School middle school students held their annual drive for the North York Harvest Food Bank and collected more than 350 cans of food. Pictured are Grade 7 students, from left, Ethan K., Dalia S., Shira A., and Matthew B.

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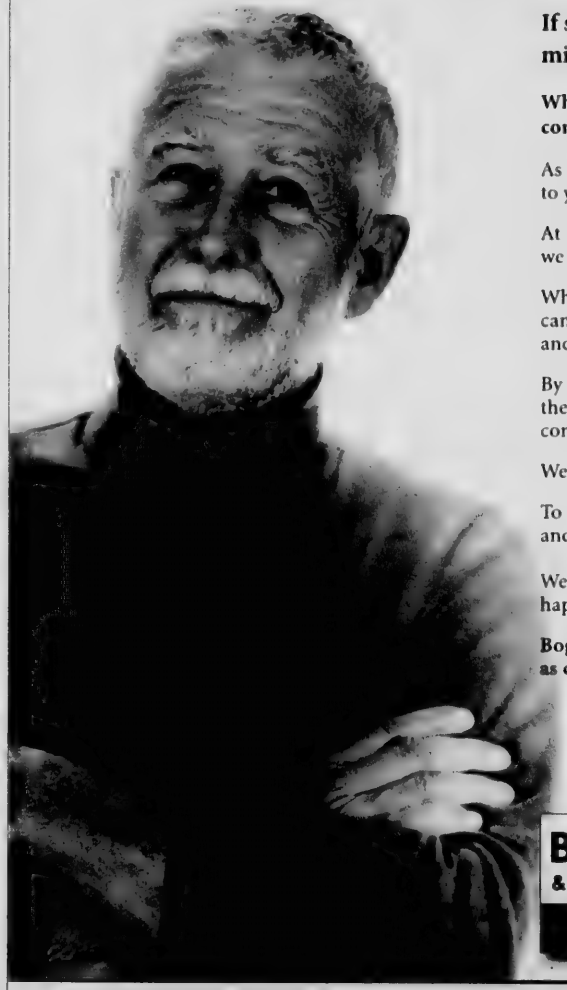

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Time to roll up our sleeves

Guest Editorial

No one committed to the safety and security of Israel could be faulted for being outraged by the Interim Agreement reached by the P5+1 and Iran. The sense of betrayal – especially by the U.S. – of its sole democratic ally in the Middle East was as palpable as it was self-evident. Few countries, Canada being a singular exception, were prepared to speak truth to power and decry what was, in effect, international capitulation to a rogue state sponsor of terrorism intent on pursuing its nuclear weapons program.

Yet just a few weeks following the news, the international community has moved on, and so too those who railed against the agreement. That is the nature of intense outrage; it burns itself out quickly, leaving only the faintest echo of its original sentiment behind.

Israel, indeed the entire Middle East, requires a more sustained response. Opposition to the Interim Agreement must not be limited to a retrospective protest against western surrender; it has to be prospective about how to undo the damage. As the pioneering American politician, Pat Schroeder, once observed: "you can't wring your hands and roll up your sleeves at the same time".

We have six months to reverse the gains Iran stands to achieve through this momentary "pause". The focus of our collective effort must be to mitigate and reverse the consequences of the deal struck in Geneva.

The greatest challenge is one of perception. Those who expressed support for the agreement must be made to understand that the agreement between the P5+1 and the Iranian regime places the global community at greater, not lesser risk, and it leaves the Middle East – and Europe – in an exponentially more dangerous situation, not one of enhanced stability.

Changing such perceptions is no easy task. It requires two essential ingredients: sustained and consistent attention and clear, simple messaging. And the message could not be more straightforward – Iran does not require a $57 billion uranium enrichment project to acquire nuclear energy. It can model the approach adopted by Canada, Sweden, South Korea, and more than a dozen other advanced economies by purchasing rather than producing the necessary nuclear material.

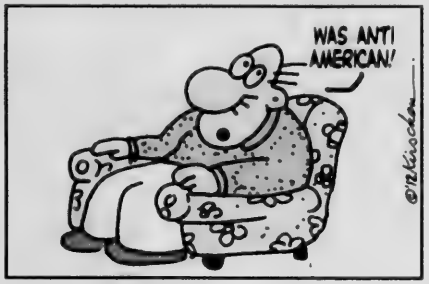
Canada is uniquely placed to serve as a credible agent of this message and our efforts have to be directed at encouraging the Canadian government to deliver that message in every forum, in every bilateral engagement, and all international venues.

The international community fundamentally understands the threat of a nuclear Iran. If it didn't, the economic sanctions regime that was so arduously constructed would never have been put into place. Unfortunately, the world blinked and Iran's game of 'three card monte' has been given new life. Throughout this period, Canada has kept a sharp eye and a clear mind. Canada can expose this shell game and challenge our traditional allies south of the border and in Europe to get back on track by promoting this simple, yet effective solution.

Our task is to push forward, not look back, and ensure Canada accepts this mission. To achieve this, we must roll-up our sleeves, not wring our hands.

Shimon Koffler Fogel

Dry Bones



Harper deserving of JNF honour

I was very upset to read the letter ("Harper honours not deserved," *The CJN*, Nov. 28) written by Stephen Lewis and others.

First of all, it was a low blow against a major Jewish organization, the Jewish National Fund, which was holding this fundraiser. Secondly, it was a malicious letter directed against Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a leader who has been the greatest friend of Israel ever. Thirdly, there are many experts who say that Lewis and his group, the Jewish Refugee Action Network, are totally wrong in their assessment of the government's refugee policy.

Personally, I am very glad and proud to say that I was one of 4,000 people who turned out at the Negev Dinner to support Harper, a true great friend of the Jewish people.

Howard Price
Toronto

* * *

The letter criticizing Prime Minister Stephen Harper has nothing to do with the Jewish National Fund honouring our prime minister.

It is an honour greatly deserved.

For years both the NDP and the Liberal parties of Canada either sat on the fence or had a negative attitude towards Israel.

Harper and the present Canadian government are Israel's best friend in the world. They constantly support the State of Israel.

A letter like this has one intention and one intention alone. It is strictly political.

Letter writers Stephen Lewis and Michelle Landsberg can see the Jewish support in Canada has swung in favour of the Conservatives and will say anything to try and undermine this support.

Selwyn Calner
Toronto

Tuition help falls short

I understand the desire of Jewish day schools to limit tuition to make it more affordable for parents ("Plan limits day school tuition to 15% of income," *The CJN*, Nov. 28). With fees of approximately $15,000 to $20,000 per child, middle-income families must make significant sacrifices to send their children to Jewish day school.

Although I commend Robbins Hebrew Academy (RHA) for trying to do something about this by limiting the total tuition to 15 per cent of income, their definition of middle income is totally off the mark. A family with income between $200,000 and $300,000 should not need financial assistance. They are the ones who should be able to afford the full amount. A family with two or three children with an income of under $100,000 cannot afford to pay half their gross income for education, and they are the ones who truly need help.

RHA's new policy may be a step in the right direction, but it is far too little to help the vast majority of Jewish parents.

Michael Kinrys
Toronto

Advocacy efforts ineffective

Regarding the article "New group's advocacy methods ruffle feathers" (*The CJN*, Nov. 14), imagine it is 1939 and you can choose one group to oppose the rampant anti–Semitism you witness in your neighbourhood. You could choose the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which advocates and justifies "muted responses" and "remaining quiet as acknowledgment draws more publicity." Or you could choose the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC), which advocates and justifies non-action and "avoiding knee-jerk reactions." Or you could choose StandWithUs, a newer group which runs counter to the attitudes of CIJA and FSWC.

Despite the fact that StandWithUs has demonstrated success in countering anti-Semitic campaigns, CIJA and FSWC still vigorously defend and justify their lack of reaction.

We are witnessing more anti-Semitism than ever, yet both CIJA and FSWC continue to advocate antiquated reactions that we recognize as misguided and dangerous from our pre-Holocaust experience. Next time you want to donate money, consider where your dollar will best counter anti-Semitism and provide the most effective pro-Israel campaign.

Elisabeth Gelb
Victoria, B.C.

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Movie shows Poland is dealing with difficult past

Wladyslaw Pasikowski's *Aftermath* (*Poklosie*) played to a sold-out crowd at a special screening of the Toronto Jewish Film Festival recently.

Attended by the Polish consul and the film's producer, the screening was an important event not just here in Canada but also for Poles thousands of kilometres away.

Loosely based on the events of the Jedwabne pogrom in 1941, the film tells a fictional story of two brothers who discover the horrific history of their village, mainly the burning of the village's 126 Jewish residents by their Polish neighbours.

The thriller is unsettling not only for its story, but also for its one missing piece: the presence of any living Jews. Eerily symbolized by gravestones dug up by the film's protagonist, the Jews of the story are invisible, only momentarily conjured up as names in archival books of land ownership.

While garnering high box-office returns, the film – not unlike Jan Gross' book *Neighbours*, which tells the story of the Jedwabne tragedy – has stirred a great deal of controversy in Poland. Such a history is difficult to accept for any nation, but it's particularly hard for Poles, who also see themselves as victims of first the Nazi then the Soviet occupation of Poland. What adds to this atmosphere of denial and difficult acceptance is that for more than 50 years, history lessons taught to all Polish children have portrayed Poles as victims of Nazi Germany's expansion.

Marcin Wisniewski

Every year, the Polish school year begins on Sept. 1, with no exceptions. This is also the fateful date of Hitler's attack on Poland. When I was growing up in Poland in the 1980s, every school year began with sirens going off across the country and a minute of remembrance to recall what had been done to us.

To be fair, the subject of the Holocaust as an extermination program of all European Jews was not forbidden. I can still remember larger-than-life photos of Jewish prisoners or their belongings exhibited in glass cases at the Treblinka extermination camp. Glasses, patches of hair, books and ovens have left images in my mind that will never be erased. At eight years old, I was overwhelmed and utterly depressed by the historical artifacts I saw. Though I understood what I was seeing and hearing, my mind couldn't comprehend what it all actually implied. To some degree, it still can't.

But Treblinka is part of a larger narrative, one in which Jews and Poles suffered together, and it was taught as such. Gross' book and Pasikowski's film stand in strong opposition to that overarching narrative. What they offer is an intimate and complicated history, one in which people who lived side by side for decades, nay centuries, turned on each other in a such a brutal way.

Yes, it was incited and supported by the Nazis, and as Gross recently remarked, the pogroms happened during a complete deterioration of the moral fabric of society that only a war can bring. Still, as the film points out, these were people who knew each other by name, and possibly whose children played with one another and who got involved in romantic affairs.

A group of Jewish students and teachers in Jedwabne, 1938. [Yadvashem.org]

A scene from Wladyslaw Pasikowski's *Aftermath*

So where can such actions come from? Anti-Semitism is only a possible answer, for the communities lived side by side for centuries without such violence. It's the impossibility of a clear answer that troubles many Poles, people schooled in the loyalty, bravery and righteousness of their nation. As a Pole, I don't stand outside of such national ideals and narrative. After all, I'm partially a product of the country's educational system.

On a very personal level, the film overwhelmed and devastated me as a human being, leaving behind the existential question of what it says about humanity, and on a more intimate level, the question of how neighbours could do this to neighbours and be fine about it. Of course, maybe they weren't fine, as is suggested by the general absence of dialogue on a national and personal level.

Another question that lingers is how Poles can make this episode part of their national narrative? We all know that we don't want to be singled out for our shortcomings, and so many nations skim over their dark pasts in their history books. Yet some steps have been taken by the Polish government to deal with this dark past. It re-opened the Jedwabne case, supporting the conclusion that it was Polish neighbours who carried out the killings.

Pasikowski's film and the debate it restarted is another such step. It's important to remember that many prominent Poles supported and defended the film when it came under attack. It's also critical that such a film comes from Poland, heralding the fact that on some level, the country is beginning a cathartic process of dealing with its difficult and complicated past.

Marcin Wisniewski is a Toronto-based writer and curator whose work explores the issues of nationality and nationalism, identity and popular culture aesthetics. His most recent project is Magnificent Obsessions: Works by Benjamin Edelberg.

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For boycotters, the 'occupation' began in 1948

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

For those who believe that the anti-Israel boycotts and other forms of political warfare will end if an agreement is reached with the Palestinians, think again. Many of the organizations that lead these campaigns aren't focused on the post-1967 "occupation," but rather target all of 1948 Israel, from Kiryat Shmonah along the border with Lebanon (and Hezbollah) to Eilat at the southern tip.

For these political advocacy NGOs and their allies, any form of Jewish self-determination and sovereignty equality is, in their language, a form of racism, ethnic cleansing and apartheid. And Israeli Jews who live in the Negev or Tel Aviv are "settlers."

For example, the NGO known as Zochrot seeks to "raise public awareness of the [1948] Palestinian Nakba" (meaning the catastrophe) and supports a "right of return" – a total distortion of international law. They erase the Arab rejection of 1947 UN Partition Plan and the brutal war that followed, while attempts to flood Israel with millions of Palestinians are equivalent to seeking the elimination of any Jewish sovereignty. Arab refugees are sanctified, while roughly the same number of Jewish refugees who were expelled from Arab countries are wiped from the history books. Even if the peace negotiations succeed in defining borders and ending the "occupation," Zochrot and its allies would continue their demonization.

Until recently, the tiny group of fanatics that run Zochrot had little visibility or impact, but their activities and impact have increased significantly, thanks to large budgets (close to $500,000 in 2011) for travel, publicity and one-sided "conferences."

The core funders who enable Zochrot's 1948-based demonization of Israel include European governments that claim to support a two-state agreement. The state-funded groups (including Christian humanitarian aid frameworks) come from Germany (via the Catholic Misereor group and the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung), the United Kingdom (Christian Aid), Belgium, Ireland, Switzerland, France and Finland. Germany's Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation (EVZ), established primarily for restitution to forced labourers from the Nazi era, belatedly stopped funding for Zochrot in 2012.

While Zochrot is a particularly sharp example, it's not unique in promoting demonization campaigns that target Israel. Indeed, supporters of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) and "Israeli apartheid" events on university campuses often refer to "occupation" while seeking the destruction of Israel. And much of the funding comes from frameworks that receive their budgets from irresponsible European governments, as well as some private funders.

Another example of NGO-led "1948 occupation" campaigns exploits the complex issues surrounding land claims on behalf of Israel's Negev Bedouin population. The Negev, with the city of Be'er Sheva, Ben-Gurion University and Soroka Medical Center, constitutes more than half of the country's territory. As the Israeli Bedouin population grew significantly, due both to Israeli prosperity and to polygamy, with very high birth rates, illegal building, without planning or environmental considerations, has expanded. As is true for any other competent government, the Israeli leadership has sought to change course, in form of assisting the Bedouin by creating new towns with schools, clinics and other necessary facilities.

In response, political NGOs launched global campaigns attacking the plan, including language such as "ethnic cleansing," "racial discrimination," and "human rights violations." In publications, videos, and presentations before the United Nations and European parliamentary groups, NGOs have falsely referred to the Negev Bedouin as "Palestinian victims" and Israeli Jewish residents in the Negev as "settlers." The campaign erases 4,000 years of Jewish history in the Negev (from the arrival of Abraham in Be'er Sheva), thereby delegitimizing Israeli sovereignty. Noted Israeli columnist Ben-Dror Yemini reviewed a slick propaganda video produced by Rabbis for Human Rights portraying Israel "as the cruel anti-Semitic ruler, expelling and disinheriting and destroying and robbing."

As in the case of Zochrot, funders bear responsibility for the damage caused by NGO warfare that exploits the language of human rights to target Israel. The European Union and its members (Germany again stands out), as well as the New Israel Fund (NIF), provide the money for the false claims and hypocritical Bedouin Negev campaigns.

By enabling fringe groups to mix the post-1967 "occupation" with the 1948 "green line," NGO donors have led many centrist Israelis to question the claim that a two-state agreement will end the demonization campaigns. If European governments and the NIF want to change Israeli perceptions, they can't allow their money to be used in these campaigns.

Hi, I'm Jewish

Andrea Freedman in Toronto

Recently, during a chance meeting, a woman struck up a conversation with me and began to divulge some of her personal history. She seemed friendly, and our chat was going along fine until she began to regale me with a story about a gentleman she knew.

When she said, "He's Jewish," as one of the first points of her description of him, an invisible warning sign went up for me. I felt the need to say that I, too, am Jewish, in case she was about to say anything derogatory against Jews. Immediately after I had provided that information, she went on to say how much she liked the man.

While I may never know the woman's true feelings, I prefer to keep it that way. She may well have said the exact same thing about him had I not mentioned that I was also Jewish, but I felt the need to head her off at the pass nonetheless. Past experience has taught me to be cautious.

If a person is important to me or is or may be in my life in a serious way, I actually would want to know what his or her feelings or possible racial prejudices are; however, if I will only be dealing with people as casual acquaintances or colleagues, I would just as soon not know how they feel about my religion or anyone else's.

There have been too many times in the past when I have been in a group setting, enjoying what I thought was a pleasant gathering, only to have that familiar sinking feeling when someone said something negative about Jewish people right in front of me.

In order to attempt to avoid such situations, I find myself trying to find the perfect segue to slip the fact that I'm Jewish into a conversation when I meet someone new. Better safe than sorry. I try to mention it casually, but what I'm really trying to say is, "If you were about to say anything against Jews, please don't, at least not until I am out of earshot."

Perhaps when I introduce myself to people, it might be easier to simply say, "Hi, I'm Andrea and I'm Jewish," or better still, to smile, extend my hand and say, "Hi, I'm Jewish." After all, people tend to forget names. An introduction such as that one, however, would likely be remembered.

I know some people who find it offensive when they are asked if they are Jewish. I, on the other hand, would rather have it out in the open, in the hope that, if the person I am talking with does happen to believe any negative stereotypes about Jews, once they find out my background, they will at least be smart enough to keep their feelings to themselves.

Where I may have hesitated to answer questions about my background in the past, and although I question why someone would inquire about another's religion in the first place, I would just as soon answer, in the hope of avoiding an uncomfortable incident.

Although my religion does not define me, it is a part of who I am, and words can be scathing. Try as people might to hide it, the look I have seen cloud faces in the past when they learned I was Jewish is unmistakable, but often masked by inappropriate comments in an attempted cover-up.

"You're Jewish!"

"Oh yes, I knew a nice Jewish chap once," or "I worked with a Jewish fellow." Sometimes they go on as if nothing has happened, other times they may change the subject.

Having travelled a fair bit, I have met people from all walks of life. There are those who, even in this day and age, have never met a Jew. It is still something foreign and, in some cases, exotic.

I have even heard someone refer to her son's wife as "my Jewish daughter-in-law," which spoke volumes about how difficult it was for the woman to accept her daughter-in-law. Otherwise, why would she bother mentioning the fact that she was Jewish?

Whether at work, travelling or in a social setting, I have come to realize that, for me anyway, instead of risking potential awkwardness for everyone involved, I would rather introduce myself with, "Hi, I'm Jewish." In other words, if you have any opinions about that, please, keep them to yourself.

Andrea Freedman is a Toronto writer.

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Richmond Hill shul grows to 325 families

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Since becoming spiritual leader of Beit Rayim Synagogue more than a year ago, Rabbi Chezi Zionce has seen its membership grow by about 100 families.

An egalitarian, Conservative congregation located at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Richmond Hill, the synagogue, which celebrated its 36th anniversary in the spring, now has a membership of more than 325 families.

The congregation started when a small group founded the Richmond Hill Jewish Community. It later became known as Shaareh Haim Congregation, but closed its doors in 1992. It started up again in a community centre later that year and changed its name to the current Beit Rayim.

At one time, Rabbi Zionce said, the synagogue was the same size as it is now, but "the congregation dwindled. It survived, however, and it has experienced exceptional growth at a time when many synagogues are floundering."

A member of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Beit Rayim also runs the largest supplementary Hebrew school in York Region, with 200 students from junior kindergarten to Grade 7.

"Beit Rayim literally means 'house of friends,' and our exceptional growth speaks volumes regarding our genuine focus on making everyone feel warmly welcomed," Rabbi Zionce said in a telephone interview.

He said half the membership is made up of young families, which dispels the myth that young people aren't looking to join a synagogue.

A Toronto native, Rabbi Zionce, 55, said that growing up, he attended a number of large synagogues, and they didn't foster a positive atmosphere. "Many did not allow young children in the sanctuary during services," he recalled.

He encourages young children to run around, he said, and he and Beit Rayim's cantor, Eli Bard, aren't bothered by the noise.

"I have them come up to the bimah, and they follow the cantor as he marches with the Torah. The parents and grandparents kvell, and it makes the kids happy to come to synagogue. If we engage the kids now, they'll want to keep coming," he said.

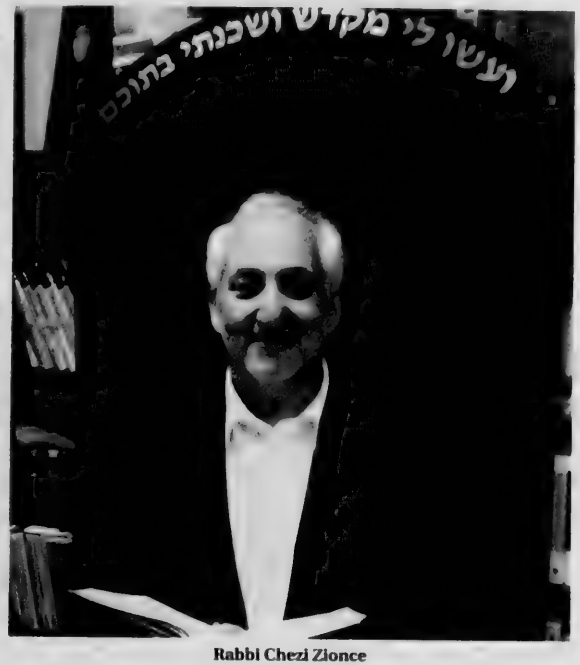
He and the cantor sit side by side with the congregation during services, he said.

"Even during the High Holidays, when we had about 1,000 people at the services, our seats were in the midst of the congregants. We complement each other, and we are close friends. This becomes evident during services."

When Hebrew school started up again in the fall, he said, he stood in the parking lot to welcome parents and students.

"I want to make sure I know as many people as possible, and let them know I'm accessible."

Many families search for a place to take their young children, Rabbi Zionce said, and "this is it. We're located in a growing area, and we have a young family committee, so they can have a say in what we offer."



Rabbi Chezi Zionce

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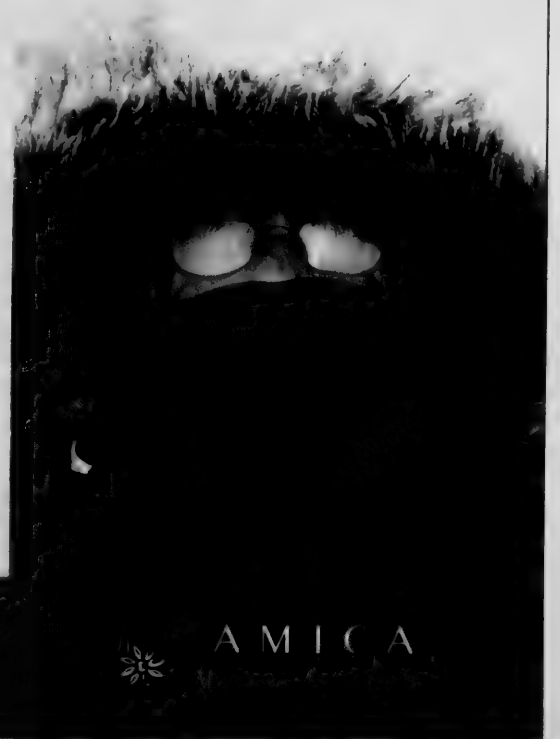

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Country a paradox, says Schneeweiss

Israel faces unprecedented challenges: consul general

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Israel's consul general to Toronto and Western Canada, DJ Schneeweiss, keynote speaker at last week's Empire Club of Canada meeting, talked about the challenges and opportunities facing Israel today.

In his lecture – which marked the first time in 37 years that an Israeli diplomat has been invited to present a talk for the speaker's forum – Schneeweiss spoke about Israel as a paradox, "a country faced by unprecedented threats and challenges, yet safer and more full of promise than any time in its history."

DJ Schneeweiss

He said Iran's "relentless drive toward nuclear weapons" is one of the threats to Israel's existence that makes "the view from Jerusalem look stark indeed."

Iran and six world powers came to Geneva last month to hammer out a six-month agreement that aims to curb Tehran's nuclear program in exchange for limited sanctions relief.

"Having come so far, having brought Tehran to begin to seek a way out of the stranglehold of the sanctions, Israel believes that the interim deal reached in Geneva is a mistake," he said.

"Through its de facto recognition of an Iranian right to enrich uranium, the core of the Iranian military nuclear program – and a right, I may add, that no other nation on earth has ever demanded or received – through allowing Iran to keep its centrifuges intact, and maintain other components of its military program… [the deal] reverses the very psychological and economic momentum that brought Iran to the negotiating table in the first place," he added.

Schneeweiss insisted that the deal weakens the possibility that the six world powers will be able to negotiate a comprehensive deal in the future.

"Freezing the situation is not enough. We need to roll back and dismantle Iran's enrichment capacity… We have to prevent Iran from having the capacity ever to build such weapons. We believe in and support a negotiated settlement – one that ends the threat, not one that perpetuates it," he said.

Turning his focus to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Schneeweiss said that Israel has made "repeated offers of territorial compromise. We have withdrawn from territories, we have removed ourselves from governing the daily lives of Palestinians, recognized the need for a Palestinian state and more. But we continue to come up empty handed."

Schneeweiss said he recognizes that some of Israel's actions have negatively impacted Palestinians, making them feel "victimized or worse. But it is a simple undeniable fact that this conflict began long before the Israeli community was established in the West Bank."

He said that Israel is committed to participating in negotiations with Palestinian leadership, adding that Israel is "ready for Palestinian statehood and for territorial compromise… but we also insist that the Palestinians recognize our own inalienable national rights and abandon further claims on our country."

In spite of the security threats that plague the Jewish state, Schneeweiss said that Israel is better off than it's ever been.

He said Israel still enjoys peace with Egypt in Jordan. Palestinian terrorism is on the decline due to a "mix of deterrent and defensive measures and diplomatic initiatives," and Israel's development of a missile defence system in response to the missile threat posed by Hezbollah and others has been successful.

"Meanwhile, in economic and diplomatic terms, Israel is more integrated than ever in the global economy," he said.

"Israel's technological prowess has become legendary. We are ranked top in the world by the World Economic Forum for the quality of our scientific research institutions and fourth overall for our innovative capacity."

Late last month, Apple purchased PrimeSense, an Israeli tech company, for $350 million.

"This makes it the 13th Israeli high-tech company to be acquired by foreign investors in 2013. Why isn't Canada getting a greater piece of this seriously nutritious pie?"

Schneeweiss said that despite Canada's long-standing friendship with Israel, "the Canada-Israel relationship is not where it should be.

"Bilateral trade was less than $1.5 billion in 2012, far from its potential… Firms are not even fully utilizing the funds the government has made available for [research and development] collaboration… As like-minded peace-loving democratic nations… and as nations whose economic success is directly linked to maintaining our respective competitive edges, it is bordering on negligent if we don't work harder to harness the synergies and opportunities that reside in the strengths that we both bring to the table."

$194,000 in grants obtained for new service

March of Living to create digital archive

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

For years, Joe Mandel turned down the opportunity to join the March of the Living on its annual trip to Nazi death camps.

Mandel was a Holocaust survivor who was liberated by American troops on May 4, 1945, in the Gunskirchen Concentration Camp. And in 2012, he changed his mind about the trip. It was a propitious decision.

That was the same year that the March, which brings hundreds of Jewish teenagers and survivors to Poland to visit the destroyed Jewish communities as well as the Nazi death camps, invited U.S. liberators on the trip.

And there, in eastern Europe, a remarkable coincidence was recorded for posterity. Mandel met Mason (Mickey) Dorsey, a veteran of the 71st Infantry Division, the man who actually blew open the gates of Gunskirchen in Austria.

When Mandel learned that his liberator was present, he sought him out and identified himself, and the two men shared an emotional embrace.

"Who could have scripted a thing like that?" asked Eli Rubenstein, national director of March of the Living Canada. "The students saw the survivor thank him, hug him. No student will forget that. It's a memory they'll have for the rest of their lives."

Joe Mandel is seen on the 2012 March of the Living in Auschwitz with some of the Toronto contingent. *(Igal Hecht photo)*

March of the Living, a department of Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA, recorded the reunion as well as the testimony of hundreds of survivors who joined the March over the years. Thanks to grants from the Canadian government, the Claims Conference and Dennis and Laura Bennie, totaling $194,000, the digitized version of the meeting will soon be accessible to the wider public.

The grant will permit the March of the Living to take their footage of survivors' testimonies, digitize and organize them into archives that will be made available on the web to anyone with an interest in the Holocaust.

Resembling Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation, which records testimony of survivors and witnesses, the March's project goes one step further, Rubenstein said. The March videos were recorded on site, in eastern European villages and death camps. They pack an additional emotional punch by virtue of their location, the reaction of the students and chance circumstances such as Mandel's reunion with his liberator. That's something you don't get in a recording made in someone's living room, he said.

Rubenstein points to the testimony of another survivor, Sidney Zoltak. Zoltak grew up in the Polish village of Siemiatycze. At the age of 11, he escaped to live in the forest. In his story, recorded at Treblinka where nearly one million Jews were murdered, he tells how of all his classmates, he is the only who survived.

"This is where my village was wiped out," he tells March students. The rest of you can have class reunions, but the only place for my class reunion is here, he said.

"The power of that testimony and as a teaching tool is exceptionally moving," Rubenstein said.

Given the location and the presence of the students, many survivors provide more details than they might have otherwise, he added.

With the grants in place, March of the Living will hire personnel to assist in retrieving videos taken over the past 25 years, which are scattered in the organization's offices in Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg. The testimonies will then be transferred to a common digital format and edited. In the end, the expectation is that survivors' testimony will be organized by theme – hidden children, prewar life, resistance, liberation – and be made available online, perhaps in co-operation with Canadian Holocaust centres.

The goal is to "create a web portal so students in the future can access the testimony and give the general public access to the material," Rubenstein said.

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Mount Sinai Auxiliary marks 60 years

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Karen Goldlist joined Mount Sinai Auxiliary about 13 years ago to help out with a program that provides new moms with layettes.

Now, as the auxiliary celebrates its 60th anniversary, Goldlist, 53, is part way through her two-year term as president.

"I originally joined because my friends were assembling about 200 layettes a year, for a program called Baby's First Comforts, and they needed an extra hand. As I began to realize the extent of the auxiliary's work, I got more and more involved."

The seeds for the auxiliary were planted in 1922, when a group of Jewish women began raising money to build a hospital where Jewish doctors could practise medicine without discrimination and where immigrant communities – Jewish and non-Jewish – could receive high-level care.

In 1933, after the women raised $12,000, a down payment was placed on a building on Yorkville Avenue that became the original Mount Sinai. In 1953, the institution moved to University Avenue, and in 1973, it moved to its current location a bit further north at 600 University Ave.

The auxiliary, a consolidated volunteer organization, was founded in 1953 and has since raised and contributed $30 million to the hospital. It was one of the first philanthropic volunteer groups to organize big fundraising galas in Toronto.

The original group was made up of wives of doctors and dentists at the hospital, "and it grew from there. Now it is made up of people who have a strong commitment to [Mount Sinai,]" Goldlist said

Proceeds from its 60th anniversary gala, held in the fall, will support the auxiliary's $4.5-million pledge to support the hospital's women's and infants' health program.

In the past 60 years, the auxiliary established volunteer services at the hospital, opened and still operates the gift shop, created the baby photography program, and developed and maintains a hospital, lecture series held in four languages, to educate immigrants and patients about important health-care topics.

Goldlist said the auxiliary has always been "this incredible machine that was fuelled by a drive to make Mount Sinai all that it could be, and really, all that it is today. It was the organization against which all other auxiliaries were measured. It was, and still is, extraordinary."

Karen and Barry Goldlist

Joseph Mapa, Mount Sinai's president and CEO, said that funds from this most recent gala and other auxiliary programs, "have always been something the hospital can count on. The auxiliary funds are like an annuity for Mount Sinai. For so many years they have provided a reliable stream of revenue, funds that literally helped us to build Mount Sinai and continue to help us define ourselves as providers of the best medicine."

Goldlist said one of the auxiliary's biggest challenges is engaging new people. "We're mindful of creating a growing volunteer base for the hospital, and new groups such as Mom's for Sinai and Future Sinai, have been started.

She said that the that these two groups are planning the annual Chef's Challenge, to be held in February, which usually brings in a whole new group of volunteers and donors. The event, which raises money for specialty care and research into women's cancers, this year features Chef Giada DeLaurentiis.

"I have a great team behind me, and two of the longest-standing members, Henrietta Chesnie and Florence Cooper, still belong. [The] team can practically run these events with their eyes closed."

Goldlist works hard for the auxiliary, but she gets back as much as she gives, she said.

"When I think about all that the auxiliary has accomplished, and what the driving force has been these past 60 years, I have always come back to the same thing – friendship.

"Women got involved and continue to run this wonderful community because of like-minded women who are inspired to join together to make a difference. All that the auxiliary has built for Mount Sinai, it has built through friendship."

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Dancing good for the brain

Continued from page 3

"Any type of dancing where people are improvising is good for the brain, as it involves making split-second decisions," said Barker.

"The more you do, the more you can do. I have had a hip replacement and I have a bad knee, but when the music comes on, I forget my name. There is no stopping me," said Green.

For her sister's 100th birthday party last March, Green danced the Charleston and hopes to do it again for her 101st.

"It is important to learn from the older generations, and to take what they know, and bring it into our work. Our most recent routine, *Ballin' the Jack*, was choreographed completely by Marion Green and will be performed to the seniors at Baycrest's Wagman Centre," Barker said.

The duo gave *The CJN* a sneak peak which was captured on video. To view it, go to cjnews.com.

Correction

The photo "Math whizzes" (Nov. 28) should have said that Associated Hebrew Schools' Grade 4 student Justin Schwartz placed second, and Ami Gorodzinsky, Grade 3, placed fourth in the world in the Caribou Mathematics Competition, not in Ontario, as originally stated, competing against 2704 other students.

Arab, Israeli employees treated equally at SodaStream

Continued from page 1

Len Rudner, CIJA's director of community relations and outreach, said fewer than 10 people attended the event, and he saw no new media there.

"[Attendees] were all folks already committed to the cause," he told *The CJN*.

The press conference was followed by what UNJPPI co-ordinator Dale Hildebrand called a "public witness event" outside the Canadian Tire store at Bay and Dundas streets.

Rudner described it as roughly 10 people carrying placards and handing out flyers to passersby, while Hildebrand estimated the number of participants in Toronto was closer to 20.

"There was absolutely no indication that their messaging found any traction in front of the store," Rudner said, noting that inside, it was business as usual.

The UNJPPI initiative is aligned with one the church launched in June based on its August 2012 General Council resolution. The campaign, called "Unsettling Goods," urges church members to "pray, choose, speak for peace in Palestine and Israel" by boycotting products made by Israeli firms in the West Bank. The campaign calls Israeli settlements there an "obstacle to peace."

The United Church sent out materials

Len Rudner

to congregations last month inviting them to join in the campaign, which includes the boycott, Hildebrand said.

He described his group's demonstrations as "public witness events," as opposed to protests, since members were engaging people in conversation, rather than chanting slogans or acting in a confrontational manner.

Hildebrand called the overall campaign a success, with some 100 people taking part in events across the country last week. He said the Toronto event "was successful in that we talked to a lot of people on the street."

But Rudner suggested that people who did take the group's pamphlets were unlikely to be swayed, because the area near the store is filled with activists.

"Let's face it, we're in Toronto. You can stand on the corner and hold a piece of paper and people will take it because we're polite," he said.

B'nai Brith Canada released a statement saying it became clear anti-Semitism was at the heart of the Toronto protest after its national vice-president, who declined to give his name to *The CJN*, was "harassed" in front of the store.

Spokesperson Sam Eskanasi said the B'nai Brith executive was handed a boycott card and then showed a protester that he had just purchased a SodaStream product. The B'nai Brith executive engaged the person in a "pleasant but useless" conversation, then she called him a "stupid thief" and a "religious fanatic," Eskenasi claimed.

Hildebrand said he was unaware of the incident, but that kind of confrontation goes against his organization's guidelines.

"We ask people to be very respectful," he said. "What we want to do is to engage people in a reasonable and straightforward conversation about the issues. We're not interested in confrontation, and we're not interested in acrimonious debate."

Saber-Freedman said CIJA launched its "buycott" in response to UNJPPI's efforts. The CIJA-affiliated website BuycottIsrael.com regularly urges readers to buy items being targeted by anti-Israel boycotts and encourages them to post pictures of themselves with the goods on Facebook and other social networking sites.

Saber-Freedman said SodaStream, which makes home soft-drink carbonation machines, is actually the model of what peace should look like, noting that around half of its employees are Palestinians who are treated and paid the same way as Jewish Israeli employees.

Although she called the Toronto press conference and boycott launch a failure, given the lack of attendance, she said it's important for the pro-Israel community to have a clear understanding of what it's dealing with.

"We're not responding to… something that calls for yelling and screaming," she said. "It's something that calls for smart, thoughtful action, and we think that's what a buycott is."

In a statement, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies said it was "horrified to learn the United Church is intensifying its campaign against the Jewish People… in support of the 'Unsettling Goods' boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against the Jewish state."

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Israeli MK says children must be saved

Canada gets warning about radical sect

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The chair of the Israeli parliamentary committee hearing allegations of mistreatment within the Lev Tahor sect says her government launched the inquiry on its own after seeking collaboration with Canadian authorities.

Knesset member Orly Lévy-Abecassis told *La Presse* in an interview published Dec. 2 that it's "urgent" authorities in Canada and Israel now co-operate fully "to save the child victims of this sect. Each day counts."

Many ex-members of the anti-Zionist haredi group and relatives of members living in Israel have given "blood-chilling" testimonies of violence, forced marriages and ill treatment of children, she said.

Lévy-Abecassis said the Israeli government is holding the inquiry into the sect, which was based in Ste. Agathe, Que., until last month, when most of the group left for southwestern Ontario, because many of its members are Israeli. There is also an affiliated group in Israel.

"It was the duty of our state to know exactly what was going on over there and to collaborate with the Canadian authorities to put an end to the ill treatment and to ensure the safety of the children…

"We have learned that some abuses were known for several years in Canada. Therefore, we started to act alone."

More than 200 Lev Tahor members, the great majority, have moved to Chatham, Ont., where they appear to be settling. Local media reported they have left motels and moved into apartments while they look for property to buy.

The group, led by Israeli-born Rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, had lived in Ste. Agathe in the Laurentians for a decade. Their houses and other buildings are up for sale.

Orly Lévy-Abecassis

Lev Tahor had been under intense investigation by Quebec's Youth Protection Department for several months and departed overnight just ahead of a scheduled tribunal was to examine allegations of child neglect against two families.

On Nov. 27, a St. Jérôme youth court judge ordered the families' 14 children immediately placed in foster care for at least 30 days, on the basis of evidence, including from a former group member, which is subject to a publication ban.

As of Dec. 4, the children were still in Ontario with their parents, who defied an order that they appear at the hearing.

A leader of the group, Uriel Goldman, told the media on Dec. 2 that the families would abide by the court order if an Ontario judge certifies it.

As Lev Tahor leaders have said repeatedly, Goldman denied the allegations of abuse and neglect and said the reason the group left Quebec is that it cannot comply with the province's education curriculum because of its religious beliefs.

Lévy-Abecassis said she thinks Lev Tahor "took advantage of the flexibility of Canadian laws, of the respect for individual freedom that exists in your country…

"They knew that, over there, they would be less watched, less easily worried by justice."

Among the testimonies was that of a woman who said she was not allowed to see her child for two years because she started to question what was going on in the sect.

The Knesset committee also heard of frequent "cruel" corporal punishment of children, including making children keep their hands in snow for hours, and the "brainwashing" of youth.

She warned Canadians to be more vigilant because other sects, "attracted by this spirit of tolerance, could find refuge with you."

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Persecuted writer granted asylum

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Award-winning Hungarian-Jewish writer Akos Kertesz, 80, has been granted political asylum in Canada, where he fled last year, claiming to be the victim of a state-led "hate campaign."

Kertesz arrived in Montreal in February 2012 saying his life in Hungary had become intolerable because of his outspokenness abroad on Hungarians' role in the Holocaust and his denunciation of the country's right-wing government.

He has been granted refugee status despite the Canadian government having placed Hungary on a list of "safe" countries in a controversial move one year ago.

In an article in the American Hungarian-language newspaper *Amerikai Nepszava*, Kertesz expressed gratitude to Canada for "ensuring security" for himself and his wife, calling this country "an island of peace and tolerance."

He said his "painful decision" to leave his homeland was not an indictment of the Hungarian nation, but rather "its current political authorities which seek to destroy the country's newborn democracy."

Eva Balogh, the Hungarian-born U.S. academic who edits the pro-democracy website *Hungarian Spectrum*, wrote that, with the granting of asylum to Kertesz, the "fiction" that the Hungarian government tries to promote abroad that there is no anti-Semitism in their country is "definitely dead."

Kertesz is the author of more than 20 books and plays that have been translated into several languages, but not English. One of his best-known novels, *Makra*, is expected to be published in Canada next year.

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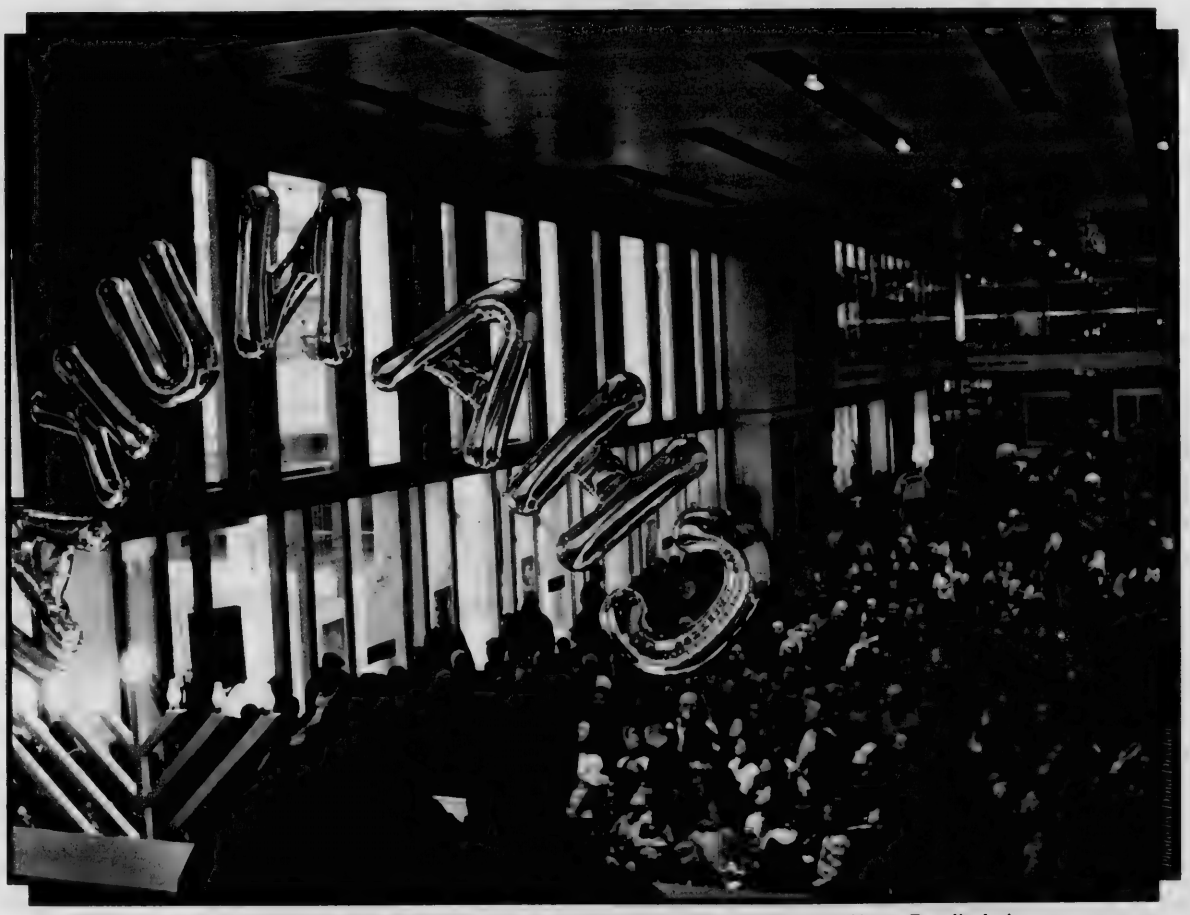

*"Chanukah Across the City", held on Saturday, November 30th, 2013, in the **Sharp Family Atrium**.*

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Winnipeg Jewish nursing home rabbi retires

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Rabbi Neal Rose has enjoyed a lengthy and varied career as a teacher, a community and congregational rabbi and a family life counsellor.

However, he says, the most important work he has done has been serving for the past 13 years as the first official rabbi for the Saul & Claribel Simkin Centre, the Winnipeg Jewish nursing home.

On Nov. 28, Rabbi Rose lowered the curtain on that part of his life so that he and his wife, Carol, can spend more time with their children and grandchildren in Jerusalem, Philadelphia, Edmonton, St. Louis and Boston.

"Rabbi Rose has made an enormous contribution to Jewish life at the centre," said Dr. Edward (Ted) Lyons, chair of the board of the Simkin Centre. "He has brought comfort to many families in times of need, and he has been a guiding light for us as a Jewish organization. He has also built important relationships with other clergy to the benefit of our residents who aren't Jewish."

The rabbi said he had been thinking about retirement for some time, but with two changes in CEO at the centre over the past two years, he felt that he should stay on a little longer to help with the transition.

Rabbi Neal Rose, his wife Carol and their grandchildren

Originally from New York, the Roses came to Winnipeg in 1967 after the rabbi was offered a position teaching at the University of Manitoba in the Judaic studies department. In the early 1970s, the couple established an alternative yom tov service, which developed a loyal following. They are still leading the annual service.

In early 2000, shortly after retiring from his teaching position at the university, Rabbi Rose was invited to become the first official rabbi at the Sharon Home (as the Simkin Centre was then known). The longtime Jewish nursing home was in transition. It was in the process of relocating from its decades-old building in north Winnipeg to a new facility in south Winnipeg, where a majority of the Jewish community had already immigrated to.

"Since the centre had never had a rabbi-in-residence before, I was able to craft the role as I saw fit," he said.

Over the years, Rabbi Rose was able to introduce many innovations that have made worship easier and more meaningful for the home's residents and their families. One of his first innovations was to create a new siddur and machzor with larger print and more graphics, changes that made the prayer books more accessible to the residents.

He also shortened the Shabbat service to an hour and yom tov services to an hour and 20 minutes, and simplified the Pesach seder to take into account the shorter attention span of most of the residents.

With the help of a Jewish-owned printing company, he produced a mini-Chumash for Monday and Thursday morning Torah readings.

"I worked with the recreation department to train the staff [most of whom aren't Jewish] to do programming for Shabbat and all the Jewish holidays," he said.

Another of his innovations was to develop a davening program for residents suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Rabbi Rose also designed a special tallit for residents in wheelchairs. He noted that he had the fabric and the work donated by local Jewish suppliers.

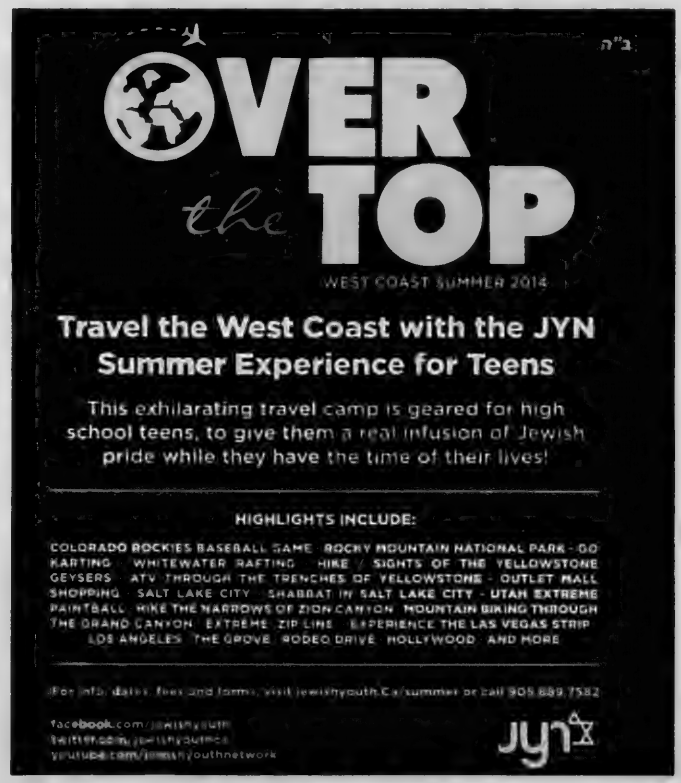
He prevailed upon a Jewish-owned lighting retailer to supply electric Shabbat candlesticks for the residents.

"We have been very fortunate in that we have received a lot of help from the community," he said. "And we have been particularly helpful with residents and their families when people are dying.

"I think my greatest accomplishment while at the Simkin Centre was to put spiritual care at the forefront of the needs and services that the centre provides – so much so that this past fall, the board created a spiritual care and Jewish identity committee."

As for the future, Rabbi Rose is working on a book of midrash, and he and Carol plan on continuing their counselling career and leading their High Holiday services.

Rabbi Rose will honoured by a tea at the centre on Dec. 16.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Kosher restaurant fire may be arson

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Arson is suspected as the cause of a fire at a kosher restaurant in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce early on the morning of Dec. 2.

The blaze broke out at the Fuego Steakhouse at 6136 Côte St. Luc Rd., which is certified by the Vaad Ha'ir, at around 4:45 a.m. About 40 firefighters were called in to put out the three-alarm fire.

It was initially thought to be the result of an electrical problem, but investigators reportedly discovered several signs that the fire had been deliberately set.

The fire, which took almost two hours to extinguish, caused an estimated $200,000 in damages.

A man who answered the phone at the restaurant on Dec. 4, identifying himself as the person who runs the business, told *The CJN* investigators have not confirmed the cause of the fire.

"I cannot assume anything [at this time]," he said, refusing to give his name. "We are waiting for the experts to get the information."

Fuego opened about 18 months ago, he said.

"We have no clue when we will reopen. We hope to serve our customers soon."

Last June, two kosher restaurants on Queen Mary Road, Chops Resto-Bar and Café Shalom, were firebombed within two nights of each other.

Although police released video surveillance images of suspects and the owner of Chops offered a financial reward for information leading to an arrest, no one has been apprehended. Police said there was no evidence to confirm that those attacks were motivated by hate.

Young adults, survivors connect over dinner

Vicky Tobiannh
Special to The CJN

About 225 young adults and 33 Holocaust survivors dined and shared stories at the ninth annual Dinner of Miracles at Petah Tikvah Synagogue on Dec. 2.

"The goal is to give young people a chance to hear stories they might not know," said volunteer co-ordinator Jenn Morawetz. "It's a more comfortable environment when we're all together, instead of listening to a lecturer on stage. You invest personally when you speak face to face... to make sure it doesn't happen again."

Since its inception, the event has brought Holocaust survivors together with more than 2,000 young adults who ask questions and learn from the seniors' experiences in a personal, informal setting. The event targets a key demographic: young Jews who are old enough to be out of school and therefore no longer learning about the Holocaust and young enough that they might not have a direct connection to the Holocaust within their own family.

Developing a connection to the Holocaust and to Jewish heritage through events such as this one, is essential, said Przemyslaw Dudek, 30, who was born in Koszalin, Poland, and, like many young Polish Jews today, only found out he was Jewish a few years ago.

Young professionals listen to a Holocaust survivor share his story at the 9th annual Dinner of Miracles at Petah Tikvah Synagogue.

"It was mentioned by my uncle that we were Jewish," Dudek said. "But [with] 100,000 people in the city but no Jewish community, I didn't see how it would affect my life."

That changed completely when he went on a Birthright trip in 2009 and found a deeper connection to his Jewish heritage. Since then, he's participated in many programs and seminars that bring together young European Jews.

"Five years ago, if someone would've told me I'd be giving a speech in Toronto at the Dinner of Miracles, I never would've believed it," he said.

While the current Jewish community in Poland – estimated to be around 8,000 – doesn't come close to the almost 400,000 Jews who lived in there before the Holocaust, Dudek said he wants people to know that the Jewish community, albeit small, still exists.

"I want people to know that we are there, that we're doing all that we can to live a Jewish life," he said. "It's very important for us that Poland is not only mentioned as the place of the Holocaust, but that we are there. Come and see today's Jewish life. It still exists."

Throughout the evening, Holocaust survivors told their story to the young adults seated at their table. For Holocaust survivor Amek Adler, talking about his past wasn't always easy.

"Up to 10 years ago, I didn't want to associate with anything about the Holocaust, I didn't feel welcome," he said. "In the beginning, it was uncomfortable being a survivor. Now, we're on a pedestal."

Adler was 11-years-old when the war broke out in 1939.

"We cannot take you back to Egypt, to where our ancestors were slaves, but we can take you back to Poland and show you what they did," he said. "It's very important we educate the young generation."

That's what motivated Adler to share his story. He's been on the March of the Living five times, has written a book and speaks in schools and synagogues.

"We're putting a very big burden on your shoulders to carry on our experiences to the next generation," said Adler, now 85. "We've got to prevent it so it doesn't happen again."

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Installed as university's 16th president

Meric Gertler takes the reins at U of T

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

As the recently installed president of the University of Toronto, Meric Gertler says he'll strive to leverage the campus' location more effectively, strengthen its international partnerships and produce more "job-ready graduates."

Gertler – who became U of T's 16th president last month, three decades after joining the university as an assistant professor in the geography department – spoke to *The CJN* about his ambitions and addressed some issues related to the Jewish community.

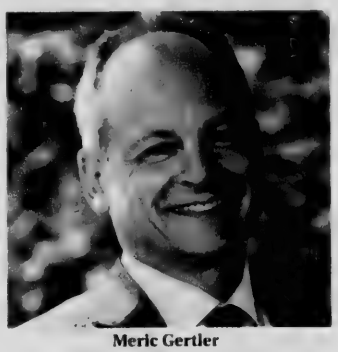
Although Gertler has only been in the president's chair for about a month and half, he said one of the things that prepared him for this challenging role was his five years of experience as U of T's dean of arts and science.

"That is equivalent to being president of a university at many other institutions, in the sense that arts and science alone has 30,000 students. It's bigger than most universities in Canada and has about a half-billion dollar budget," Gertler said.

He said that since last March, when the announcement about his presidency was made, until September, he has travelled to a number of large cities that are home to some of the world's best universities.

"I went to cities like Chicago, New York, Baltimore, Boston, and also to London in the U.K. I had a look at the activities of universities there."

He said he wanted to get a sense of how the universities "leveraged their location, how they take advantage of their situation in large metropolitan regions to enhance their own strengths. Often that [is done] indirectly by helping to make their city stronger, and in doing so, making the university stronger by making it easier for them to attract and retain great faculty, great students, great staff."



Meric Gertler
(Brian Summers photo)

After spending two months job-shadowing outgoing U of T president David Naylor, and having conversations about transitioning into his new role, Gertler hit the ground running.

In just his second month in charge of Canada's highest-ranked university (according to the *Times Higher Education* World University Rankings), Gertler is actively working toward his many goals, one of which is to better prepare U of T graduates for the working world.

"We're under a lot of pressure to produce job-ready graduates, but the question is, how do we do that while retaining the best of a liberal arts education or a broadly-based undergraduate education? That is something that will continue to be a pressing challenge," he said.

Another of his ambitions is to strengthen U of T's international partnerships.

Gertler, a world-renowned urban policy and planning expert who gave a lecture on urban studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem two years ago, said U of T has a very strong relationship with the Israeli school.

"We also have a great relationship with the Technion in Haifa, which is only getting stronger. We just had the president, Peretz Lavie, in Toronto," he said.

"We're very interested in what they're doing in the whole area of innovation and entrepreneurship and the whole start-up nation phenomenon, in which they've played such an important role."

Gertler said he's interested in bringing U of T into a new partnership with Technion and China's Shantou University.

Chinese billionaire Li Ka Shing is funding a joint project between the Israeli and Chinese schools, and has created a new centre called the Technion Guangdong Institute of Technology.

"Soon after meeting with president Lavie, I went to China, spent eight days there, and met the director of the Li Ka Shing Foundation and had a chance to talk about that relationship with Technion," he said.

"There is a lot of interest on both sides and I anticipate more interaction there, possibly a three-way between us, them and China."

He said U of T also has meaningful partnerships with the Weizmann Institute, Tel Aviv University and the University of Haifa.

When it comes to calls by promoters of boycotts, sanctions and divestments who demand that U of T cut ties to Israeli academic institutions, Gertler said his university has always taken a very clear stance on the issue.

"We feel that academic boycotts are just completely counter to the fundamental values of the University of Toronto, and we object in principle to any boycott or ban that tries to politicize academic discourse… because they disagree with the policies of their government. That is just a non-starter."

Gertler also addressed an ongoing issue for Jewish and pro-Israel students at schools across North America: Israeli Apartheid Week, which originated at U of T in 2005. Last month, the students' union at U of T's Scarborough campus voted to endorse the annual event.

"The university does not sponsor or endorse any of this activity, or any student-organized events. We also fully recognize that the very term 'Israeli apartheid' is distressing to many people.

"The second thing I would say is that universities… have a unique role and an important role to provide a safe venue for difficult discourse on controversial topics. We also have a responsibility to make sure that the discourse takes place in a respectful way and that… organizers… understand the difference between free speech and hate speech."

Gertler, the son of a Holocaust survivor, boasted about U of T's Centre for Jewish Studies, which continues to expand its reach.

"What I love about it is that it builds on all the academic strengths that we have at the university in history, philosophy, languages, in literary and cultural studies, in so many areas in politics and more," he said. "Jewish studies has attracted burgeoning enrolments, not just from Jewish students, but something like half the enrolments in courses are from non-Jewish students."

Gertler, who described Toronto's Jewish community as "the most significant, best-organized, most vibrant communities we have in the city," said he hopes to continue to build on the relationship between the university and the community "and leverage that partnership for mutual benefit."

ZAREINU DONATION: Members of the Lodge Ilan Ramon chapter of the Hebrew Order of David International, a non-profit fraternal organization, recently donated $5,000 after a chapter-wide fundraiser for the Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto. Children from the new, integrated Zareinu class at Netivot HaTorah Day School lent a helping hand to accept this most generous donation. Pictured, from left, back row, are Les Prosser, Adrian Lichtman, Cyril Braude and Leonard Laser; and front row, from left, Chiam-Dov, Mendel, Shoshana and Yael.

MACCABI WINNERS: Maccabiah Games (2013) soccer bronze medalists, from left, Jason Mausberg, Gerry Wimmer and Gil Vainshtein, have lots to smile about. The Maccabi boys team they coach, pictured here, recorded an 18-1-1 record this past spring and summer, in the highly competitive Soccer Academy Alliance of Canada (SAAC). The team, which also won the 2013 SAAC Spring Challenge, is now transitioning to the indoor season, in which they train three times a week and play exhibition games against other local elite soccer squads.

Thank You!

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We look forward to seeing you at UJA's Telethons next year!

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Knishes for your kitchen

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Of all the challenges the Jewish People have had to overcome throughout the ages, this is *not* one of them. But oy, what a nuisance it has become.

A fire at Gabila's Knishes on Long Island, billed as the world's biggest maker of these greasy delights, caused consternation and headlines around the globe (*New York Times*: "From small fire, a great fried-knish famine"). [http://bit.ly/knish11]

The impending shortage was even memorialized by a limerick on National Public Radio:

For tasty, filled Jewish kuh-dishes,
The timing is simply kuh-vicious.
Supplies are all gone-ukkah,
Right before Hanukkah.
It seems we've run out of kuh-nish-es. [http://bit.ly/knish1]

Although the makers suggested that knishes are too difficult to create at home, the trove of online recipes seems to belie that claim. We'll get to the recipes in a moment. But first, some history.

The *Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink* calls the knish a "canonical" Jewish American food whose name comes from Ukrainian Yiddish (from the verb "to crease"). Knishes successfully made the jump from eastern Europe to the United States and into the Jewish vernacular. "The round, potato-stuffed knish became an American Yiddish metaphor for stupidity ('the brains of a knish'), unexpected good fortune ('to be hit with a knish'), and sexual favours ('looking for some knish')." [http://bit.ly/knish2]

The Jewish-food Knish Archives (yes, there *are* knish archives!) lists an impressive 32 varieties including Corned Beef, Indian Potato and Tuna, and several recipes from Manhattan's venerable Yonah Schimmel Knishery – with chicken, kasha and cheese fillings. [http://bit.ly/knish3]

Another Jewish recipe goldmine offers a dozen others including Fruit-filled, Jennie Grossinger's and Knishelach (Little Knishes). [http://bit.ly/knish12]

For years, filmmaker Laura Silver was on the hunt for the holy grail of knishes – Fannie Stahl's, founder of Mrs. Stahl's knishes and one of Brooklyn's "legendary purveyors of the stuffed, baked eastern European savoury pastries." Silver's quest took her to San Francisco, where she tracked down Fannie Stahl's granddaughters, who agreed to share their bubbie's recipe with Laura – and you. [http://bit.ly/knish4]

Since the fire, it seems as though everyone has been getting into the act. Brooklyn's Center for Kosher Culinary Arts ("the only kosher cooking school outside of Israel to offer career training in culinary and pastry arts") has created a Gabila-like recipe "for all those 'knish-a-holics' suffering through the knish crisis." [http://bit.ly/knish13] And there's even a vegan version (hold the liver – bring on the tofu), care of PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. [http://bit.ly/knish5]

If you need help with the technique, you can observe experts ply their trade on YouTube. [http://bit.ly/knish6] But for a real heimishe ta'am, I recommend watching Rukhl Schaechter and Eve Jochnowitz instruct you in Yiddish (with English subtitles). [http://bit.ly/knish7]

What will a knish do to your waistline? According to fitday.com, a standard potato knish packs 214 calories with about half from fat. [http://bit.ly/knish10]

If you love the food, but can't find like-minded fans, fear not. Join the Facebook group, The International Knish Society, and you'll never be alone. Archival photos, "lost" recipes and more. [http://bit.ly/knish8]

For those who rely on Gabila's, the news is good. The knish shortage is almost over. But isn't the news even better if you can bake one yourself?

highway@rogers.com

Kashrut agency adds safety mandate

Lauren Kramer
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — How safe is your food? That could depend on whether or not is has the Kosher Check certification.

Formerly known as BC Kosher – with its BCK hechsher – the Vancouver-based agency now known as Kosher Check is expanding its requirements for kosher certification to include food safety standards beyond the minimum regulations laid out by Canada's Food Inspection Agency.

Kosher Check is insisting that present and future clients adhere to advanced food safety protocols such as Canada's Hazard Awareness Critical Control Points (HACCP), British Retail Consortium standards (BRC), Safe Quality Foods (SQF), the Foundation for Food Safety Certification (FSSC), among others.

"We feel customers have a right to know that their food is safe," says Rabbi Avraham Feigelstock, who sits on the Vancouver Rabbinical Court.

What's more, the market is demanding additional levels of food safety inspection, he adds, with Europe being way ahead of North America.

Two to three decades ago, such food safety scrutiny might not have been necessary.

"It used to be when you went into a bakery or butcher shop, the chances of your products having ingredients from China, India or Sri Lanka was low, but today it's the opposite," Rabbi Feigelstock says. "The food market has become global, which is good because it brings down the price, but other countries don't have the same level of food safety that we do. The need for a system to ensure these products are safe is essential."

Kosher Check is taking the lead in this respect and is the only kosher agency worldwide making this move.

It's a non-profit that has distinguished itself from other kosher certifying agencies since the mid-1980s, not long after its inception.

In 1985, Rabbi Feigelstock, the organization's founder and supervising rabbi, began operating in Asia and today has representatives throughout the world. That makes Kosher Check Canada's only kosher certification agency that operates internationally in a significant way.

Companies that already have a BCK hechsher are now required to have food safety certification as well, though more than 95 per cent of the companies Kosher Check certifies are already in compliance, he says. Kosher Check certifies some 14,000 products, with 2,000 of them manufactured and certified in Asia.

Obtaining the extra level of food safety certification isn't necessarily all that complicated for food manufacturers, thanks to Icicle, cloud-based software created by Burton Software in Richmond, B.C. Companies pay to subscribe to the software, enter their ingredient lists and are given data on what they have to do to achieve kosher certification and HACCP certification.

What Kosher Check is doing is nothing short of revolutionary, Rabbi Feigelstock says.

"For the first time in history, a customer can know just by looking at a product label that a product is HACCP certified," he says. "We're the only agency in the world that is offering customers some kind of certification that tells them, 'This food is safe.'"

Kosher Check's 500 customers include Canada Safeway, Rogers Sugar, Garden Protein, Golden Boy Foods and Sunrise Soya.

Rethinking Israel's Bedouins

From the Reut Institute
Alissa Breiman

What comes to mind when you think about Israel's Bedouins? Warm hospitality in a Bedouin tent during a family mission or a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip? Camel rides and sweet tea? Or maybe the Israeli-Arabs that serve in the army?

For many Israelis, similar associations will spring to mind. However, the place of Israel's Bedouin community in the Zionist narrative and the Israeli imagination has begun to shift over the past few weeks. Political tensions and violent protests have opened to doors to a new conversation and a new overt challenge facing Israel's leadership and the country's identity.

In June 2013, the Bill on the Arrangement of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev (also known as the Prawer Plan or the Prawer-Begin Plan) passed by a slim majority in the Knesset. The bill outlines the relocation of a large proportion of Israel's Bedouins from unrecognized townships to government approved townships.

The uncertainty and impermanency that have defined the status of Israel's Bedouins since the establishment of Israel are at the heart of the government's attempt to create a new order. While the government sees the plan as an investment in basic services and access to economic and education opportunities for Israel's Bedouins, opposition to the bill frames it as land grab and as part of a broader effort to strengthen Jewish settlement, made without proper consultation with the local Bedouin population.

But the uncertainty and impermanency that surround Israel's Bedouins is not new. In many ways, the Israeli government has, in the main, made a concerted effort to maintain this status quo for much of the past 65 plus years. The overwhelming "otherness" of Israel's Bedouins – the difference in organization, norms, laws, values and needs – have allowed a policy of non-policy to reign for more than six decades.

An effort to streamline settlement and infrastructure for a community that is fundamentally different in its make-up to that of the majority population is not unique to Israel. While there are a number of key differences, attempts to streamline government policy in areas of settlement and infrastructure among Australia's indigenous peoples, for example, highlight the complexity of the challenge and the unquestionable importance of cultural sensitivity, thorough local consultation and the dangers of failed urbanization.

For the Jewish People, however, Bedouin resettlement presents a new and unfamiliar challenge. While for centuries, Jewish leadership was largely concerned with meeting the needs of the local Jewish community and often communicating these needs to the relevant governmental powers, the government of Israel is responsible to act in the interest of all its citizens in a way that brings value to all its citizens.

So while a status quo of uncertainty has left the Bedouins on the periphery of the Israeli national narrative, recent events have created an opening for Israel's Bedouins to occupy a new place. These protests and subsequent media storm have forced Israeli society to question Israel's policies of settlement and maintaining the status quo and have created a renewed conversation around the challenges facing a Jewish majority rule in a country with significant minority communities. Indeed, the issue of Bedouin settlement and land rights is complex and presents a unique challenge to Israel's leadership and Israeli society at large.

Alissa Breiman, an immigrant from Australia, led the Reut Institute's task force on engaging the Israeli Diaspora and changing relationship between Israel and the Jewish world.

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

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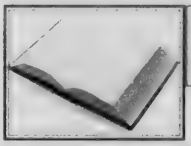
A blessing for our sons



Rabbinic Reflections

Rabbi Mark Fishman

"May HaShem bless you like Ephraim and Menashe."

One of the very special moments I have on Shabbat takes place each Friday evening after we return from shul. *Shalom Aleichem* and *Eishet Chayil* are sung and then comes the moment we all look forward to. The blessing of the children.

Our daughter, being older, is first and, with eyes closed, she receives from her parents those time-honoured words. "May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah," the foremothers of our nation, with their challenges and struggles, their overcoming the odds and their underlying righteousness. With these hopes and dreams for the future, we bless our daughter, praying that she will grow up to emulate the heroines of our nation.

For our son, who is just one year old, it can sometimes be a challenge to put our hands on his head and keep him still. Yet, when we bless him, we do not wish that he will emulate the values of the forefathers (thus mirroring the female blessing), but rather we somewhat unexpectedly bless him by praying that he grow up to be like Ephraim and Menashe.

Strange? Ephraim and Menashe are Joseph's two sons, born in Egypt. They look Egyptian, speak Egyptian, dress like Egyptians, and for all intents and purposes, these are not two fine young boys that have any cultural or ethnic "Jewishness" about them. And yet, when Shabbat comes, we follow in our patriarch Jacob's footsteps and bless Jewish boys by praying that they should grow up to become like Ephraim and Menashe.

The answer to this riddle can be found by taking a sweeping look back on the entire book of Bereshit. Throughout these long and painful weekly readings, there has been one theme that constantly recurs – the theme of sibling rivalry, beginning with Cain killing Abel: "The Lord said, 'What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.'" Then we have Isaac and Ishmael: "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." Jacob and Esau continue the theme: "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob." Joseph's brothers say: "Let's kill him, throw him into one of the cisterns, and say that a wild animal has eaten him." Throughout, there is one clear message: siblings do not get along.

Yet, there is one departure from this all too familiar theme: the blessings given to Ephraim and Menashe. In fact, the blessings are given to the younger Ephraim over the older Menashe. And we never hear of any bitterness, rivalry or animosity.

The blessings we, in turn, give to our sons is that they should not only love their siblings, but deeply respect them, care and look out for them. The brotherly rivalry of Bereshit comes to a close with the partnership of two brothers who feel no jealously and no resentment toward the other. This is the blessing we give to children.

Rabbi Mark Fishman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Tikvah Ahavat Shalom Nusach Hoari in Montreal.

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Netanyahu aims to ease tensions with U.S.

Ilan Ben Zion
The Times of Israel

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a high profile address Sunday, attempted to allay tensions between the United States and Israel while reiterating his warning that Iran was continuing its drive toward a nuclear weapon.

Netanyahu addressed the Saban Forum in Washington, D.C., over video from Jerusalem, and lauded the strong relationship between the United States and Israel. He called it "the crucial anchor of stability in the Middle East" and an "indispensable alliance." He also assured viewers that despite the public spat between Jerusalem and Washington over the Geneva agreement reached last month between the P5+1 and Iran, Israel and the United States see eye to eye on most things.

"I want you to know we can have different perspectives… Most of the time and on most things, if not the major things, we see eye to eye because we're anchored in deeply democratic societies," he said.

Originally slated to be interviewed by Charlie Rose of CBS News, Netanyahu opted to give a speech instead, and did not answer questions afterward, as other speakers at the forum, including U.S. President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry, had done.

Netanyahu offered praise for Obama, who spoke Saturday, saying that defence and intelligence co-operation between Israel and the United States under his presidency had reached "new heights."

Obama had indicated Israeli demands on the Geneva deal with Iran were unrealistic, and mentioned that he and Netanyahu did not view the deal, which eases sanctions in return for curbs on uranium enrichment, the same way.

"You'll hear arguments, including potentially from the prime minister, that we can't accept any enrichment on Iranian soil. Period. Full stop. End of conversation," said Obama. "In an ideal world," he said, "Iran would destroy every element and facility, you name it." But, he went on, "We have to be more realistic."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu offered praise for President Barack Obama. *[Flash90 file photo]*

Along with the Iranian issue, the other core of Netanyahu's address was the ongoing peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, and the prime minister lauded Kerry's "tireless efforts for peace."

"Tireless. I mean, this man doesn't sleep," Netanyahu said, adding that some of his cabinet ministers were growing jealous at how much time he was spending with the American diplomat.

The prime minister dismissed charges that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the core of the region's instability, noting the Sunni-Shia conflict, the Syrian civil war, terrorism in Iraq and Iran's nuclear program as examples.

"That's not to say that peace with the Palestinians is not important – it's vital," Netanyahu said, "first and foremost for Israel and for the Palestinians." He called a lasting peace accord with the Palestinians a "strategic goal of the State of Israel" and his government.

"I've made hard decisions to further peace negotiations," he said, perhaps in reference to his government's agreement to release Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails as a precondition to peace talks, which began in July. "I'm willing to make even harder decisions to achieve peace, and I hope [Palestinian Authority] President [Mahmoud] Abbas is willing to do so, because peace can only be and must be a two-way street."

Netanyahu said he was ready for a "historic compromise that ends the conflict between us once and for all," but said the core of the conflict has been the Palestinians' refusal to recognize Israel "with any border." He said Palestinian recognition of a Jewish state's right to exist was "not too much to ask" and was a "minimal requirement for peace."

Any such peace accord, he said, must provide guarantees for Israel's security, as a treaty between Israel and the Palestinians was likely to yield "a cold peace."

"Any agreement that we make must enable us to protect the peace, or conversely to protect Israel in case the peace unravels," Netanyahu said. "So there must be ironclad security arrangements to protect the peace, arrangements that allow Israel to defend itself, by itself, against any possible threat" with Israel's own forces.

Turning to Iran, Netanyahu said a nuclear-armed Iran was the greatest threat to a potential Israeli-Palestinian accord.

A nuclear-armed Iran, he said, "would undermine the chances of arriving at a negotiated peace. I would say it would undermine those peace agreements that we've already reached with two of our neighbours" – Jordan and Egypt.

He called Iran's virulent rhetoric about Israel "not just a matter of sticks and stones." In Tehran's case, "talk has consequences," he said, and called on the world to demand, alongside the Geneva talks, a change in Iran's "genocidal policy" vis-a-vis Israel.

"I don't think I can overstate – I don't think any of us can overstate – the Iranian danger," Netanyahu said. "Steps must be taken to prevent further erosion of sanctions," he added, because the sanctions are critical to international efforts to press Iran to dismantle its nuclear program.

"For diplomacy to succeed, it must be coupled with powerful sanctions and a credible military threat," he said. "A diplomatic solution is better than a military option, but a military option is necessary for diplomacy to succeed, as are powerful sanctions."

TimesofIsrael.com

Peres would meet Rouhani

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli President Shimon Peres said he would be willing to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

"Why not? I don't have enemies; it's not a matter of a person but of a policy," Peres said Sunday in Tel Aviv at the Globes Business Conference during an on-stage interview with CNN's Richard Quest. "The purpose is to convert enemies into friends."

Peres said Israel and the world powers have to "concentrate all our efforts to make sure Iran doesn't become a nuclear danger to the rest of the world. President Obama constructed a coalition and he can't go alone," he said.

Peres said there is no question that the world prefers a diplomatic solution.

He added: "All options remain on the table to give weight to the words. The ones who are meant to listen must realize they could face a far more complicated situation. No one wants Iran to have a nuclear bomb, no one wants to have an Iranian danger hanging over our skies."

Peres said that Israelis and the Palestinians could learn from the late South African leader Nelson Mandela.

"If there was something that seemed impossible it was solving apartheid, but it happened and it was far quicker than we thought," he said.

Speaking on the current Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, Peres said, "There are two major problems. Israel's security after our experience when we left Gaza which made many Israelis reluctant to do likewise in the West Bank. On the other hand is the problem of our existence as a Jewish state, a state where the Jewish people are a majority. It's not a matter of declarations; it's a matter of numbers."

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Cotler scheduled to attend memorial services

Continued from page 1

"The most remarkable thing about him is that he emerged from prison, not only to preside over the dismantling of apartheid, but to become president."

In Parliament, Cotler said: "We are all, wherever we are, deeply saddened and profoundly pained at the passing of a great world historical figure [who] made possible, as president, the establishment of a democratic, multi-racial, free South Africa.

"Nelson Mandela was really the metaphor and message for the struggle for human rights and human dignity in our time. If apartheid was the ultimate assault on human rights and human dignity, South Africa was the first post-World War II country to have institutionalized racism as a matter of law.

"We should not forget that apartheid was not just a racist philosophy, it was a legal racist regime, and it was Mandela who fought and gave full expression to that struggle for human rights and human dignity against this racist legal regime."

Cotler recalled being arrested in 1981 in South Africa after speaking there at the invitation of South African anti-apartheid movement leader Helen Suzman.

"[South African politician] Pik Botha asked to meet me, and there was a picture of [Soviet prisoner of conscience] Natan Sharansky in his office.

"He thought Sharansky was a freedom fighter and a democrat and that Nelson Mandela was a communist and revolutionary, and asked me to go around the country to see how democratic South Africa really was.

"When I got back, I told him: 'Sure, South Africa is democratic. But only if you're white.'"

Even though Israel was one of the only countries to continue to do business with the apartheid regime despite international sanctions, Mandela recognized Israel's right to exist and had "very warm" feelings for the Jewish People despite the fact that he could be critical of Israel's treatment of Palestinians, Cotler said.

Cotler also noted that Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, shows that Mandela read Menachem Begin's memoir *The Revolt*, and it served as something of an inspiration. Mandela wrote: "I was encouraged by the fact that the Israeli leader had led a guerrilla force in a country with neither mountains nor forest, a situation similar to our own."

In 1999, asked why he had finally decided to visit Israel, Mandela replied, "To the many people who have questioned why I came, I say: Israel worked very closely with the apartheid regime. I say: I've made peace with many men who slaughtered our people like animals. Israel co-operated with the apartheid regime, but it did not participate in any atrocities."

Cotler said Mandela's greatest legacy will be his role in establishing a free, multi-racial South Africa.

When Mandela became an honorary Canadian citizen, Cotler said in the House of Commons: "This honorary citizenship will have a historic and inspiring resonance for Canadians, for good relations between Canada and South Africa, and for... our common humanity."

Cotler left with the Canadian contingent to South Africa Sunday to attend memorial services for Mandela.

Mandela was close to his country's Jews

Moira Schneider
JTA

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — In the early 1940s, at a time when it was virtually impossible for a South African of colour to secure a professional apprenticeship, the Jewish law firm Witkin, Sidelsky and Eidelman gave a young black man a job as a clerk.

Nelson Mandela in 2008
[South Africa The Good News photo]

It was among the first encounters in what would become a lifelong relationship between Nelson Mandela and South Africa's tiny Jewish community, impacting the statesman's life at several defining moments — from his arrival in Johannesburg from the rural Transkei region as a young man to his years of struggle, imprisonment and ascension to the presidency.

Mandela, who died Thursday at 95, wrote of the early job in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, and acknowledged the disproportionate role that Jews played in the struggle against apartheid. Lazer Sidelsky, one of the firm's partners, treated him with "enormous kindness" and was among the first whites to treat him with respect.

"I have found Jews to be more broad-minded than most whites on issues of race and politics, perhaps because they themselves have historically been victims of prejudice," Mandela wrote.

South Africa's Jews remembered Mandela, the country's first democratically elected president, as a close friend, one with deep ties to prominent community figures and a partner in the decades-long effort to end apartheid.

"I was extremely privileged to lead the community during his presidency," said Mervyn Smith, who was chairman and later president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, the community's representative body. "We met with him on many occasions and the talk was direct and open."

For Mandela, who rose to prominence as a leading opponent of the discriminatory racial regime known as apartheid, Jews were vital allies. Jewish lawyers represented him in multiple trials, and Jewish activists and political figures played leading roles in the fight.

Go to cjnews.com to read full feature.

Netanyahu to skip memorial

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will not attend a memorial service in South Africa for Nelson Mandela due to the high cost of transportation and security.

The decision was announced late on Sunday, hours before Netanyahu's scheduled Monday departure for the memorial event to have been held Dec. 10 at Johannesburg's FNB stadium. Some 70 world leaders, many heads of state, as well as all living U.S. presidents and more than two dozen members of the U.S. Congress, are scheduled to attend the event, which will include about 150,000 people.

It was unclear if Israeli President Shimon Peres would decide to attend the memorial once it was announced that Netanyahu would not attend. The costs to send the president reportedly are significantly lower.

Netanyahu's decision comes less than a week after the disclosure of the large amount of taxpayer money spent on the Prime Minister's official residence, and his two private residences.

The cost to send Netanyahu to the Mandela memorial would have been close to $2 million, including chartering a private plane and transporting security personnel and equipment, according to *Ha'aretz*. Netanyahu's visit reportedly would have been protested by pro-Palestinian demonstrators in South Africa.

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Parliamentarians pass resolutions on Iran

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

The International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians (ICJP) last week passed a pair of resolutions that called on Iran to end its nuclear enrichment program while urging European lawmakers to adopt protocols that address a "disturbing" rise in anti-Semitism.

And in a separate resolution, the Jewish lawmakers criticized a number of European governments that had passed measures against male circumcision, calling those steps a denial of religious liberty.

The ICJP is an initiative of the World Jewish Congress that includes lawmakers from the United States, Canada, France, Israel, Costa Rica, Hungary, Ukraine, Belarus and elsewhere. It meets periodically to promote democracy and human rights while advocating for measures that address anti-Semitism and racism. It met last week in Washington and New York where its steering committee elected U.S. Congressman Eliot Engel as chair and Canadian MP Irwin Cotler as deputy chair.

Irwin Cotler

Cotler called the resolution on Iran "comprehensive." It acknowledges the recent agreement between Iran and the P5+1 nations, but points out that UN Security Council resolutions have repeatedly called "for suspension of enrichment, and that this agreement is a violation of international law."

The ICJP asks the P5+1 "to adhere to international law and ensure that Iran does not enrich [uranium] en route to a nuclear breakthrough," Cotler said.

On the issue of anti-Semitism, U.S. State Department Special Envoy to Monitor Global Anti-Semitism, Ira Forman, told the parliamentarians that anti-Semitism had become "dramatically worse in the last decade," particularly in France, Hungary and Venezuela.

The ICJP resolution cited a survey by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency that found 76 per cent of European Jews believed anti-Semitism had become "more acute and has increased in their country in the last five years."

The agency also reported that in a 12-month period, 21 per cent of respondents experienced at least one incident involving verbal insult, harassment or physical attack because they were Jews.

European and Latin American parliamentarians briefed their colleagues on developments in their countries. They "spoke movingly about the intensification of anti-Semitism there," Cotler said.

The ICJP is in the position of being able to raise public awareness on this issue and on Iran, he added.

Red-Dead pipeline water approved

Stuart Winer
The Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority were set on Monday to ink an agreement to build a long-anticipated pipeline from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea, part of an initiative that would produce millions of cubic metres of drinking water for the parched region and slake the critically dwindling Dead Sea.

Representatives of the three parties to the agreement – Israel's Minister for Regional Co-operation Silvan Shalom, Jordanian Minister of Water and Irrigation Hazem Nasser, and Palestinian Authority Minister for Water Shaddad Attili – were scheduled to gather at the World Bank in Washington for an official signing ceremony.

"We're talking about a historic process that realizes a dream of many years," Shalom told *Yedioth Ahronoth*, which broke the story. "We have here strategic co-operation of national significance between Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority."

The Red Sea-Dead Sea canal, known informally as the Red-Dead project, is expected to cost $250-$400 million (US), to be raised from donor countries and philanthropic sources as well as a cash injection from the World Bank, the report said. Within a year, international tenders will be published for the construction of the pipeline in Jordanian territory along the Arava valley.

The surface of the Dead Sea lies some 427 metres (1,400 feet) below sea level, and water would naturally flow to it from the Red Sea. The project will be completed in four to five years, the report said.

According to the report, around 200 million cubic metres of sea water are to be pumped from the Red Sea, at the very southern tip of Israel, per year. A desalination plant in the Jordanian city of Aqaba, across the gulf from the Israeli resort town of Eilat, will produce drinking water. Israel is to receive around 30-50 million cubic metres, for the benefit of the port city of Eilat and communities in the arid Arava region, while Jordan will use 30 million cubic metres for its own southern areas.

One hundred million cubic metres of the highly saline byproduct of the process will be piped north to the Dead Sea to replenish the lake, whose level has dipped precariously in recent decades. Environmentalists have warned that pumping the water into the Dead Sea will endanger the environment.

In addition, Israel will pump from the Sea of Galilee 50 million cubic metres of fresh water for Jordan's northern regions and 30 million cubic metres for the Palestinian Authority-controlled West Bank.

The idea of a conduit between the two bodies of water was first put forward by the British during the 19th century. In the 1990s, after Israel and Jordan signed a peace agreement, the idea of laying a pipeline from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea began to gain momentum.

Timesofisrael.com

Israel/Germany sign arms deal

Yifa Yaakov
The Times of Israel

Germany has signed a multimillion-dollar arms deal with Israel, Germany's *Bild* newspaper reported Saturday.

Within the framework of the deal, Germany will reportedly supply Israel with two guided missile destroyers, each valued at one billion euros.

The destroyers will be used to protect Israel's gas pipelines.

In April, *Der Spiegel* reported that Israel may sell technologically advanced attack drones to the German military.

According to the German weekly, the German defence ministry proposed the purchase several months ago, and German representatives have already held two meetings with Israeli Defence Forces officials to discuss the matter.

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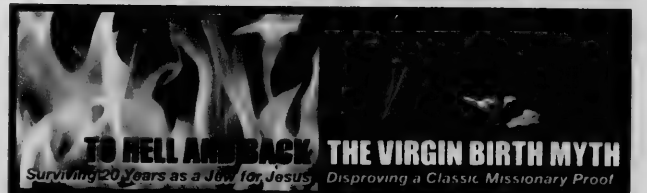
Two Explosive Jews for Judaism Events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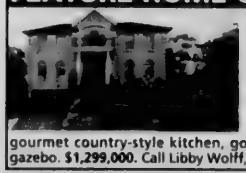

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When I met Nelson Mandela

Bernie Farber

It was June 1990, a hot summer day and one I have never forgotten. Only a few months earlier the iconic leader of the anti-apartheid movement, Nelson Mandela, had been released from serving a 27-year jail sentence and was in the midst of a tour of Europe and North America.

During these visits, amongst the many state leaders and others he saw, Mandela specifically wanted to meet with Jewish leaders. It was no secret that many Jews in South Africa were amongst the few whites that were strong and keen activists within the anti-apartheid movement and Mandela very much wanted to show his gratitude by meeting with Jewish leaders wherever his travels took him.

Nonetheless it was still very much a surprise when I came to my office early that morning of June 20 to receive a phone call from the head of the Mandela Canadian visit asking if we could bring a small delegation to meet with Mandela at his Royal York suite for that afternoon.

With only a few hours to prepare I simply did not have the time to contemplate the historical and unique opportunity I would be participating in. I immediately got in touch with then Canadian Jewish Congress president Les Scheininger and chair of the executive Moshe Ronen. Along with my colleague, Manuel Prutschi, we made our way downtown for our rendezvous with this most prominent of world champions.

We were met in the lobby of the hotel and ushered into Mandela's hotel suite. It is said that when you are in the presence of greatness you will know. I finally understood what that meant. Walking up to us, his arm outstretched, that beatific smile and eyes that swallowed us all, was Nelson Mandela. I was first struck by his height, well over six-feet-tall, strong and assured but with an easy manner and a gentle way.

Pictured, from left, Bernie Farber, Moshe Ronen, Les Scheininger and Nelson Mandela

I will never forget what he said as he greeted us. "Hello" he said in a quite but firm voice. "I'm Nelson Mandela and it is truly an honour to meet you."

The humility of his greeting shook me to my core. In those few words I understood the essence of Nelson Mandela. As he approached to shake my hand I found myself tongue tied at first but his gentle manner and kind eyes unfroze my tongue. "Mr. Mandela I'm humbled and feel so privileged to meet you" I mumbled.

He led us into the living room of his suite, introduced us to his wife Winnie and a short time later another guest joined us, then minister of external affairs, Joe Clark. At any other time to meet Clark would have been a huge honour in itself. That day, Clarke, like our delegation, was in awe of this man of conscience.

We probably spent 25 minutes talking with Mandela but it seemed like an entire afternoon. His modesty yet depth of purpose seemed as though they shouldn't fit, yet they merged in a manner that is hard to describe. In the many years I worked with CJC, I had the great privilege of meeting kings and presidents, philosophers and Nobel laureates, however I very much doubt I will ever have the experience again of being with a man who in his simple yet courageous and elegant way was an astonishing agent of change, a man who truly helped make this world a better place. As we say in our tradition may his memory be for a blessing.

In his capacity as then associate director of community relations, Bernie M. Farber met Nelson Mandela on June 20 ,1990.

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Yaphe, Abraham Wilfred	Nov. 13/13	91 Invermay Ave
Katzman, Laura	Nov. 26/13	Private
Sohn, Sylvia	Nov. 28/13	Private
Weinrieb, Ellen	Nov. 26/13	3174 Bathurst St
Raskin, Mary	Nov. 27/13	429 Walmer Rd
Meltz, Barbara Esther Jordana	Nov. 27/13	583 16th Ave
Shawriky, Miriam	Nov. 28/13	2045 Finch Ave. W
Stein, Mannie	Nov. 28/13	339 Riverview Dr
Keslassy, Perla	Nov. 29/13	88 Promenade Circle
Zadik, Cipora	Nov. 29/13	216 Kingsbridge Circle
Sidi, Selly	Nov. 29/13	Private
Sasto, Charlotte	Nov. 30/13	784 Centre St
Woolf, Sidney	Nov. 30/13	103 Palm Dr
Szajman, Towa	Dec 1/13	Private
Lebovici, Olga	Dec. 1/13	
Shapero, Terance	Dec. 2/13	13 Bowring Walk
Tsigelman, David	Dec. 2/13	
Struzer, Franceen	Dec. 2/13	82 Crown Heights Cres
Lehberg, Aileen Ann	Dec. 2/13	546 Steeles Ave W
Rosenzweig, Frieda	Dec. 2/13	333 Clark Ave. W
Mazor, Alex	Nov. 26/13	Private
Chekhtman, Kiara	Dec. 3/13	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Jack Westreich	Nov 22/13	4001 Bayview Ave
Phyllis Shapiro	Nov 21/13	645 Castlefield Ave
Judy Slozberg	Nov 21/13	82 Almore Ave
Alex Biller	Nov 22/13	117 Elm Ridge Dr
Liv Wise	Nov 25/13	17 Fairgate Close
Jane Lesley Lewis Evoy	Nov 24/13	4 Belvia Dr
Sidney Ler	Nov 26/13	38 Carscadden Dr
Rupert Shriar	Nov 26/13	605 Finch Ave W
Joy Edelstein	Nov 27/13	4005 Bayview Ave
Rose Herman	Nov 28/13	171 Kennard Ave
Renata Skotnicka Zajdman	Nov 28/13	5761 Honore-De-Balzac
Jack Lubelski	Nov 28/13	247 Winnett Ave
Faye Caplan	Nov 30/13	88 Promenade Circle

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Helen Chvertkin	Nov 30/13	2 Neptune Drive

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Anaheim Ducks owner an acquirer of Israeli start-ups

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

When U.S. communications chip giant Broadcom needs to develop a new technology for its customers, it scours the world looking for start-ups, and often, according to Broadcom chair Henry Samueli, "we end up finding those companies in Israel."

In fact, he said, "it's actually somewhat amazing – no matter what technology we need, there is usually an Israeli company already doing it, and they are often the best in the world at it."

Broadcom is a serial acquirer, buying out more than 60 companies since it was established in 1991 – 11 of them in Israel. Among the technologies Israeli companies have helped develop for Broadcom are Passive Optical Network processors (developed by Broadlight, a recent acquisition); mixed signal semiconductors for microwave backhaul systems (Broadcom acquisition Provigent); system-on-a-chip (SoC) solutions for femtocells for better Internet connections (Percello); switch fabric solutions for data centre networking equipment (Dune Networks), and more.

The Israeli teams are now part of Broadcom global units, which typically tackle a specific product (LTE, networking equipment) on a worldwide basis, instead of dividing teams up by geographical location, as most other multinationals do.

In some ways, running work groups as single units with offices around the world makes it easier to manage teams, said Samueli, but in other ways, the challenges for Broadcom are greater than they are for companies that typically assign a task to a team in a specific location, and later on try to integrate their work into what other teams are doing.

Henry Samueli

"One of my primary challenges is to meld these teams, all of which have different corporate cultures, to get them to work together," Samueli said. "But the rewards are worth it, because all our employees see themselves as part of a global corporation, which encourages them to be motivated and see the value of their work."

Samueli was in Israel for a first-ever Broadcom technical conference, in which representatives of the units in Israel discussed the new technologies they are working on. It's been said, and not just by Broadcom, that 99.8 per cent of all data traffic in the world touches a Broadcom chip; the company's technology is in products as diverse as microwave transmitters, wide area network switches and mobile device-driven communications items.

Samueli declined to give specifics on the technologies his Israeli acquisitions or Broadcom in general were working on. He did say, however, that a lot of it was tied up in developing technology for the LTE (4G) cell network. While 2012 was Broadcom's most profitable year ever, there was a bit of a falloff in recent months, a result of the heavy investment Broadcom is making in LTE.

"We're in investment mode now, so it makes sense that profits would fall somewhat while we spend money to develop new technologies," Samueli said. "We expect the payoff to come within three years, when LTE really begins flourishing."

Partnering with startups was more crucial in the chip business now than ever before, he said.

"When we started out, you could design a chip with a few guys in a basement," he said, describing the roots of Broadcom, which he started in 1991 with partner Henry T. Nicholas III. "Now a chip is likely to have 20 different technologies and a huge amount of intellectual property, and it could cost as much as $100 million to design. Economies of scale are hugely important, so only the largest companies – who get to market first – are able to succeed in semiconductors today."

"By now, we usually look at Israel first," he said.

That search for innovation continues. During his visit, Samueli and Joseph Klafter, president of Tel Aviv University (TAU), signed an agreement under which Broadcom will establish a research fund for TAU scientists that will focus on finding solutions for cyber threats.

When it comes to teamwork, Samueli is an expert, in part because he is owner of the Anaheim Ducks hockey team.

"Buying it was an opportunity that was just there," said Samueli. "But it's turned out to be really fun."

While Samueli didn't get any new technologies when he bought the Ducks, he did get lessons in teamwork that apply just as well to a multi-national tech company.

"To succeed in hockey you need teamwork," he said. "A team may have some great players, but typically the team that works best together does the best. I look at running Broadcom in the same way. We have a culture where people have different skill sets, but they are happy to leverage their skills to help others, and to help the company. If you want to succeed you have to make sure your colleagues succeed as well. In that, hockey is a lot like the tech business."

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Apple acquires company and its 3D technology

David Shamah
The Times of Israel

TEL AVIV — Ending weeks of rumour and speculation, Apple has confirmed it will obtain Israeli tech firm PrimeSense for $350 million (all figures US).

PrimeSense and Apple have been in intense negotiations over a possible Apple acquisition since at least July, when reports on the proposed purchase surfaced.

PrimeSense developed the Kinect 3D system for Microsoft. Since then, it has developed 3D sensors for consumer electronics, cars, game devices, digital signage, medical devices and more. The company's sensors are installed in over 20 million devices.

According to industry insiders, Apple has been working on three-dimensional technology for some time. Last year, it took out patents on a method of presenting 3D content on devices without the need for glasses. If Apple wants to add 3D to its iPhones and iPads, it would need not only a 3D sensor, but also technology to enable the device to understand and apply gestures properly – a major programming task.

PrimeSense has already overcome many of the programming issues that Apple would face. The company's technology uses depth-sensing to enable devices to identify movements and gestures, enabling the device to differentiate between specific gestures that trigger specific events – such as an arm sweep to change channels on a TV or a hand movement to change the volume.

PrimeSense's technology also enables devices to differentiate between objects like furniture, and to weed out gestures that are not meant to be picked up by the device. The technology is based on an innovative "light coding" method, which codes a scene with light from the near-infrared spectrum, interpreting actions based on where activity takes place.

PrimeSense's technology would most likely be applied to new, smarter Apple TVs, devices that let users subscribe to Internet television and media services. Apple TV is one of the leading set-top boxes for delivering Internet content to TV sets, but it has recently been challenged by Google, which released its ChromeCast device several months ago.

Although Apple TV offers more entertainment options right now, including services like Hulu and HBO, the Google device offers more flexibility in connectivity and the formats it plays – and is one-third of the price of Apple TV. Adding 3D gesture sensing to Apple TVs would give the Cupertino-based company a big leg up on its Google competitor.

Timesofisrael.com

German Jew hunted down Kommandant of Auschwitz

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Hanns and Rudolf, The German Jew and the Hunt for the Kommandant of Auschwitz
Thomas Harding
Simon & Schuster

When Rudolf Höss, the Kommandant of Auschwitz, was reassigned to Berlin in 1943, his wife, Hedwig, and their children stayed behind.

After all, life there was pretty good. They had a spacious villa adjacent to the camp fence, servants at their beck and call, an affluent lifestyle and excursions to the banks of the nearby Sola River. Oh, and there was a second-floor view, if gazing upon crematoria chimneys could be considered a desirable view.

"His wife called life at Auschwitz paradise," said Thomas Harding, author of *Hanns and Rudolf, The German Jew and the Hunt for the Kommandant of Auschwitz.*

For Höss, running a death camp was something he left behind at the end of a long day at work. A longtime Nazi who viewed Jews as something less than human, Höss could "compartmentalize" his work from family life, Harding said in an interview.

His work consisted of designing the mechanism of death at the camp, and then implementing it. He was pretty good at his job, so much so that in the end, some 1.1 million people, the vast majority of them Jews, would be sent to their deaths, mostly in gas chambers.

Höss is the Rudolf in the book's title. Hanns refers to Hanns Alexander, who, it turns out, is Harding's great-uncle. Alexander was appalled at the murders committed under the Nazi regime. A Jew facing discrimination in 1930s Germany, Alexander had left Germany for London well before the outbreak of war, along with his twin brother, Paul, and the rest of their family. He enlisted in the British army in 1939.

In 1945, he was recruited into the British Army's 12-man War Crimes Investigation Team as an interpreter. At the time, it was the only unit investigating crimes against humanity in postwar Germany. The assignment afforded Alexander the opportunity to take revenge on Nazis for their cruelty, Harding said.

Sent to Bergen-Belsen in May 1945 shortly after it was liberated, Alexander was appalled by what he found: corpses stacked one on top of the other, emaciated survivors, mothers clutching dead babies.

His experience in the camp changed him. "Up to then, he'd been happy-go-lucky. Something happened to him. It was like a light being tripped," Harding said.

During the interrogation of SS personnel at Bergen-Belsen, Alexander learned that many had been transferred from Auschwitz before it was liberated by the Red Army in January 1945. One of them was Josef Kramer, the Kommandant of Belsen who had been Höss's adjutant.

As Harding tells the story, his great-uncle felt the need to "hunt down these Nazi bastards."

Given permission to search for missing war criminals, Alexander tracked down the former gauleiter (political leader) of Luxembourg, Gustav Simon, and delivered his corpse to local authorities. Simon had died, mysteriously, while in custody. Alexander was thanked for his efforts, but cautioned that dead men tell no tales about other Nazis.

Alexander's next big assignment was locating Höss, who had gone to ground in northern Germany, working on a farm under an assumed identity.

Harding describes in detail the detective work that led to Höss's capture. Alexander had learned his lesson from the Simon incident, and when he and about two dozen British soldiers – many of them Jews – finally arrested Höss a year after war's end, they made sure he remained alive, though they did take a box of axe handles with them to aid in the arrest.

Delivering Höss alive, if somewhat worse for wear, was a wise decision. Unlike other senior officials in the know, Höss was willing to tell all about the Nazi mechanism of death. In fact, he was angry at the top German leadership, who distanced themselves from the Nazis' crimes or denied outright their involvement when facing trial in Nuremburg.

In that respect, Höss and Alexander shared the same goal – to set the record straight.

A dedicated Nazi who could count SS leader Heinrich Himmler as a mentor, Höss had been tasked in 1939 with getting the decrepit, run-down facility at Auschwitz up to speed so that it could accept vast numbers of prisoners. In Harding's description, it all appeared as a technical issue for Höss, a problem in search of a solution, which he provided.

As a devotee of "scientific anti-Semitism," Höss saw Jews as "a threat to the National Socialist project," Harding said.

For his part, Alexander was born in Berlin to an affluent family that was well integrated into German life. But when the Nazis' anti-Jewish legislation took effect in the 1930s, he and his family fled while they could.

Hanns spent the rest of his life in Britain, though Paul lived for a time in Toronto. In 1964, Hanns visited the city to attend the bar mitzvah of Paul's son, John, at Congregation Habonim. Harding spoke there recently during a visit to the city.

Hanns never visited Germany after the war, Harding said. He was angry that so many perpetrators never faced justice and could enjoy normal lives.

Alexander died in late 2006. The rabbi delivering the eulogy mentioned that in addition to raising a family and working as a banker, beyond helping his synagogue, he had done great things as a young man – he had tracked down the Kommandant of Auschwitz.

That piqued Harding's interest, since he had not known of that aspect of his great-uncle's life and wanted to tell the story of a Jew who fought back.

The story he aimed to tell is not of one-dimensional caricatures, but of more complex characters. Still, what he learned about Höss, the cold callous killer, was truly frightening, he said.

Rudolf Höss, the Kommandant of Auschwitz, was a family man who presided over the death of some 1.1 million people, the vast majority of them Jews.

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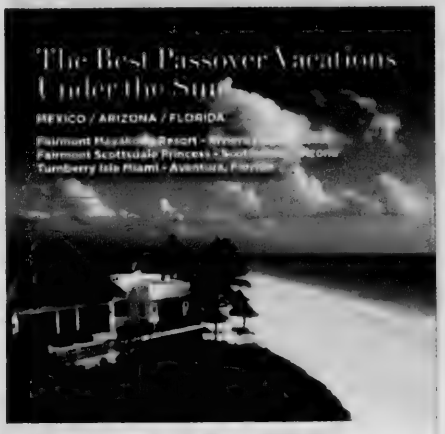
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Fusion band is the musical equivalent of fine dining

Jordana Divon
Special to The CJN

To the uninitiated, klezmer and Afro-Cuban music may seem as compatible as gefilte fish with a side of fried plantains.

But like all talented fusion artists, David Buchbinder has the chops to demonstrate how, with the right touch, the two disparate traditions can make for the musical equivalent of fine dining.

The award-winning Toronto musician recently released *Walk to the Sea*, the second critically acclaimed album from his Jewish-Cuban collective, Odessa/Havana. The group's self-titled debut earned Buchbinder and Co. a Canadian Folk Music Award on its 2007 release, and they're nominated for the same honour again this year.

Odessa/Havana's well-attended CD release party this fall at Lula Lounge, a venue that hosts some of the most interesting and diverse world music acts that pass through the city, proved, at the very least, that there's a strong appetite for whatever Buchbinder is serving.

"We had a really solid house and I think, for a Toronto audience, we had people who were pretty loud. Lots of yelling and clapping. It was nice. It felt really celebratory," Buchbinder said of the show.

The nine tracks on *Walk to the Sea* are a fascinating blend of chromatic scales and complex rhythms that Buchbinder and his co-collaborator, Hilario Durán, a Cuban born star of Toronto's jazz scene, have spent the last few years exploring for their inter-musical potential.

Rather than try to force either style to intersect, Buchbinder is content to let the Jewish and Cuban sounds to speak to one another in organic and often unexpected ways, using his ear as a filter.

"In general, my goal has been to just maybe, with some small orientation toward one culture or the other, create my version of that space. Many of the tunes will come from a particular impulse, but then they evolve however they evolve," he explained.

Though it's difficult to say whether audiences are coming out for the Old World Jewish sounds, the syncopated Latin American grooves or simply to hear how this strange but inspired hybrid creature might sound, they appear to be enjoying the result, "and I think that is partly because it's a unique style of music we've created that's not exactly anything any of us have played before," Buchbinder said.

David Buchbinder

But while he shares composing and arranging duties with the Juno Award-winning Durán, the project is ultimately the fruit of Buchbinder's musical curiosity and his sensitivity to the subtleties that link two beloved musical styles.

"I first made the connection [between Jewish and Cuban music] for myself many years ago, because I was playing salsa before I played traditional [Jewish] music," he said. "But it wasn't my own idiosyncratic discovery. It turns out they're historically connected in Medieval Andalusia, which was the Golden Age for Jewish culture and for world culture in general."

Buchbinder followed his intuition to Spain's southern region earlier this year, where he uncovered an even more intricate and fascinating history.

Before the Inquisition wiped out much of the ethnic presence in pre-Renaissance Spain, Jews, Muslims and Catholics lived together in brief but relative harmony, a situation that resulted in a rich, collaborative tapestry of cultural and intellectual achievement.

After the expulsions began, many of Spain's Jews fled east, establishing large Ladino populations across the Mediterranean, eastern Europe and Turkey.

When the Spanish conquistadores later began to infiltrate the New World, Buchbinder noted, many carried with them a strong musical culture influenced by Jewish, Roma and Arab sounds that would connect with the West African influence brought west by the slave trade.

Though he's inspired by the history, however, Buchbinder admits he's far more interested in creating new narratives and mythologies through a space where two worlds meet.

"I feel like what we're doing in this band is to create something... out of these powerfully rich traditions that we're using in a non-traditional way," he said. "Ours is one of many projects like this that are re-finding or finding each other for the first time."

He also cites Toronto as the ideal place for creative fusions like Odessa/Havana to flourish, referring to its multicultural mosaic as a sort of Andalusia of the modern era.

"It was a different world, but Toronto is a place that has the entire world in it, and that's a huge part of my thinking around this band."

With plans to see where the project leads him, Buchbinder is currently hoping to take the new CD on an international tour. In the meantime, he said, he'll continue to play locally with the same progressive, open-minded and open-eared enthusiasm with which he's always approached his music.

"I'm all for the continued life of and therefore evolution of all streams of music, just like languages," he said, although fans of his traditional klezmer music will be relieved to know he has no intention of abandoning that avenue either.

"To me there's something profoundly important about keeping all that stuff in a living stream," he said, finishing his thought

To learn more about Odessa/Havana or to check for upcoming live performances, visit odessahavana.com.

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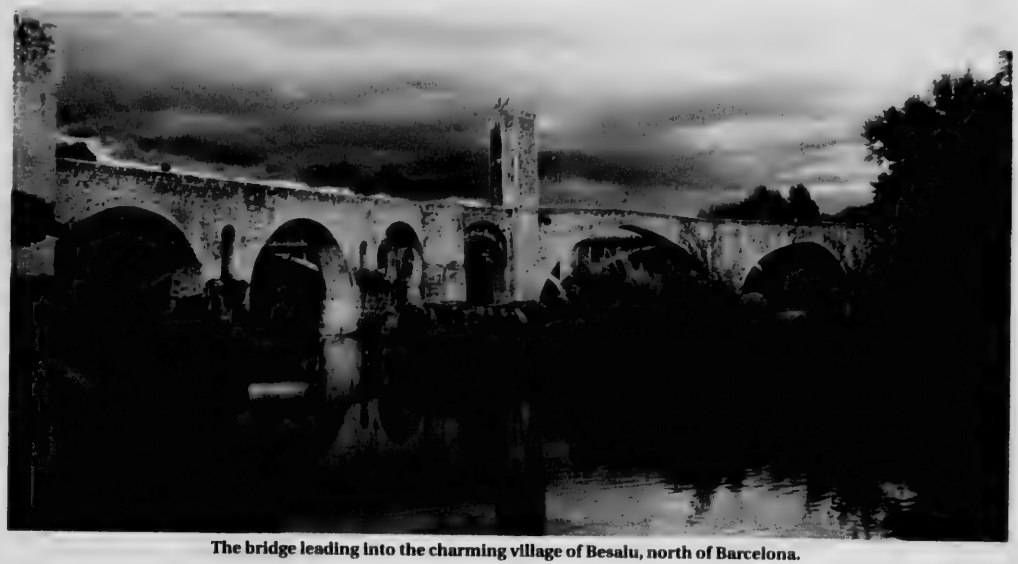

The bridge leading into the charming village of Besalu, north of Barcelona.

Barcelona's allure is usually associated with its strong affinity for fiestas, siestas, tapas and the Mediterranean lifestyle. It's also known for its gorgeous architecture and "Moderniste" movement, which was led by the famous, Antoni Gaudí and his contemporaries during the end of the 19th century. What visitors sometimes don't realize, however, is that it's also a city with a rich and elaborate connection to Judaism and Jewish culture.

Although today the city currently has a population of approximately 5,000 Jews, centuries ago it was one of the world's largest and most prosperous Jewish communities. The 12th and 13th centuries were considered the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry and Jews comprised a mainly affluent, 15 to 20 per cent of the population. To give it some perspective, modern-day North America is approximately 2 per cent Jewish, and Barcelona today is less than .01 per cent. Medieval Jews were extremely successful and held occupations mainly as skilled labourers, doctors, advisors to the royal court, and money-lenders (a profession that was off limits to Catholics and Muslims at the time) providing their services to all levels of society, including the kings and queens to finance their wars and conquests.

Everything changed however, when in the 15th century, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella's Inquisition called for the expulsion of all Jews from Spain. As a result, it's hard to find a lot of tangible evidence of a Jewish existence in the country today.

That being said, if you know where to go and how to explore there are various historic sites and small towns that shed light onto Barcelona's Jewish past.

For those traveling to Catalonia and seeking Jewish tourism, visit the 'Calls.' This is the name for the historic Jewish quarters in Barcelona, Girona, Besalu, and various other towns and villages throughout the region. Some of Catalonia's significant Jewish landmarks, which have been discovered in recent decades, include the ruins of Barcelona's ancient synagogue, (which claims to be the oldest in Europe), and Spain's only fully-preserved medieval mikvah, located in the charming village of Besalu (one and a half hours north of Barcelona by car).

The historic town of Girona is another quaint day trip from Barcelona and was once home to the great Talmudic scholar Nahmanides, or "Ramban," who in the year 1263 appeared before the king to publicly defend the tenets of Judaism. In Girona, you can stroll through what's left of its Call and visit the Museum of Jewish History, the only one of its kind in Spain, which also houses an important research centre and library.

Although Catalonia's Jewish heritage can be uncovered on one's own, the best way to really delve into this part of history is with an expert guide. For those looking to gain a full appreciation for the region's Jewish past, a knowledgeable guide can help discover hidden pearls, many of which are not obvious to the typical traveler and are concealed amongst narrow alleyways and tiny courtyards, not easily found on city maps.

For example, the Call in Barcelona has Hebrew inscriptions on some of the buildings, built with refashioned headstones from abandoned Jewish cemeteries. But they're extremely hard to find, especially if you don't even know where to look. It's also beneficial to hire a private car with your guide; if you're doing a day trip, as towns like Besalu aren't easily accessible by bus.

Some touring companies offer Jewish tours and day trips that include both Girona and Besalu, which is a very comprehensive and well rounded way to get a genuine feel for Jewish history and culture in the region.

Although there is still a very small Jewish presence in Barcelona today, it is slowly starting to revive. In the past few years the city went from having no kosher restaurants to now having three and there is a general feel that the city seems to be making subtle efforts to revitalize its long-forgotten Jewish past. There's also a growing number of modern-day 'Barcelonesos' converting to Judaism after investigating only to discover their own Sephardic roots. All of this is complemented by a gradual influx of Jews from abroad who can now choose to attend services in any of four active synagogues within the city.

Through both tourism and locals' efforts to revive the city's Jewish presence, Judaism today is being promoted in a way like it has never been before. It's looking like it will only continue to become more popular, so it's definitely worth a visit before the hidden gems of the past aren't so secretive anymore.

Sam Mednick and Jordan Susselman are North American Jews who run Hi. This is Barcelona, a private tour company specifically catered toward Jews. They particularly tailor the experiences for those looking to gain an in-depth experience into the region's history. www.hithisisbarcelona.com

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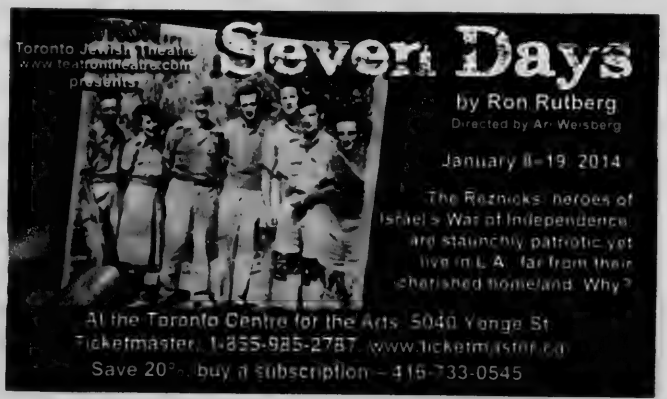
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FIFTH GENERATION OF TORONTO'S LESTER-ALEXANDER FAMILY JOINS CANADIAN FILM INDUSTRY

Toronto-based filmmaker **David Lester** got started in the film industry about five years ago with a position in the rights management department of Alliance Atlantis Films. The 30-year-old has also worked in the area of children's programming for Cookie Jar Entertainment before moving "to the production side" on projects for CBC, IMAX and others. As an independent filmmaker, he's currently in pre-production for a short film titled *Frozen Marbles*.

Remarkably, David is the fifth generation of his family involved in the film industry in Toronto. His father, **Brian Lester,** was a film distributor who supplied movies to drive-in theatres across Ontario – "I think the biggest picture he gave them was *The Graduate*" – and also booked indie films into theatres across the province. His grandfather, **Lionel Lester**, was a pioneering film distributor who worked at 20th Century Fox until 1948 and then ran a national booking company; he was the first to import Italian films for Toronto's growing Italian community.

His great-grandfather, **Angell (George) Lester**, along with his brothers **Sam** and **Harry**, opened the King Theatre, the Bonita, Doric and other theatres in Toronto beginning in the silent era. Their brother-in-laws **Harry Alexander** and **Morris King** were also among the first movie theatre entrepreneurs in Toronto. David's second-great-grandfather, **David Alexander**, worked the ticket booth and candy counters at some of these early theatres in the 1910s and 1920s.

"I grew up with a strong passion for film because my dad made it his sworn duty to get me hooked on **Alfred Hitchcock** films from the age of eight," he recalls. "It took me a while to realize that this is the world I wanted to be in, but this just had to happen."

• • •

Arts in Brief

• Puppetmongers presents *Tea at the Palace*, a puppet show performed by **Ann** and **David Powell** and directed by **Sharon Weisbaum**. Suitable for adults and children aged 5 to 12. $25, $20. Tarragon Extra Space, 30 Bridgman Ave. Dec. 26 to 29. 416-531-1827, www.tarragontheatre.tickets.com

• Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre presents *Seven Days*, by **Ron Rutberg**. The play focuses on **Nathan** and **Sarah Reznick**, former fighters in the Jewish underground in pre-independence Jerusalem who moved to Los Angeles after the state of Israel was proclaimed. The play probes the reasons these fierce nationalists moved so far from their cherished homeland. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, Jan. 8 to 19, 2014. 416-781-5527

• *JewishFiction.net*, the online magazine of international Jewish fiction, has released its 12th issue. Writers of the 16 featured stories include **Tova Mirvis, Levi Aryeh Arieli, Henri Raczymow**, and **Wendy Zierler**.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *Mapping Harbord Village: Stories of a Neighbourhood* was developed by the Harbord Village Residents' Association and the Master of Museum Studies at the Faculty of Information, U. of T. On view at the Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until Dec. 15.

• *We're In The Library*, a diverse exhibition by seven Toronto artists, is the inaugural showing in the Koffler Gallery's new space in Artscape Youngplace, the former library of the Shaw Street Public School. 180 Shaw St. until Jan. 19, 2014. Admission free. www.kofflerarts.org

• The acclaimed exhibition *Mesopotamia: Inventing Our World* highlights the many cultural innovations – writing, codified law, urban planning, long-distance trade, empire-building, beer – that originated in ancient Mesopotamia more than 3,000 years ago. The exhibition continues at the Royal Ontario Museum thru Jan. 5, 2014.

Toronto film pioneers Harry Lester, Angell Lester, Sam Lester and Lionel Lester in the 1940s

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-Nicole Herrington, THE NEW YORK TIMES

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-Tom Tugend, JEWISH JOURNAL

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-Gary Goldstein, LOS ANGELES TIMES

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Jazz singer to honour grandmother

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Jazz singer Sophia Perlman will honour her South African roots when she performs African and world jazz at a benefit concert for the Stephen Lewis Foundation at Hugh's Room in Toronto on Jan.16.

The Stephen Lewis Foundation launched the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign in 2006, in response to the emerging crises faced by African grandmothers.

"My South African grandmother, Ina Perlman, was a member of the Black Sash – working against apartheid," Perlman, 28, says. "She was also the founder of a group called Operation Hunger. She would get in her station wagon with supplies and drive for days to distribute food and help women in outlying areas create their own subsistence programs so that they could support themselves.

"She would say to me, 'It's great to sit around and talk about policy, but sometimes you just have to get in the car and you have to drive and actually do something.'"

Perlman is looking forward to playing with Bruce Cassidy, a Toronto jazz trumpet player and arranger, who has lately immersed himself in South African culture.

"I always wished and hoped that I would get the chance to sing with him one day. The music will be heavily influenced by South African music, which is a music that has been part of my growing up. One of my favourite singers when I was little was Miriam Makeba." Makeba, or Mama Africa, was a Grammy-Award winning singer and civil rights activist who died in 2008.

"This benefit will be a way to honour the things that my grandmother instilled in me," Perlman says.

Perlman grew up in Toronto's Kensington Market area. Her skill as an improviser has made her a featured singer with some of the top ensembles and musicians in the country, and she has become a fixture of the Ontario jazz and blues scene.

"I remember while growing up I listened to klezmer music and went to lots of festivals and parades. Being exposed to that type of music at a really young age set the stage for me," Perlman said.

"I started singing when I was a little kid, and I did lots of theatre and sang in choirs. Music is something that I've always done; it's been part of my life one way or the other and my parents really supported it. They are both musical people and are involved in the music community. They gave me lots of opportunities to explore and figure out my own voice, and what I wanted to do with it. My dad plays guitar and writes songs and my mom plays piano. As a singer, my musical tastes are pretty eclectic. I like songs that are meant for singing," said Perlman.

Early choral training and a knack for picking out harmony nurtured in Perlman a deep love for singing with others.

"I studied early childhood music at the Royal Conservatory of Music. I was a member of the Canadian Children's Opera Company from the time that I was seven years old right up until the end of my second year of college. That was my foundation for my vocal training. I completed the jazz program at Humber College in the spring of 2007 and have been working as a musician ever since."

In addition to performing and touring with her own quartet, Perlman is collaborating with numerous artists and ensembles, including husband, Adrean Farrugia, who plays piano. Her most recent recording is one she did with him, *Alive at Musideum.*

Sophia Perlman will be performing at Hugh's Room, 2261 Dundas St. W., Toronto on Jan.16. at 8 p.m. For tickets call 416-531-6604 or visit hughsroom.com.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Volunteer brings charity home from Nepal

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Kids in a daycare Josh Broadman visited in the slums of Kathmandu

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Josh Broadman had an eye-opening experience when he volunteered at an orphanage in Pokhara, Nepal last summer.

The Montreal-native travelled there hoping to gain some perspective on life, and he wasn't left disappointed.

One night, he went for a walk, and saw four kids huddled on the side of the street. There they stood looking hungry with no shoes on and no parents in sight.

"It was heartbreaking to see these kids who weren't being taken care of," he said. "I brought them some food and it was a heartwarming moment for me."

But that wasn't enough. He knew there were many other kids who needed to fill their bellies, and he couldn't do it all himself.

So he approached a local Pokhara restaurant called Tea Time Bamboostan.

"I proposed the idea that they allow their customers to, once they get their bill, leave a little extra money to feed the homeless families in the area every morning," he said.

Although he was pleased with the results, he knew it wasn't enough. "It's not going to help them," he said. "It's just making them dependent [on the program]."

He wanted to help educate the kids, so they could help themselves.

He decided to partner with the Namaste Children's House orphanage where he volunteered, to help educate the impoverished children, particularly through the orphanage's scholarship programs. He works with the Namaste Community Foundation to turn his goals into reality.

Now, back at home in Ottawa, where he studies science at the University of Ottawa, Broadman is continuing his fundraising venture. Though he's no longer working with the Tea Time restaurant, he has kept the name of his fundraiser Tea Time for the Homeless.

"'Tea time' has a deeper meaning," he said. "It's a time where you can kind of relax and not deal with the daily stresses of life."

By focusing on fundraising for scholarships, he's hoping to reduce the children's stress regarding how they could fund their education.

At the orphanage, he had the chance to hear many people's life-stories. Even though they were children, so many of them had such heartbreaking experiences.

He recalled working on an application on behalf of an eight-year-old girl who the staff was hoping to bring in to the orphanage. Her father had travelled to India to find work, but he didn't make it back alive. Her mother abandoned her, and her caregivers, her grandmother and her uncle, were both dying.

He wrote a letter to the board asking for a spot for this girl, but in the end, there wasn't enough room for her and she was turned away.

"They really tried to get her in but there has to be space," he said, adding that he hasn't heard what has happened to the girl since.

That story fuelled his desire to raise as much money as possible for the foundation. He's hoping the money will go to expanding the orphanage, providing scholarships, as well as setting up a women's empowerment centre, and other institutions that would improve the quality of life for those in the community.

He began his fundraiser with a goal of $5,000 – a good amount that is still realistic, he said. Although he hasn't yet reached that goal, the donations have been coming in much quicker than he expected. He raised almost $1,800 in the first month through an online campaign, with very little promotion.

He's hoping once university finals are done for the year, he can ramp up his efforts. He's planning a campaign to get talk show host Ellen Degeneres' attention through having as many people as possible email her about the foundation at the same time.

"I know it sounds crazy, but go big or go home," he said.

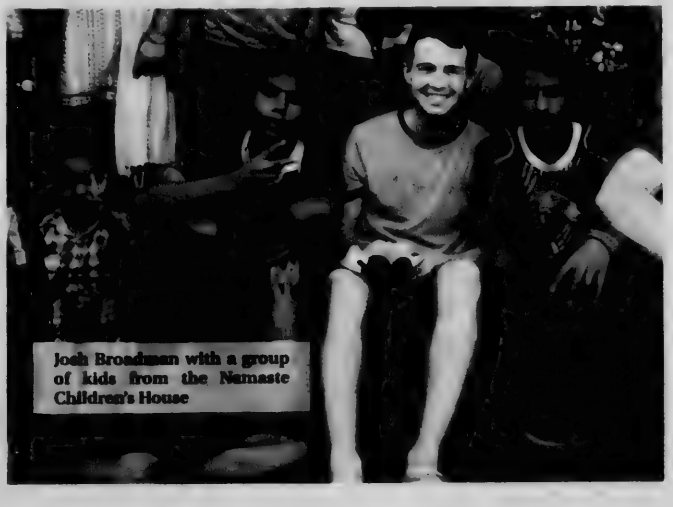
Although the 20-year-old doesn't think he'll make a career fundraising, he knows it'll always be a part of his life.

"I'm always going to want to travel and make a difference," he said.

And even though he doesn't get anything in return for his efforts, it's really about the satisfaction of knowing he's helping out those less fortunate than himself.

"It makes me happy," he said. "It's pure selfish happiness."

To learn more, visit gofundme.com/teatimeforthehomeless.



Josh Broadman with a group of kids from the Namaste Children's House

Deadline reminder: Dec. 16 is the deadline for the issues of Dec. 26 and Jan. 9. *The CJN* is not publishing an issue on Jan. 2. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Thursday, Dec. 12

NETWORKING FORUM

Job seekers are invited to an employer panel and networking forum organized by JVS Toronto with representatives from Deloitte, Questrade, Royal Bank of Canada and CGA-Ontario, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Lebovic Jewish Community Campus. Pre-registration required, at hmartins@jvstoronto.org or 416-661-3010.

WHO WROTE THE TORAH?

Three rabbis from the Conservative movement discuss "Who wrote the Torah?", 7:30 p.m., Beth David Synagogue.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Beth Emeth Synagogue invites women of all ages to an evening of board and card games, 8 p.m. $3/$5.

Saturday, Dec. 14

B'NAI SHALOM

B'nai Shalom Congregation, a Conservative egalitarian congregation in Peel Region, meets today. Call 905-901-9889 or www.bnaishalom.ca.

BOOK SIGNING

Dr. Sharon Baltman signs copies of her memoir, *Escape From the Bedside*, 9 a.m.- noon, Wychwood Barns, 601 Christie St.

SEPHARDIC HALACHAH

Dr. Marc Shapiro discusses "Rav Ovadiah Yosef and the Revival of Sephardic Halachah," Or Chaim Yeshiva, 7:30 p.m., www.torahinmotion.org.

Sunday, Dec. 15

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

Ella Burakowski, *The CJN's* Ask Ella columnist, has written a novel based on her uncle David Gold's experiences during the Holocaust. Ella is introducing David, who will speak at Ayin L'Tzion Congregation, Netivot HaTorah Day School, 18 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, 7:30 p.m.

LEARNING TORAH

Dr. Marc Shapiro discusses "Learning Torah on Christmas Eve," Bnai Torah Congregation, 465 Patricia Ave., 9:15 a.m. www.torahinmotion.org.

Tuesday, Dec. 17

VISIONS FOR CANADA

Chris Alexander, minister of citizenship and immigration, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 7 p.m. Advance registration required. Email RSVP@bethtikvahtoronto.org or 416-221-3433.

Wednesday, Dec. 18

ARAB LABOR: A COMEDY

Watch the Israeli TV show *Arab Labor* and enjoy drinks with New Israel Fund of Canada at Camera Bar, 1028 Queen St. W., 7 p.m. Free but RSVP to atarah@nifcan.org.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

The Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles shows a movie about the Israeli Quilters Association, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Sinai. New members welcome. www.pomegranateguild.ca.

Other News

GAMES NIGHT

Congregation Bnai Torah holds a games night with games, food, prizes and a silent auction, Dec. 21 at 8 p.m. $20/$25. For tickets, call 416-226-3700, ext. 21.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for a female volunteer to assist during swim time at the Holland Bloorview Pool, Mondays, 6 p.m. The volunteer doesn't need to be a strong swimmer, but must be comfortable in shallow water. Call **Mille Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org.

NARAYEVER CENTENNIAL

First Narayever Synagogue celebrates its centennial next year and is looking for memorabilia (photos, documents, newsletters etc.), as well as memories and stories from people who were connected with the shul or surrounding neighbourhood. Call 416-927-0546, or email centennialcelebrations@narayever.ca.

MORASHA CLASSES

Barrie Wilson teaches a class on "Reading Paul's Letters through Jewish Eyes," 11:15 a.m., Jan. 8-Feb. 5, Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call **Loretta** to register, 416-789-7400.

Continued on page 37

Continued from page 36

TALLIT WORKSHOP

Temple Har Zion holds a one-day tallit-making workshop Jan. 19. Register before Dec. 20. Email lisarosefox@gmail.com.

YIDDISH SONGS

Singer **Faye Kellerstein** performs a program of Yiddish songs, accompanied by **Jordan Klapman,** Dec. 22 at 1:30 p.m., Kensington Place Retirement Home, 866 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-636-9555

HEBREW CLASSES

Temple Sinai offers Hebrew classes for adult beginners (starting Jan. 14) and intermediates starting Jan. 9. Call 416-487-3281.

Conversational Hebrew ulpan method with **Yael Lev** is offered at Pride of Israel Synagogue. Learn modern vocabulary and discuss current events, for intermediate students (Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.) and advanced students (Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.). Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

QUICK PICK SHABBAT

Choose from 4 different topics of learning at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. Classes include "The Roots of Jewish Prayer; Conservative Judaism and the Pew Study; Jewish Music in the Synagogue and Images of Women in Jewish Religious Life."

SHABBAT SHIRAH

Cantors David Edwards, Tibor Kovari, David Rosen and **Eyal Bitton,** accompanied by a live band, perform Israeli and chassidic melodies for Shabbat Shirah, Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue.

BAT MITZVAH CLUB

Chabad of Markham's bat mitzvah club begins Jan. 12. To register, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

SILK PAINTING WORKSHOPS

Paula Miller leads a 7-part series on painting on silk. Create something special for your home for Shabbat. Starts Jan. 14 at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $30/$35. Call 416-633-3838.

SHABBAT SHIRAH WORKSHOP

Adam David discusses "Middle Eastern and Afro-Latin Influences on Modern Jewish Music," at a Shabbat Shirah brunch, Beth Emeth Synagogue, Jan. 12, 10 a.m.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

High-Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents in a high-conflict situation. Not for individuals in an abusive situation. Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m.

Dating in Mid-Life: A workshop for men and women over 40 who have been single for 2 or more years. Dec. 12.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244 or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Dec. 18. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Wednesdays mah-jong 12:30 p.m.; Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Dec. 12, **Allen Kula** discusses "Medication Use and Ask a Pharmacist," 1:30 p.m.; Dec. 17, **Corey Keeble,** curator emeritus of the ROM, discusses "The Titanic: The 'Unsinkable' Ship," 10 a.m.; Dec. 19, **Jackie Hickey** discusses "Roadmap to Healthy Aging," 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com. or ext. 4103.

Register now for winter programs: **Beverlee Swayze** discusses "The History of Symphony," Jan. 21, 1 p.m.

Iain Scott discusses "Great Canadian Opera Singers," starting Jan. 16.

Kevin Courrier discusses "Produced and Abandoned 111: Yet More Best Movies You Have Never Seen," starting Jan. 15.

To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Register now for winter fun and learning. Pottery classes start Jan. 8; Klezmer ensemble begins Jan. 14; Hebrew Institute begins Jan. 20; Media Mondays looking at the work of Steven Spielberg starts Jan. 20; fiction and poetry workshops start Jan. 20.

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Mapping Harbord Village: Stories of a Neighbourhood, developed by the Harbord Village Residents' Association and the master of museum studies program in the University of Toronto's faculty of information is on display in the gallery until Dec. 15.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Got Shabbat? Shabbat program (songs, games and stories) for children ages 0-4 with an adult starts Jan. 10. Ext. 388.

Aviva Chernick hosts a symposium and celebration in honour of Shabbat Shirah featuring local musicians and leaders of prayer, Jan. 12, 1-6 p.m. $15/$20. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Social club for singles 35-50, Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. $16/$20. Preregistration required. Call ext. 3006 or email **Andrea**, adaiam@srcentre.ca.

RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS: **Na'amat Canada Toronto recently held its annual tribute to members and Chanukah party. Mark Breslin of Yuk Yuk's spoke about his trip to Israel with six Canadian comics, a trip that led to the production of a movie, *A Universal Language*. From left are tribute chair Sheri Goldberg, Na'amat Canada Toronto president Laurel Wiseman, senior fundraising and development officer Lori Nusbaum, Breslin, Na'amat Canada national president Orit Tobe, Na'amat Canada Toronto member Faigie Libman and vice-president Gerry Anklewicz.**

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FAMILY MOMENTS

MAZEL TOV!

מזל טוב

Mazel tov to Sybil & Gerald Berley on their 69th wedding anniversary. With love from your children in Toronto, Calgary, and Melbourne and Perth, Australia.

Wendy & George Hutman and Liane & Michael Eliesen are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Robyn & Daniel. A fall wedding is planned.

Mazel tov Mom & Dad on your 40th wedding anniversary. Love, Chana, Jason , Miriam and Leiba.

Welcome Xavier Connor! Proud parents and brother are Esther, Daniel and Alexander. Happy grandparents are Mrs. M. Oh, Brenda & Rick Bornstein.

Mazel tov to Sargis on his 17th birthday. Love, Mom, Dad, Grandma and brother Zaven.

Mazel tov Stefan Smith & Deborah Linsky, who were married in London, England. Love, Henry Smith & Helen Schreibman-Smith, Robert & Jean Linsky, and families.

Email your digital photos to cblackman@thecjn.ca or go online to www.CJNews.com and click the "Family Moments"

Humanities and music help in health-care training

Senior Side of Life
Michael Gordon

Recently there has been much written about the many health and cognitive benefits to be derived from music and the study of the humanities. The Alzheimer Society of Toronto recently introduced a program to provide personalized music to individuals living with dementia, using small iPods programmed with music deemed to be of particular suitability to them. It promises to perhaps change the nature of one method of intervention for those living with dementia that may improve their quality of life, even if they have severe cognitive and behavioural challenges.

Given this background, I was pleased to get a review copy of a wonderful new book soon to be released: *Creative Arts in Humane Medicine*, edited by Cheryl McLean, a highly regarded advocate and writer in the field of enhancing ways to bring the humanities into health-care practices. The title of the book resonated with my own views of the importance of the humanities in health care, for the practitioners as well as for the patients, and having met the author some years ago, I was flattered at the opportunity to review the book.

I can attest to the importance of the humanities on my medical education and practice. I recall vividly how reading A.J. Cronin's *The Citadel* in 1960 transformed my educational direction from engineering, which had for years been my life's goal, to medicine. With a father who was an engineer and taught me "how things work," and my high school education at the well-known engineering preparatory Brooklyn Technical High School, it was a major change in educational direction – one that a novel did for me. I keep copies of the book in my office and give them to exemplary students and medical trainees.

I studied medicine at the University of St. Andrews medical school's Dundee campus. One of my first purchases was an inexpensive amplifier and basic 33-rpm turntable, which sat on an open cardboard box through my five years of medical school and six months of internship in Aberdeen, Scotland.

With ample access in Britain to inexpensive, eastern European recordings, especially from Czechoslovakia, but totally unknown to the Communist-fearful United States, I gradually accumulated a modest, high-quality music library. It was my practice to rest after supper while listening to classical music before waking up at about 8 or 9 p.m. and then studying for the next few hours – the musical interlude relaxing me after a challenging day of classes.

Sometimes I also listened to music while I studied, depending on the subject matter: anatomy was more conducive to musical accompaniment than physiology.

It was therefore with great eagerness that I read the McLean book, which covers diverse approaches to the arts, music and humanities in all its forms and the study and practice of medicine. The real challenge is this: if it is assumed, as I believe is the case, that the study of humanities and the use of music enhances the abilities and satisfaction of those in the health-care professions, what are the best way to achieve those humanity and musical experiences?

The focus in the last few years on trying to enhance health-care professionals' sensitivities to the humanities has been to provide exposure during their professional health-care education. Some espouse providing the exposure prior to entering medical school so that the foundational core will be planted as early as possible before the significant stresses of health-care practice occur and to prepare for the profound human experiences of these professions.

As someone who was exposed to a robust humanities and musical education prior to medical school, I would opt for the former. But I would continue that process during undergraduate and post-graduate health-care education, in the hope that the *human* aspect of humanities is emphasized, as it will be beneficial to health-care practitioners and their patients.

The Canadian Jewish news HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Deadlines for the December 26 issue are as follows:
Display Advertising - Wed. Dec. 18 at 11:00 a.m.
Classified and Organizations - Tues. Dec. 17 at 11:00 a.m.

****There will no January 2 edition****
We will resume printing in the new year with the January 9 edition.

The CJN offices will be closed the week of December 23 and will re-open on December 30.

Make mine Mexican

Randy Fingrut
Special to The CJN

Mexican cuisine is a favourite of mine, but here in Canada, it's hard to locate good Mexican restaurants. Nevertheless, there's good news – with a little exploration, we find that our grocery stores are slowly starting to carry more and more Mexican ingredients: chilies, spices, grains, tortillas and canned goods. Now more than ever, we can prepare distinctive, colourful, rich, spicy and exciting Mexican dishes whenever we wish. With a little ingenuity we can also add some Mexican flair to many of our everyday dishes. So stock your pantry and make dinnertime a fiesta!

BEAN AND CHEESE BURRITOS

1 15.5-oz. can of black beans, rinsed and drained
2 cans refried beans (Eden organic or Amy's organic kosher refried beans available at Whole Foods and other stores)
1/2 tsp. cumin
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 tomato, seeded and diced
2 green onions, chopped
1 cup 1 per cent sour cream
1 cup shredded Tex Mex blend cheese (or shredded cheese of your choice)
10-12 small corn tortillas
1/2 cup shredded cheese for garnish

Preheat oven to 425. In a bowl, combine beans, refried beans, cumin, salt, pepper and cilantro. Set aside. Take 1-1/2 to 2 tbsp. of the black bean mixture and place it in the centre of the tortilla. Sprinkle on some diced tomato and green onions, one tbsp. of sour cream, then one tbsp. of cheese on top of the black bean mixture.

To roll the burrito: Hold the filled tortilla in your palm so that the weight of the filling pulls it tight. If your burrito busts through now, it will certainly burst later. If not, continue. Fold one side toward the centre. Fold the other side toward the centre. Roll the bottom (the end nearest you) up toward the top. Make sure not to let the food squeeze out. Keep rolling it up. Place on a parchment-lined baking dish, seam side down, about 1/2 inch apart. Sprinkle with additional cheese. Bake in oven for 15-20 minutes until tortillas start to turn golden brown. Let cool for 5 minutes and then serve with salsa and/or sour cream.

MEXICAN QUICHE

2 9-in. frozen baked deep-dish pie shells, baked at 350 for 10 minutes
1 large zucchini, diced
1 large green or red pepper, chopped
1 tbsp. diced green chilies (optional)
3 large green onions, sliced
2 cups four-cheese Tex Mex blend grated cheese (or shredded cheese of your choice)
6 eggs lightly beaten
1-1/4 cups mild salsa
1/4 cup 1 per cent sour cream
1 cup milk
additional cheese for garnish approximately 1/2 cup

Preheat oven to 375. Place pie shells on a cookie sheet.

Sauté red and green pepper, zucchini and onions until soft.

Sprinkle cheese, green and red pepper and onion mixture onto bottom of pie shell. Combine eggs, salsa, diced chilies (if using), sour cream and milk in small bowl until blended. Pour into pie shell. Sprinkle with additional cheese.

Bake for 50-55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between centre and edge comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 10 minutes before serving.

MEXICAN STYLE SALMON

6 4-oz. salmon fillets
1 650-ml jar chunky salsa, mild
zest of 2 limes
juice of 2 limes
1/2 cup cilantro, chopped.

Preheat oven to 350. Line a baking dish with parchment paper. Place salmon fillets an inch apart. Mix salsa with zest, juice and cilantro, then pour the mixture over the salmon. Cover salmon with additional parchment paper and cover baking dish with a lid or oven-proof dish. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until fish begins to flake when tested with a fork. Open parchment carefully as hot steam will escape.

FAMOUS NYC RESTAURANT BROILED LEMON CHICKEN

• 2 chickens cut into 1/8's • 1 c fresh lemon juice
• 1/2 tbl. red wine vinegar • 1/4 tsp. dried oregano
• 4 cloves garlic, peeled, minced
• 1/2 c olive oil • Salt & freshly ground black pepper
• 1/4 c chopped fresh parsley

Spray a baking rack and place over a baking sheet in oven; preheat broiler at least 15 min. In large measuring cup, whisk together lemon juice, oil, vinegar, garlic, oregano. Add salt, pepper.

Place chicken skin side down carefully on hot oven rack; broil 15 min. Turn chicken skin side up; broil until crisp and golden, about 15 min more. Remove chicken from broiler. When cool enough to handle, cut into serving size pieces. Place chicken in baking pan; pour lemon mixture over chicken. Broil additional 5-7 min. on each side until chicken is browned and cooked through. Sprinkle with parsley.

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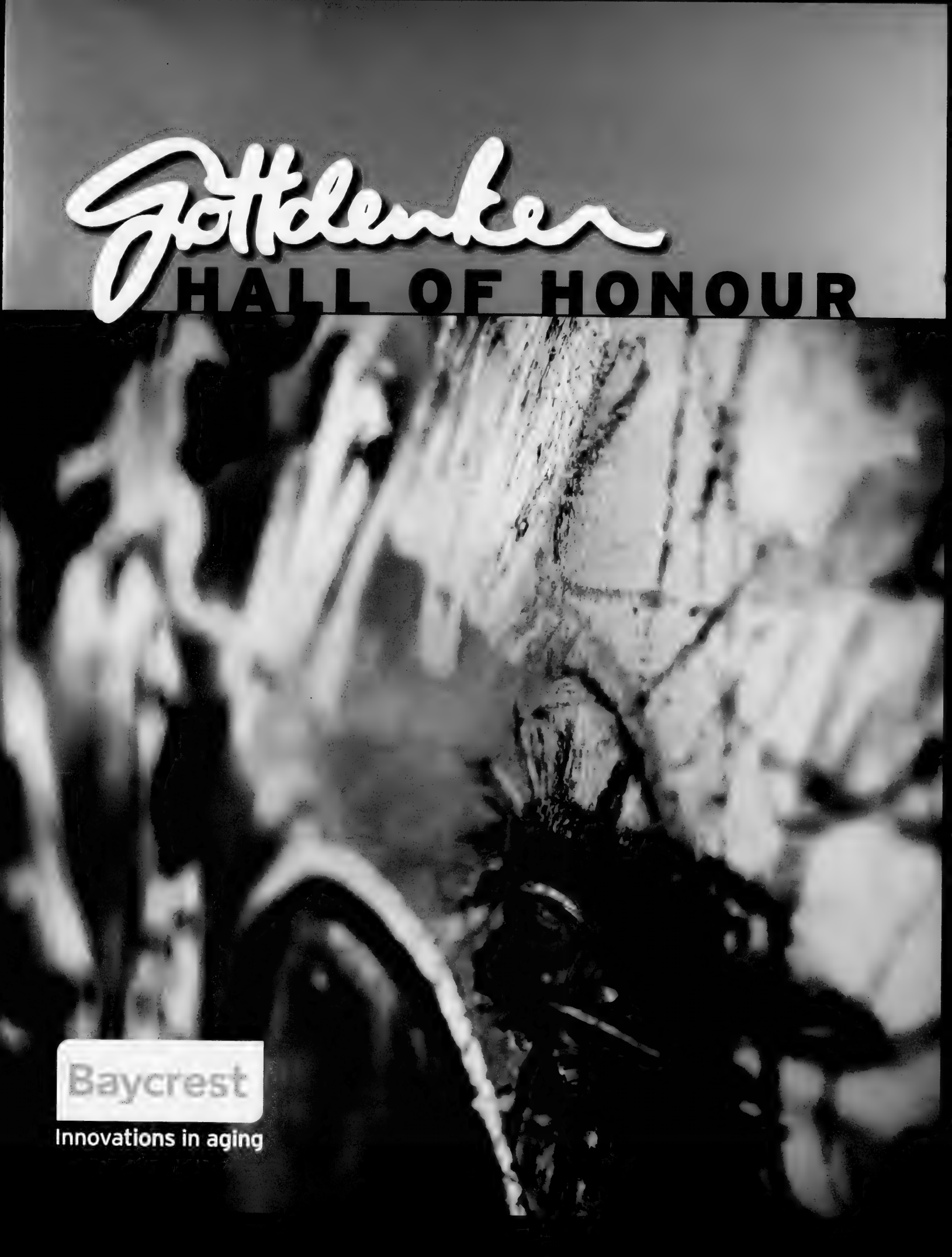
Gottlieb
HALL OF HONOUR



Baycrest

Innovations in aging

YOU ARE YOUR BRAIN

Baycrest

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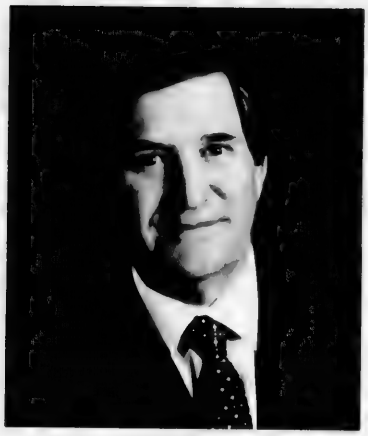
YOUR INVESTMENT IS OUR FUTURE

A message from Baycrest Leadership



Dear Friends,

Each year, we gather together to celebrate the many people who have generously donated to Baycrest through endowment funds and planned gifts. This event is a chance for us to reconnect with friends, show our love for Baycrest and thank our donors, who are making a difference in the lives of so many.

Contributing to an endowment fund or planned gift is a powerful act of giving. It shows support for Baycrest's work and a commitment to the health of future generations. It's an investment in our families, our friends and our community.

Anne Frank once wrote, "No one has ever become poor from giving." This statement rings true today. The generosity of our donors supports the research, education and care that affects us all - now and for years to come.

By celebrating the charitable individuals and families who share our vision, we honour the spirit and resonance of their philanthropy.

Please join me in thanking our generous donors, tonight and always.

Sincerely,

Garry Foster

Garry Foster
Interim President
Baycrest Foundation

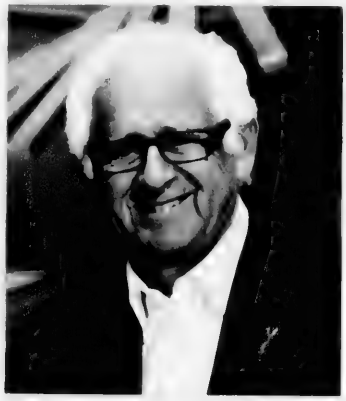
Gottdenker HALL OF HONOUR

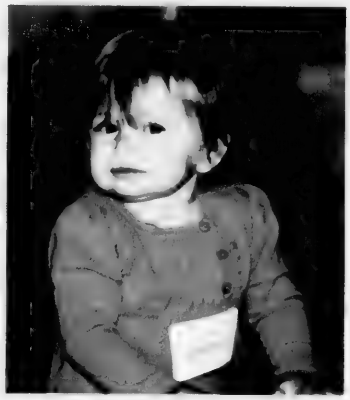
BAYCREST FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT FUNDS

We are pleased to welcome you into the Gottdenker Hall of Honour at Baycrest. The donors acknowledged in this booklet are recognized for their generous support of Baycrest through the creation of new funds or for upgrading existing funds. Each donor listed has created or enhanced a fund which provides a lasting tribute to family members or special individuals.

By creating an endowment fund at Baycrest, you are joining a very special group of supporters. Your fund creates a legacy that demonstrates care for others and support for innovations in aging and brain health. You are helping to provide stable funding for our crucial care, research and education initiatives, now and into the future.

Thank you for helping us revolutionize the way we age and transform the aging experience. We know we do so with the commitment and support of donors like you, whose shared vision and ongoing investment continue to be our success.





Joseph Gottdenker (second from the left) is grateful for the care his mother received at Baycrest and has generously given back to the organization as part of his legacy to benefit future generations, including his granddaughter, Lily Gottdenker (right).

GOTTDENKER HALL OF HONOUR

The Gottdenker Hall of Honour, made possible through the leadership and generosity of Joseph Gottdenker, exemplifies and reminds us of the incredible community members who help to make Baycrest a world leader in aging and brain health. Opened in June 2011, the Gottdenker Hall of Honour proudly recognizes benefactors who make significant lifetime contributions to Baycrest. This tranquil, innovative space not only acknowledges major supporters, but acts as a hub of local activity, enabling donors to commemorate loved ones through their commitment to Baycrest.

The Gottdenker Hall of Honour celebrates you, your family, your history and your ongoing support of Baycrest.

My belief in Baycrest and my desire to help secure its future led me to support the Gottdenker Hall of Honour – a new approach to recognition that is building momentum in giving. It is extremely meaningful for me to give back in this way and to help Baycrest achieve its ambition to be the global leader in aging and brain health.

– Joseph Gottdenker, Benefactor, Gottdenker Hall of Honour

ENDOWMENT FUND AND SAM RUTH LEGACY SOCIETY CATEGORIES

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BENEFACTOR
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TRUSTEE
$50,000 - $99,999

$36,000 - $49,999

$18,000 - $35,999

$10,000 - $17,999

VISIONARY

Kunin-Lunenfeld Applied Research Endowment Fund

Continuing a family tradition

Continuing in the philanthropic tradition initiated by our grandparents Samuel and Elizabeth Lunenfeld, our parents, Reuben and Sybil Kunin, created the Kunin-Lunenfeld applied research endowment fund. Our grandfather suffered from Alzheimer's disease and took part in a variety of programs at Baycrest. Seeing the wonderful endeavours that were taking place at Baycrest, our parents decided it was important to establish an applied research endowment fund to support the continuation of that great work. Our family will continue to follow the wonderful work being conducted at Baycrest.

The Savlov Family Endowment Funds

PILLAR

Allan & Elizabeth Rodda Endowment Fund

Anne Tanenbaum Endowment Fund for the Kick Start Grants Program

In loving memory of a remarkable woman

Anne Tanenbaum was an individual of great merit and distinction. She was a philanthropist dedicated to improving the lot of mankind and a concerned Jew who sought to ensure Jewish survival through the realization of the Zionist dream. Charming and modest, gracious and generous, she was truly one of her generation's women of valour. Her strong belief in *tzedakah* drove her to set an international example of generosity and philanthropy.

BENEFACTOR

Faye & Al Mintz Family Endowment Fund

Supporting Baycrest in loving memory

Al and the late Faye Mintz were life-long supporters of Baycrest. When Faye passed away in February 2011, all memorial donations were directed to Baycrest, where she was an active volunteer for many years. Faye and Al led by example for their children and grandchildren by giving generously to their community and family throughout their lives. As part of the Baycrest family, their hope is that their legacy will inspire others.

TRUSTEE

Stuart & Paula Cohen Alzheimer's Research Endowment Fund

Al & Sorcy Gorlick Family Endowment Fund

Supporting outstanding care

Al and Sarah "Sorcy" Gorlick were strong supporters of social justice and charities. As active and generous volunteers, improving healthcare across local, provincial and federal levels was of utmost importance. The Gorlick family has a strong and personal connection to the Apotex Centre where Sorcy lived and received wonderful care for 12 years and where Al was a special visitor every day. The family is grateful for the dedication of the staff.

Himel Family Endowment Fund

Proud to support Baycrest's research in health and aging

The B.A. Himel Family Fund was formed to financially support the many Toronto institutions that Ben, Edith and their families believed in. We are grateful to Baycrest for its support to members of our family during their aging process. We will continue to support Baycrest.

Harry & Ethel Wasserman 65th Wedding Anniversary Endowment Fund

SPONSOR

Sidney & Gina Brown Endowment Fund

Cohen & Morrison Mood Disorder Research Endowment Fund

Sylvia & Joseph Cohen Family Research Endowment Fund

Continuing to support Baycrest

This fund is a tribute to loving parents Sylvia and Joe from their children Miriam and Harvey Freedman and Joan and Zane Cohen. Sylvia volunteered at Baycrest, faithfully delivering Meals-on-Wheels and later received attentive care in the home and hospital. Joe was loved and respected by all who knew him. Sylvia and Joe would have been proud to know that their family dedicated a fund to support innovative research at Baycrest in their names.

Hyman, Doris & Mervin Cooper Endowment Fund

Allan & Susan Fenwick Endowment Fund

Jennie & Bernat Goldberger Family Endowment Fund

Giving from their hearts

Although Jennie and Bernat support many causes and charities, Baycrest has always held a special place in both of their hearts. Jennie and Bernat recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary and requested all donations be made to Baycrest. Having visited Baycrest many times over the years to see Jennie's mother and sister, the Goldbergers feel it's an honour and a privilege to be able to give back to such a meaningful institution.

Henry & Helen Goldenberg Alzheimer's Research Endowment Fund

Saul & Mildred Kelman Medical Research Endowment Fund

Supporting Baycrest's future

Gilda and Marty are delighted to have established The Saul & Mildred Kelman Endowment Fund in memory of Marty's parents. This fund is dedicated to research, as Saul and Mildred considered it to be an important investment for future generations. It is hoped this fund can make a contribution that will help enhance someone's life or one day find a cure for dementia.

Nitza Kojfman Endowment Fund

In loving memory

"That though the radiance which was once so bright be now forever taken from my sight. Though nothing can bring back the hour of splendor in the grass, glory in the flower. We will grieve not, rather find strength in what remains behind." - William Wordsworth

Gottlieb HALL OF HONOUR

Leib & Toby Krieger Hospital Equipment Endowment Fund

Honouring Baycrest's commitment to research

Leib and Toby Krieger survived the Holocaust and worked hard to achieve a fulfilling life in Canada. They helped many relatives from Europe start new lives by sharing what they had. As they prospered, they always continued to think of others. Baycrest hospital's dedication to caring for others and commitment to research were always close to their hearts.

Ben & Sylvia Smith Endowment Fund

In praise of Baycrest

The Ben and Sylvia Smith Endowment Fund was established to honour our parents. Baycrest provided excellent care to our father in his time of need as well as support for our mother who was a volunteer at Baycrest. We are forever grateful to Baycrest.

GUARDIAN

Sara & Morris Botnik Endowment Fund

In appreciation of excellent care

The Sara and Morris Botnik Endowment Fund was established by their children, Hanna Shlesinger and Ruth Ehrlich, in thanks for the care given to their parents during their years at Baycrest.

Jean Brown Endowment Fund

Supporting the exceptional programs at the Community Day Centre

The Jean Brown Endowment Fund was established in honour of Jean, who loved and participated in the Community Day Centre's social, creative and cultural activities. Our family is pleased that this fund will assist community clients in need, allowing them to participate in the exceptional Baycrest Day Centre programs.

Supporting Alzheimer's Research

The Sally Caplan Alzheimer's Research Endowment Fund was established by her family to honour the memory of a remarkable woman who was taken too soon by Alzheimer's. In establishing this fund, it is her family's hope that Sally's belief in helping others will continue to live on.

My Daughter Linda Ahava Feldman

I write as a parent, living with the loss of a child.
How can I leave the memory of my precious daughter to obscurity?
How can the tragic accident that took her life be her only marker?
She was a beautiful young woman, a dedicated and caring professional.
As a social worker in Jerusalem, she administered to the people she loved in the city she loved.

For our Linda to be truly remembered, we sought and found the embodiment of her life's work. We chose Baycrest to honour her memory with the establishment of the Linda Ahava Feldman Fund in support of Music Therapy at Baycrest.

Proud to support Baycrest's programs and dedicated staff

The family of Bess Godfrey will always be thankful to Baycrest for the compassionate care provided to Bess during the last 13 years of her life. The family established the Philip and Bess Godfrey Endowment Fund to honour a couple whose pride and joy were their children and grandchildren. Philip and Bess were the children of immigrants from the United Kingdom and Poland respectively. Philip was an employee of the L.C.B.O. and Bess spent her time as a political advisor. The Godfrey family is honoured to support the programs and research carried out at Baycrest.

Gottdenker HALL OF HONOUR

Happy to support such a special place

Having visited many friends and family living at Baycrest through the years, our parents Jack and Marilyn Goldman were strong supporters of the institution. Baycrest has played an important role in helping our family cope with and understand the passage of time. With grace, kindness and dignity, the people at Baycrest provide a bridge and a way closer to those we cherish when they're in need of a little extra patience and love.

Fund's growth enables more to be helped

Annie and Joe Isenman spent a fulfilling life together which included working side-by-side in a ladieswear business and spending time with their son David. Their Jewish cultural home was the Borochov/Labour Zionist Alliance movement, where they raised money for Jewish philanthropic causes, including Baycrest. Annie and Joe both benefited from Baycrest services – Joe at the Apotex Centre and Annie at the Terraces. The Joseph Isenman Covenant Fund was established in 2001 to support research activities at Baycrest. Annie's name was added when she passed away in 2005. Through contributions by family and friends, the fund has now reached the Guardian Endowment level.

A meaningful contribution

At the end of my teenage years, the Shirley Kofman Leap Year Fund for Rotman Research was established in my honour. Baycrest is very meaningful to me because my mother spent her last days there and was made very comfortable by the staff. Prior to becoming a resident, my mother spent numerous hours at Baycrest bringing homemade goods to friends. Baycrest is still very much a part of my life, as I am there on a regular basis dealing with my own health issues.

Linked to Baycrest and the good it does

Adele and Saul Laskin helped repair the world by giving generously both financially and of their time. As leaders in their home community of Thunder Bay, they instilled in their children – as their parents did for them – a sense of social and moral responsibility. Living in Toronto in their later years, they saw firsthand through Saul's volunteering and Adele's recuperative stay, the importance of Baycrest to the community.

Honouring the memory of beloved parents

The Max and Myna Lazer Endowment Fund was established in memory of two very special people. They were loving, dedicated and devoted parents, grandparents, siblings and friends. Myna and Max worked hard their entire lives to provide for their family. They taught their children the importance of honesty, integrity and giving to others. Myna and Max will always be missed and would be proud of the continued support for Baycrest by the fund established in their honour.

Helping others to enjoy music

Willy was an avid photographer with a fondness for the arts. Sylvia was a member of the Baycrest Women's Auxiliary and was involved with many additional charities. They both enjoyed music and loved life. We hope that this endowment fund will help bring the joy of music to individuals' lives at Baycrest.

Supporting service and care at Baycrest

Our family has a long connection with Baycrest. Our father, Jack, spent his final years there as a resident. Dora's mother, Mary (Musha) Etkin was a resident, as was her mother-in-law, Jenny Etkin. We have friends and family members who use the various services Baycrest offers and feel it's important to support this fundamental community institution.

Holocaust survivors remembered

Holocaust survivors Leslie and Olga (Olly) Nyiri left Budapest with their only daughter, Marika, during the Hungarian Revolution. Leaving behind their families and possessions, Leslie and Olly set off to Toronto where they lived out a happy life. Shortly after arriving in Canada, Marika married Bill Glied and they had three daughters - Sherry, Tammy and Michelle. Olly lived to see and play with two great-grandchildren. Leslie and Olly are remembered by three growing families.

Giving back to Baycrest

Ruth Brooks, the late Rachel and Saul Frydberg and Harry Reingewirtz, were siblings of the late Shaindel and Naftuly Reingewirtz. They were raised to know the importance of giving back to community. They are loved and missed.

Supporting Music Program Enrichment

Frances Rosenfield was an active woman, highly involved with the world around her. As a registered nurse and instructor by profession, Frances' support of Baycrest was a natural fit. At Baycrest, Frances served on more than 13 committees over a 23-year period. She was chairperson of the family advisory council and sat on several ethics councils. Her family is pleased that her covenant fund has now grown to become the Frances Rosenfield Endowment Fund, which will continue to support Baycrest's music programs on an ongoing basis.

Grateful for warm and compassionate care

This endowment fund is in memory of our beloved parents and grandparents, Harry and Molly Title. They were proud of their family and community. Their values of generosity, commitment to the Jewish community and having a strong Jewish identity have been passed down. Harry and Molly's special attachment to Baycrest is attributed to the several years they spent visiting Harry's mother, Frimit Title. She spent her last years at Baycrest, where she was well cared for by warm and compassionate staff.

Recognizing compassionate care

Our mother Ethel had two children, five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and a long and loving marriage to Murray. She resided at Baycrest where her years were joyful and purposeful, taking part in many of the activities, concerts and outings. We are grateful for the care she received there. We humbly feel that it gave her extra years of meaningful life.

The fund is now in honour of Marty, Natalie's late husband, and Ethel. We are proud to link their names and hope to continue to support Baycrest and help in whatever way we can.

In honour of the Baycrest family

Jack and Bernnie Winnick considered Baycrest family. Jack performed the *mitzvah of bikur cholim and gemilut chesed.* Jack visited the sick and the aged almost every day for more than 20 years; shmoozing, comforting, befriending and entertaining everyone he met including residents, patients, doctors and staff.

During the last 10 years of Jack's life, Baycrest became his home. Our mom Bernice spent every day visiting and caring for him along with the wonderful staff of Baycrest.

To our family, Baycrest is another word for home.

Supporting excellence in care

Ever since my mother lived at Baycrest in the late seventies and early eighties, my late husband Jack, z"l, and I have always felt closely affiliated. We are grateful to Baycrest for the excellent care it provided my mother. *Tzedakah* was, and continues to be, an important aspect of our lives, especially where Baycrest is concerned. We're proud to be one of the cogs in the wheel supporting this world-renowned and admirable institution.

PATRON

Supporting Baycrest with sincere thanks

When the hospital provided us with only 48 hours to find a palliative care hospice to move my father, ז"ל, Baycrest was there. Neither my parents nor my family were Baycrest "*machers*," but that was irrelevant. They accepted my father, ז"ל, with open arms and made the last three months of his life extremely enjoyable and comfortable. This brought great comfort to my mother, ז"ל, and our family. For these reasons, my husband and I established this fund in my parents' memory.

Furthering the vision of our parents

Knowing how deeply our parents Eleanor and Herb Baskin felt about Baycrest, it has brought us great comfort and solace setting up an endowment fund to honour their memory. In times of greatest need, Baycrest was home not only to our parents, but to generations of our family members, providing exemplary care, services and warmth in all respects. We see this as an expression of our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude and know that our parents' memory lives on through this recognition.

Devoted to family, community and tzedakah

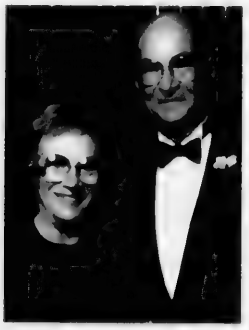
Abe Beker was a survivor of the Holocaust. Born in Lithuania, he lived through three years in the Kovno ghetto and one year in Dachau. Liberated during the Death March, he made his way to Italy before finally settling in Toronto. He was honoured by the Canadian government for leading a productive life. Charity was always foremost in his mind and he helped people immigrate to Canada. He is survived by his wife, three children, their spouses, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and two Holocaust-surviving sisters.

Supporting programs that enrich residents' lives

During his years at Baycrest, our father, Aubie Bossin, received the care he required with compassion, kindness and respect. Our mother Pearl spent her days engaged in meaningful social, cultural and creative pursuits. We are grateful to each individual who played a role in our parents' lives at the Apotex Centre. It is our hope that the important research at Baycrest will benefit individuals worldwide. Our donation supports a program that enhances residents' Sunday afternoons creatively and socially.

In loving memory

In memory of Alice Nusbaum: a woman with a huge heart, tremendous warmth and a great smile. She used these qualities to enhance the lives of those around her. She was connected to Baycrest as a frequent visitor of her mother, a volunteer and a palliative care patient. She loved life and was taken too soon from the lives of her husband, Mitch, daughters Jackie and Danielle, and sister Ruth. She will always be by our sides.



Supporting cognitive health research for an aging population

This endowment fund was established in honour of my mother, Rose Calmenson. Her generosity, love, laughter, singing and fun spirit touched everyone she met. My dad, Carl Calmenson, left us with many fond memories of having a positive outlook on life and living life to the fullest. He always reminded us to tell those you love that you love them from the moon to the stars and back again. Carl and Rose Calmenson were very special people who were married for 56 years. They were that grand couple who you would see walking down the street holding hands. Baycrest seemed the perfect place to have their names live on forever in the spirit of supporting ongoing research in cognitive health issues for an increasing, aging population.

In appreciation of great care

My beloved mother, Jean Lepofsky, was a resident at Baycrest Hospital for more than 10 years. The dedicated and professional staff was very supportive and caring to her needs. Baycrest is such an important institution for the community and deserves our admiration and support.

Honouring a mother's legacy

Our beloved mother, Bonnie Chizick, was a woman of great strength and tremendous value. She taught us the importance of family, honesty, love and to cherish and live each day to the fullest. Our mother would be proud of the legacy she has left behind and that her memory and lessons guide us every day. We are thankful to Baycrest and the palliative care team for the dignity and compassion they provided our mother and our family. This Endowment Fund is a tribute to the legacy of a wonderful lady who lives forever in our hearts.

In appreciation of Baycrest's wonderful staff and quality care

Our father, Albert, and our mother, Rose, both passed away in Baycrest's palliative unit. The compassion, care and dignity shown to our parents in the final stages of their lives, along with the kindness and sympathy given to our family, made Baycrest the perfect place to honour their memory. With this fund, we hope to support Baycrest in continuing to provide high-quality care to other patients and their families.

Proud to support excellence in research and patient care

We are truly thankful for the excellent care and outstanding support our family members have received at Baycrest. The research conducted in the field of aging and the programs and support offered at Baycrest are respected not only in our community but throughout the world. We are pleased to honour our parents' memories by creating this fund to support and improve the quality of life of the elderly for generations to come.

In appreciation of great care

Gitte Crangle spent her final days at Baycrest. We were grateful that those difficult days were made as comfortable as possible. The amount of quality time we were able to spend with our mother was in direct proportion to the level of professional care and compassion she received from the Baycrest staff. Our father, Leslie, informed us that Baycrest would be the only place for him, should the need ever arise. This fund is a testament to the high regard that the Crangle family holds for the people who make Baycrest the special place it is.

Gottlieb HALL OF HONOUR

Supporting Baycrest in loving memory

George and Belle Drutz both came from humble origins. They were strong-willed, determined, accomplished people who could appear to be tough on the outside, whilst on the inside they were incredibly caring and supportive. Their enduring marriage was based on love, respect and commitment. They were devoted parents and grandparents. Their home was open, gracious and warm, a place where everyone was made to feel welcome. They were role models and mentors, pioneers and adventurers, always involved with their community and Jewish causes. They are remembered lovingly by everyone whose lives they touched.

Thankful for excellent care

Our mother, Ida Farber, lived at Baycrest for many years. Here she received excellent care, enjoyed wonderful programs and was able to maintain a good quality of life. She was a kind, gentle, intelligent and optimistic person. Our father, Fishel Farber, the love of her life, was a person of great personal integrity who passed away at a young age. Our family has established this fund both to honour our parents and in grateful appreciation for Baycrest's excellent care.

Supporting Baycrest an easy decision

Dave and Gertie had a sweeping sense of confidence that they transmitted to their children. They were comfortable with everybody and were gracious and elegant wherever they found themselves. Although Dave and Gertie supported Baycrest with the hopes of never needing to use its facilities, they spent their final days there. Their profound dignity is now reflected in their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Honouring ongoing commitment to Baycrest

The Fishbein family's relationship with Baycrest extends over decades. Rina's grandmother was a patient at Baycrest, and Saul and Rina were volunteers with Meals-on-Wheels. Saul was a well-respected businessman and community volunteer known for his integrity, warmth and glowing smile. Rina, a caring and cherished family matriarch, benefited from Baycrest's Parkinson's Early Management Program. Dedicated to fostering strong family ties and supporting others, Saul and Rina have admired the ongoing support provided to individuals and their families through Baycrest's Community Day Centre.

Contributing to Baycrest's innovative research

We have chosen to support Baycrest because of the world-class research it conducts, which has helped enrich the lives of so many. Our hope is that this research will continue in the years ahead.

Recognizing volunteerism at Baycrest

This donation was made in honour of Barbara and Larry Gluckstein's 62nd wedding anniversary. They are two extremely loving and caring people, adored by their family and community. With Barbara having been a volunteer at Baycrest for many years, we couldn't think of a better way to honour her and her husband, Larry, on this joyous occasion.

In appreciation of Baycrest's wonderful staff and care

This fund was established to honour the loving memory of our parents, Harry and Sonia Greenberg. After our father suffered a stroke, Baycrest offered us support through rehabilitation, the daycare program and eventually, the home and hospital. We are grateful for the care and compassion that he received.

In memory and honour

Helen Medwedeff Greenberg was a special human being who was able to translate her kind and soft character into the language of music. On both a professional and personal level, Helen garnered the respect of everyone she met. She had a generous spirit, tremendous loyalty and not an ounce of pretension. She will be greatly missed.

Celebrating a rich life together

The children of Max and Ida Gula, Frank Gula and Dorothy Kurtz were lifelong friends. Dorothy was married to Bernie Kurtz for 56 years and they established a home rich in Jewish life. They were blessed with three children and eight grandchildren. An accomplished violinist, Frank was a devoted son, brother, uncle and great uncle, known affectionately as "Uncie." Both Dorothy and Frank cared deeply about their family and community and this fund was established to commemorate their bond and honour their memories.

Gottlieb HALL OF HONOUR

We could not imagine our lives without Baycrest.

Our 102-year-old aunt Rebecca used to live in The Terraces of Baycrest and now resides in the Apotex. She is highly involved with the daily activities, so much so that she has in no time to feel her age. Baycrest is close to our hearts because of its contribution to the community and for the care it provides to the elderly. Baycrest is truly unique and we cannot think of a more worthwhile cause to donate to.

Supporting ongoing research into the process of aging

This fund was established to honour the memory of our parents, Abe and Bunny Katz. Baycrest has been a part of our family for many years. Our grandmothers were residents in the original Jewish Home for the Aged and eventually our mother became a resident of the Apotex Centre and Baycrest Hospital. She loved the concerts, pottery and all the activities the Centre had to offer during her stay. This fund was created to ensure continuing care and research in aging for generations to come.

Supporting the Jewish spirit at Baycrest

Taube and Isaac Bornstein were the sole survivors of their immediate families during the Holocaust. After the war, they went on to start a new life in Canada with their two daughters. Despite the difficulties they faced throughout their lives, their commitment to all things Jewish and Israel was paramount. They would be proud to support Baycrest.

Helping the elderly

Alex and Freda Kirsh were loving, kind and gentle people. They lovingly raised their son and daughter to be proud members of the Jewish community. They embraced all things Jewish and would be proud to support an institution that so helps the elderly Jewish population in Toronto.

Remembered with love and fondness

In loving memory of my parents, Kojfman Israel and Nitza. Grandchildren: Jacob, Alexander and Tamir.

תירבע
זמפיוק היסחו יכדרמ יירוהל
חצנל רמשי מכנורכז ,יירועג דסח מכל יתרכז
זמפיוק הציני האדשי זבה
ריימת ,רדנסכלא ,בקעי מידכנה

A lasting family commitment

With Jack's father involved in the Jewish Home for the Aged in Rochester, N.Y., and Dorothy's father, J. Irving Oelbaum's pioneering efforts in establishing Baycrest, it is with pride and humility that we maintain our heritage in establishing this fund.

Proud to be a part of Baycrest's past and future

Blanka Kronenberg, a Holocaust survivor, was always compassionate and caring. When an SS officer demanded that 100 people from the factory where she worked be selected for transport, she was among those chosen. She was saved from certain death by the pleas of a nine-year-old boy she cared for who insisted she was his mother. After the war she came to Canada and worked hard alongside her husband, Chaim, until she reached retirement. She focused on giving back to the community and spent more than 25 years volunteering in the Baycrest gift shop. Her kindness and generosity have been extended beyond her life with this endowment fund.

Memorial to Harry and Annie Lerner, beloved parents

Family, integrity and honour best describe Harry and Annie Lerner. Immigrants from Poland, Harry and Annie aimed to make a new life for themselves and their four children. They devoted their entire lives to creating a legacy, which lives on through their grandchildren and great-grandchildren who all cherish their wonderful memories. Model citizens to the nth degree, in our hearts they will live forever.

In appreciation of Baycrest's wonderful staff and innovative programs

Molly and Harry Lewkowicz were longtime clients of Baycrest. Whether it was the exercise classes, the swimming pool or the Holocaust survivor program Café Europa, they considered Baycrest their home away from home. Their Baycrest gerontologist, Dr. Fabio Varlese, guided them through the years. As their health failed, the wonderful staff and facilities allowed Molly and Harry to gracefully spend their last moments in a place where they felt the love and care that only Baycrest can provide.

Gottdenker HALL OF HONOUR

Promoting the well-being of Holocaust survivors

Mom and dad were Holocaust survivors who lost their immediate families in the war. They arrived in Canada in 1948 and overcame numerous obstacles to build and nurture a strong family, rooted in Jewish principles. Their proudest accomplishment was their family - three children, eight grandchildren and a great-granddaughter. We are very grateful to the GATU social workers and medical team for the care they provided to our mom this past summer. With this contribution we hope others will benefit.

Supporting musical programs at Baycrest

The Hannah and Solomon Nusbaum endowment fund for musical programs was established on my mother's 100th birthday, which was celebrated at Baycrest. It reflects her passionate love for music and song. This passion helped her find new expression and enjoyment in her years at Baycrest. Our parents were Holocaust survivors who created a secure, generous, loving and musical home for their daughters, Alice and Ruth, and their three grandchildren. Our parents' home reflected their strong Jewish values, kindness, and great love for Israel. These values continue to be at the core of our lives.

Honouring Holocaust Survivors

This fund was established to honour Holocaust survivor Jack Ordynans by his loving family, and to support Baycrest's important programs and services.

Dedicated to the Baycrest community

Our family continues to be inspired by this meaningful expression of my parents' devotion to *tikkun olam*. Baycrest was established in the Jewish tradition of providing for the elderly in the community. With the enduring support and vision of compassionate people like Yetta and Morris, Baycrest has become a world-renowned institution, unparalleled for life-altering innovations. Our parents' contribution makes us proud.

Supporting Baycrest's innovative research

We believe very strongly that the research being conducted at Baycrest will lead to a treatment, if not a cure, for Alzheimer's disease. While we hope to see it in our lifetime, research conducted by Baycrest will benefit our children and grandchildren. By establishing this endowment fund, we hope our financial support and that of our family and friends will hasten the day when Alzheimer's will no longer be the threat to the "golden years" that it is today.

Supporting enrichment programs through music

Murray and Rivy's marriage was a love affair that lasted 47 years. Their signature song was "It Had To be You." In the years following Rivy's death, music was a comfort and pleasure for Murray. While at Baycrest, he thoroughly enjoyed the weekly guitar performances. Staff routinely helped him choose tapes and CDs of his favourite songs and singers. The family established this endowment fund in order to honour Murray and Rivy's memories and to support Baycrest's music enrichment programs.

Continuing to show support for Baycrest

Sam and I have been longtime supporters of Baycrest, having spent countless hours there volunteering and giving back. I started my volunteer career with Baycrest in 1954, in the Physical Fitness department. Sam became a volunteer with Meals-on-Wheels after his retirement. I have lived in the Terraces for the past five years and still continue to volunteer when needed. Baycrest showed its appreciation to me when I was honoured as a 2006 Treasure of Baycrest.

Supporting cultural enrichment programs

Our family has always held Baycrest in the highest regard. Our mother, Lily, devoted several years to the Baycrest Meals-On-Wheels program when she herself was a senior citizen. She also became one of the earliest residents of Two Neptune, a home she thoroughly enjoyed. At the end of her long life she was a patient at Baycrest Hospital. We have chosen to honour our parents' memory and to support Baycrest with the establishment of this endowment.

Honouring commitment to Baycrest

Isaac dedicated his life to Jewish principles and family. His last days were spent with dignity at Baycrest. Malka, better known as Molly, enjoyed her time at Baycrest with her many acquaintances, daily activities and as the president of the residents group.

In memory and honour

Murray, Eleanor (Siegel), Howard and Ian are the children of Max and Dorothy Roher. Now in our 70s and 80s, our spouses and children enjoy the benefits of the total loving and giving bestowed upon us by Max and Dorothy. We had a traditional Jewish upbringing where our needs came first. Honesty, loyalty and caring took precedence over materialism and self-indulgence. Proud of our humble heritage, we thank and hail our parents for their exemplary contributions to our lives.

To our mother, Denise Sonia Rose, a gentle and inspiring soul

You left us with an afterglow of eternal love, devotion and rich values that we cherish.
In our souls, you never die. In our hearts, you live forever.
Heaven is blessed with your presence, darling Mom.
Thank you for your selflessness, your guidance, your beauty, your sense of humour and your
love.
You created who we are today.
With our thoughts of you, we are never alone.

Love always,
Melanie, Derrick, Alison, Lewis and families

Recognizing graceful aging and innovative research

The Shain family knows firsthand the vital role Baycrest plays in innovations in aging and care in our community and across generations. Our grandmother, Celia Harris, as well as our parents, Sam and Trudy, received the compassionate care that Baycrest is so well known for. To honour their memory, the Sam and Trudy Shain Memorial Endowment Fund was established by their children and grandchildren to help ensure that Baycrest can continue to play a key role in graceful aging for generations to come. *L'dor va dor.*

Contributing to Baycrest's role in the fight against Alzheimer's disease

Our family established the Sone Family Alzheimer's Research Endowment Fund because of the exceptional support and care Baycrest has provided to our dad Marty Sone. Baycrest has also provided support services for our mom as well as regular educational presentations that our family has attended. The support, compassion, medical intervention and care of Baycrest professionals during our journey with Alzheimer's disease have been exceptional. We hope these funds assist Baycrest in finding a cure for Alzheimer's disease so that other families will be spared the sadness we have experienced.

Forever thankful for the opportunity to volunteer and for excellent care

Upon the passing of her daughter at Baycrest in palliative care, our mother Greta became a very active volunteer. Her optimism and passion for volunteering across all areas of Baycrest made us very proud. We know she would be honoured by the establishment of this fund, which continues to support the hospital.

Supporting Baycrest's dedicated researchers

Nathan and Clara Stein were devoted to each other for nearly 64 years. They worked, danced, traveled, and shared the joys of family. When faced with the challenges of declining health, they moved to Baycrest. They were always treated with dignity and their lives were enriched. We honour our loving memories of Nathan and Clara Stein by supporting Baycrest's many efforts to enhance research, education and the quality of care within our community and the world.

Contributing to the growth of Baycrest's research and care

Our family has always had a great appreciation for Baycrest and the integral role it plays for so many in our community. Both our parents' mothers spent many years living at Baycrest, as did our aunt. We have such fond memories of our visits there, which included birthday parties and other special occasions. Additionally, my sister and I both volunteered at the Terraces.

We are very proud and happy to honour our parents' memories by supporting Alzheimer's research at Baycrest. It is all the more meaningful, as our parents' nephew, Dr. Morris Moscovitch, is one of the senior scientists at Baycrest.

Supporting diabetic research

Pearl and Albert Stevens were happily married for almost 50 years. Family was the most precious thing to them. They were so very proud of their children and grandchildren and would have been thrilled to know their great-grandchildren. Albert spent the last month of his life at the Apotex Centre, dealing with the effects of diabetes. To honour their memory, the family established the Pearl and Albert Stevens Endowment Fund, directing it in support of diabetes research.

Music, family and faith: Keys to longevity and healthy lives

Holocaust survivors Chana, Leo z"l and Mania z"l have a long history of supporting Baycrest. Chana believed in Baycrest from its beginnings and in keeping with her generous heart, a fund was established in honour of her 100th birthday. Leo, an internationally acclaimed pianist and composer, wanted to share his passion for music with Baycrest. Leo and Mania - his cherished wife of 66 years - donated a grand piano in 2003. The endowment serves as both a celebration of their resilience in overcoming struggles and a triumph as individuals and as a family. All three understood what matters most: to live with unshakeable faith, undying devotion and resolve for building a better life for family. The Spellman-Shifman family is forever inspired.

Recognizing compassionate care

Gus stayed in palliative care in Baycrest and requested this fund be established due to the high quality and compassionate care he received there. Lucy was a past Board member who with her friends helped to support the establishment and growth of Baycrest.

Supporting innovative music programming

This endowment gives everlasting life to my maternal grandparents. In particular, it plays an important role in remembering my one grandmother who has no relatives who share a surname. Music has always played a vital role in my family. For this reason, I have chosen to support music therapy programs at Baycrest because they evoke emotions and remembrances, healing a heavy heart.

THE SAM RUTH LEGACY SOCIETY

Named after Sam Ruth, the founding president of the Baycrest Foundation, the society reflects Sam's vision of care, commitment and compassion. The members of the Sam Ruth Legacy Society ensure that Baycrest clients receive the best care available. Their thoughtful commitment funds research and educational initiatives that will help transform the journey of aging.

Baycrest extends deep appreciation to the individuals and families who have recently committed their support with a bequest in their will, a gift of life insurance, an annuity or charitable remainder of trust. For this, we welcome them as members of the Sam Ruth Legacy Society.

- **Sheldon & Ellie Parker**
- **Ellen Drazner**
- **Ida Tugg**
- **Anonymous**

COLOURS

The world is filled with colours
That give us pause for thought
The birds, the flowers and rainbows
That nature to us brought

What drab existence would there be
If life were black or white
For some there'd just be sunshine
While others had the night

The colour grey's an exercise
In how we learn to cope
Through clouds that tend to rain despair
The sunshine's rays of hope

The colour green is everything
Whose life is born anew
The colour green is charity
From donors just like you

POEM BY ANITA MARCUS

Gottdenker family members participate in the Hall of Honour ribbon-cutting ceremony.

HELP BAYCREST LEAD THE WAY

Baycrest is unique in the world, combining a comprehensive system of care for aging adults, one of the world's top research institutes in cognitive neuroscience (the Rotman Research Institute), dedicated centres focused on mitigating the impact of age-related illness and impairment and unmatched global knowledge exchange and commercialization capacity.

Be the driving force in our success. Make a donation today.

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Please process my monthly donation on the 15th ◯ or 30th ◯ of each month.

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Baycrest
Innovations in aging

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of this publication. If we have erred, please accept our sincere apologies. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Dinnarr in the Baycrest Foundation at 416-785-2500, ext. 5125 or ldinnarr@baycrest.org.

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Once-in-a-century storm batters Israel

Times of Israel

JERUSALEM — Israeli children got news Sunday night that school would be closed for a fifth straight day Monday, as the capital hunkered down for another cold night, with warnings of lower temperatures and freezing roads after a brief thaw during the day.

The Egged bus company announced Sunday night it had halted public transit service inside the city as well as on buses into and out of Jerusalem for fear of slippery roads after one of Israel's worst-ever storms.

The move came hours after officials opened the main roads leading into the city, following several days in which it was effectively cut off from the ground.

Temperatures were expected to reach freezing again overnight Sunday and into Monday, refreezing arteries made slick as snow piled up from a record storm over the weekend begins to melt.

Israel weathered the brutal winter storm "better than developed countries" accustomed to more frequent blizzards, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday, as roads slowly cleared and the capital thawed out of one of the heaviest snows in decades.

Continued on page 21

Heavy snow hit Israel, including Safed, above, last week. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the nation weathered the storm "better than developed countries" accustomed to more frequent blizzards. *[Israel Sun photo]*

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CJN selects new president, names editor

Board expects Yoni Goldstein, 33, will make paper a 'bit edgier'

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

The CJN is moving forward under new leadership, with Elizabeth Wolfe stepping into the role as the newspaper's president and Yoni Goldstein as the new editor who will be leading the staff as of Jan. 6.

Wolfe, who had been serving as *The CJN*'s vice-president since last June until she was officially installed as president on Dec. 12, said she is hopeful she'll be able to successfully lead the paper into the future.

"I think we're looking at an evolution. We're hoping to modernize the paper, to make it interesting and appealing, not only to its current audience, but to younger generations as well," she said.

"We are beginning to take the first steps towards a re-design. We are hiring someone this week to help us change the look and the format of the paper... We really do need and want to transition to something that is just a little... bit edgier."

Wolfe said she expects *The CJN*'s new editor, Goldstein, 33, who takes over from interim editor Joseph Serge, will bring that edge to the paper.

Continued on page 5

Yoni Goldstein

Shmot
Candlelighting: 4:27
Havdalah: 5:30
Greater Toronto Area

Baycrest residents enjoy glee club
Please see page 30

United Church members object to Israel boycott— please see page 10

CANADA

Shul Demolished

CALGARY — The former Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue in Calgary's inner city Mission area was torn down Dec. 11. The modernist-style heritage building, erected in 1959 to house Calgary's oldest congregation, was Calgary's largest shul when it opened, but hasn't been used as a synagogue since its modern Orthodox congregation moved out in 1986 and merged with Beth Israel Congregation to form Calgary Beth Tzedec, a Conservative congregation. Its 1,470-seat shul is closer to newer Jewish areas.

WORLD

Karski Honoured

WARSAW — Poland's parliament named 2014 the Year of Jan Karski, honouring the man who alerted the allies about the Holocaust and sought their intervention. Last week's unanimous vote in the Sejm marked the centennial of Karski's birth. Karski, a non-Jew born in Lodz in 1914, was a courier for the Polish underground during World War II. He infiltrated the Warsaw Ghetto and the Izbica transit camp, and was among the first to relay first-hand news of the Holocaust to the West. Karski appealed for intervention to British foreign secretary Anthony Eden and later to U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, without success. His 1944 book, *The Story of a Secret State*, became a best-seller. Karski remained in the United States after the war and became a Georgetown University professor. Yad Vashem named him a Righteous Among Nations in 1982, and Israel made him an honorary citizen in 1994. He died in 2000.

Hotel Shul Opens

MADRID — A Spanish hotel built on the remains of a 15th-century synagogue opened a new shul on its seventh floor. Last week's opening at the Parador de Lorca, a four-star hotel, was the result of a deal between management and the Sefarad Beitenu Jewish association, which will reportedly run the shul, located in Lorca, near the Mediterranean coast. Sefarad Beitenu's president signed a co-operation contract with the Paradores hotel network Dec. 4. The shul was unearthed during construction of the hotel, which opened last year. The seventh floor also houses a small Jewish cultural centre offering an overview of Spanish Jewish history and a description of the shul and other findings from the ruins. Several heritage groups opposed the hotel's construction because of the loss of archeological finds. Management pledged to incorporate the relics, including a 15th-century mikvah into its architecture. Shlomo Amar, a former Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel, visited the hotel and ruins earlier this year and asked that it be made into a place of pilgrimage for Jews.

Rabbi Gives Minister 'Quebec Kippah'

MONTREAL — Rabbi Yisroel Bernath, director of NDG Chabad, gave a "Quebec Kippah" to Jean-François Lisée, the Quebec cabinet minister responsible for Montreal and anglophones, during their Dec. 10 appearance on Montreal radio station CJAD.

Rabbi Yisroel Bernath models his creation.

Only 40 of the 400 kippot festooned with the province's Fleur-de-lis flag, which the rabbi created to protest the government's proposed secularism charter, remained unsold last week.

"I think it's a great idea, finding innovative ways to participate in the debate by having this kippah," Lisée said during his appearance.

During a commercial break, Rabbi Bernath gave Lisée another kippah to present to PQ Premier Pauline Marois, and Lisée assured the rabbi that he would personally deliver it to her.

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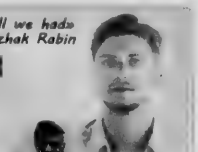

Joe Warner, 4th Troop, Anti-Tank Artillery Unit

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Peter Shurman resigns as Thornhill MPP

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Did he jump or was he pushed?

Thornhill MPP Peter Shurman tendered a letter of resignation Dec. 10 to Progressive Conservative leader Tim Hudak, saying he'll leave his seat effective the end of this month. In an interview with *The CJN*, Shurman said he had been planning the move since last June and that he wanted to "leave when you're at the top of your game."

However, the move came around the same time Hudak criticized the two-term MPP for claiming mileage expenses to and from his home in Niagara-on-the-Lake to Queen's Park. And that critique followed a housing allowance controversy in September, in which it was reported that Shurman received $21,000 in government funds to maintain a second home in Toronto – an allowance that did not violate any technical rules.

Citing the high standard expected of elected officials – and no doubt conscious of the current Senate scandal – Hudak removed Shurman as Tory finance critic when Shurman refused to pay back the money.

Hudak released a letter dated Dec. 3 in which he stated: "In my mind and that of taxpayers, there is no distinction between the mileage claims and the housing issue you dealt with in September. Taxpayers expect parliamentarians to hold themselves to a higher standard when it comes to expenses. They expect us to respect their tax dollars."

Peter Shurman

But Shurman told *The CJN* he is being discredited for doing what any legislator is entitled to do. "My brand is inherent in my integrity, and there are hundreds of thousands who will attest to that," he said.

The mileage expenses, which ranged from $500 to $1,000 a month, were cleared with "legislative finance" officials to make sure they fell within accepted rules, Shurman said.

"They vet every expense, every dime that an MPP claims for anything," he said.

Shurman said Hudak has known since 2011 that he intended to live in Niagara-on-th-Lake, but the leader had asked him to run in Thornhill. "I was quite open with where I lived," he said.

Shurman said that when he met with Hudak to tender his resignation, "He reached out to hug me."

The next day, he was surprised to see the letter from Hudak, dated Dec. 3 and made public, which criticized Shurman for claiming mileage expenses.

"It's invented crap, and I take exception to it," he said. It is designed "to make them look better."

Adding to the intrigue, a statement released by Hudak following Shurman's resignation noted his accomplishments in office and called him "one of the finer communicators in the legislature."

Shurman said he leaves Queen's Park satisfied he has done some good, particularly in working "under the radar" to help constituents

As for his future plans, Shurman, 66, said he plans to fire up his Beechcraft airplane and pilot it down to Florida so he and his wife can spend time visiting family in the Boca Raton area.

He doesn't have anything specific lined up when he returns in February.

"There are a couple of things that look promising," said the former radio talk show host, including using his negotiating skills to help companies in business development. And, he suggested, "I might get involved in the radio side."

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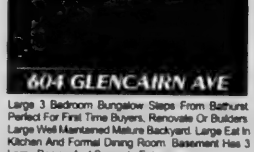
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Don't judge this book by its coverage

Ari Shavit's *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*, has been receiving a lot of media attention.

A well-known veteran columnist for *Ha'aretz*, Shavit has a reputation for providing a balanced overview of Israel – critical of occupation and settlements but mindful of the intense regional hostility to Zionism (of which Shavit is proud) and threats to its security.

According to Reports
by PAUL MICHAELS

While Shavit's book reflects this balance, some reviewers, paying only lip service to his honesty, forthrightness and soul-searching, betray that spirit by emphasizing his criticisms of Israel while ignoring the countervailing factors and broader context that Shavit raises in some detail.

For instance, in the Nov. 30 *Globe and Mail* books section, Beirut-based writer Rayyan Al-Shawaf wrote: "Shavit's honest appraisal of the injustice done to the Palestinians is one of this book's strongest suits, though it coexists awkwardly with his (conflicted) acquiescence in the initial phase of the phenomenon."

Al-Shawaf draws attention to Shavit's admission (in a chapter titled "Lydda, 1948,") that the Palestinian expulsion from the town in July 1948 was an inevitable, if regrettable, outcome of the establishment of the Jewish state. What Al-Shawaf doesn't mention, however, is the broader historical context that Shavit describes: the rejection by the Arab League and the Arabs of Palestine of the 1947 UN Partition Resolution (which the Jews accepted), and the Arab 1948 invasion of Israel when the state was declared. Shavit writes: "It is clear that Arab nationalism is about to eradicate Zionism and destroy the Jewish community in Palestine by the use of brutal force. It is clear that the Jews must defend themselves, as no one else will come to their rescue."

Do such facts justify an injustice committed by Israel during war? No. But they certainly help explain why it happened just as they invite the converse: had the Arabs accepted the Partition plan for the creation of Jewish and Arab states west of the Jordan River, would there even have been a Palestinian refugee problem?

Israeli historian Benny Morris, the leading expert on the issue of Palestinian refugees, has argued that their plight arose as a result of a war the Arabs inflicted on Israel, not of an over-arching Israeli policy. In isolated cases commanders did evict Palestinians, but, in a great many other cases, Palestinians fled – often at the behest of their own leaders. Lydda was not the norm, but it was bad, what Shavit calls Israel's "black box."

Israel's inveterate critics, however, cling to the story of Lydda as if it stands as an unqualified, broadly representative indictment of Zionism, as if there had been no violent Arab rejection of the UN plan for two states for two peoples.

What's also missing in reviews of Shavit's book are his numerous references to the land purchased, sometimes at great cost, by Jewish immigrants from Arab landowners. Contrary to cartoonish depictions (not committed by Al-Shawaf), Zionists did not come to Palestine with guns blazing to force Arabs off their land. There was indeed an initial hope of sharing the land peacefully.

While acknowledging Shavit's pride in Israel's economic development and high-tech innovation, Al-Shawaf also accuses Shavit of using Israel's "virtues" as a way of "mitigating" its "oppression of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, and its discrimination against Palestinian citizens of the Jewish state."

Al-Shawaf's one-sided critique reminds us why it's vital to read Shavit's book in its totality. While Shavit argues that an end to occupation is necessary to preserve Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, he's not naive about how this can be achieved. He faults many on the Israeli left (to which he belongs) for putting the onus for peace solely on Israel. But he recognizes that what's also required, but absent, is a reliable Palestinian partner prepared to accept the legitimacy of Jewish national rights and to relinquish the "right of return" to Israel. What Shavit calls the "Zionist predicament" must be appreciated in all the complexity that he brings to this subject.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

SeeJN

WHITE CITY

Jerusalem residents woke up Dec. 12 to a blanket of snow covering mountain tops as well as the capital's streets. Access routes to the city were briefly blocked, and schools were closed.

[Israel Sun photo]

Wolfe hopes to see 'new energy' at the paper

Continued from page 1

The Toronto-born-and-raised Yeshivat Or Chaim graduate said he'd like *The CJN* to be "an honest broker for the Jewish community," which he hopes will attract a younger readership.

"To me, that means celebrating all of the great things that are happening in the community, but also highlighting the difficulties in the community, because there are many, and we're not going to fix any of those things if we sweep them under the carpet and don't talk about them," he said.

"I think honesty is attractive to younger readers… They start to question publications when they feel like they're not getting the whole story."

Goldstein, a former *CJN* columnist whose journalism experience includes working for the *Jerusalem Report*, *Maclean's* magazine and the *National Post*, as well as being a contributor to the *Huffington Post*, the *Globe and Mail*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *Ha'aretz*, said one of his ambitions is give *The CJN* a better online presence by making better use of social media outlets.

"We want to be providing information on a daily basis for our readers online… We're also going to be out in the community much more. We'll be far more visible."

He said he intends to "give voice to all sides. We want to change the perception of being soft. To my mind, there are no topics that are off limits. In fact, we want to talk about issues that have been off limits, like addiction, sexuality, abuse in the community," as well as the burden of day school tuition and the increasing gulf between religious denominations.

Elizabeth Wolfe

His vision includes "a modernized magazine-style newspaper that focuses on issues and ideas with a larger online component with much more daily content available."

Wolfe said she hopes Goldstein will give *The CJN* "some new direction, some new energy, which I think is really important, and perspective from someone who has knowledge of the community, with a background in journalism and wants to go forward and appeal to a younger generation."

Donald Carr, who stepped down as president after 23 years and was named chairman emeritus by the board of directors, said he's confident Wolfe will succeed in revitalizing the paper.

"Elizabeth will be carrying on a wonderful tradition started by her father, and she has a very deep commitment to the paper, as she has to the community," Carr said.

In 1971, the late Ray Wolfe, Elizabeth's father, was part of a group that bought the newspaper from founder Meyer Nurenberger and converted it into the non-profit, independent paper it is today.

"I can't distinguish in my own mind how much of my commitment to the paper is driven because of the family connection and how much of it is driven because I believe deeply that it is a really valuable asset to the community and something that the community needs," she said.

Wolfe said she is "certainly hopeful" *The CJN* will be able to overcome the financial challenges that led it to cease production last June.

It resumed publishing Aug. 1 after a grassroots campaign to save the paper.

"There are a couple of challenges. One is a challenge that all newspapers face in terms of declining advertising revenue, and people transitioning to Internet-based material… [and] not being interested in paying for it," she said.

"We've been told that we are a niche market and that we should be able to surmount those challenges, because we have a very specific audience and a very specific message that really isn't met anywhere else."

As for what the distant future holds for *The CJN*, Wolfe predicted that it will likely only be available electronically.

"Whether 10 years from now we'll still have a print edition will be interesting to find out. I would hope that we would continue in an electronic version… until the next thing comes along," she said.

Goldstein said he's looking forward to putting his stamp on one of the newspapers that gave him his start in the industry.

"When [former *CJN* editor] Mordechai [Ben-Dat] was leading the paper, he gave me a chance to develop my voice and to develop as a journalist as well, so I feel a deep connection to the newspaper going back many years. I really hope to continue the legacy of those who came before me and turn the paper into something special for the new generation as well."

It's the season for new plantings at *The CJN*

Donald Carr
Chairman Emeritus

Kohelet was right. For everything there is a season.

My season at *The Canadian Jewish News* has spanned more than 40 years, the last 20 of them as president.

During that time, the dream that was the late Ray Wolfe's has been substantially realized.

From gathering a few Toronto and Montreal leaders around him and acquiring this paper from private hands, *The CJN* has become an essential part of the Canadian Jewish landscape, a reliable, independent source of news and opinion, a reflection of the community and, concurrently a shaper of ideas and opinion – in print and on the web.

Over the years, which have seen several metamorphoses in the paper, the board of directors, regardless of who sat in the boardroom as part of that volunteer group, has consistently regarded itself as the veritable trustee for the community, in its broadest sense.

I am proud of all of these accomplishments.

Recent events have confirmed that *The CJN* is woven into the Jewish fabric in Canada. We have heard that from the *amcha* across the country.

This is the season for new planting, new ideas, new outlooks.

As I retire from the presidency and make way for successors, this is the season for enthusiastic, imaginative new members of the board. They will combine with several existing members, who are already serving so well. Together, they will chart the way forward.

Led by Elizabeth Wolfe, whose tireless and successful work during these past months has been an inspiration, I foresee the confirmation of what we all desire – an ever-flourishing and vibrant community newspaper.

I am flattered that I have been given the title of chairman emeritus. I shall attend board meetings. I may speak. But the decisions are to be made by others.

I wish my successor and the new board every success.

Your continued support is essential. The future is boundless. Make it so!

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Netanyahu's lame excuse

The greatest statesmen and women of our day gathered Dec. 10 in Johannesburg, South Africa, to honour the late Nelson Mandela. It was a touching ceremony, as everyone knew it would be, but particularly so because of its celebratory nature. The tens of thousands of rain-drenched South Africans in attendance were more often than not exuberant – though they were quite the opposite when their current president, Jacob Zuma, stepped to the microphone. U.S. President Barack Obama's speech brimmed with optimism (and he took a selfie!), while our former prime minister, Kim Campbell, danced up a storm and went viral in the process. Somehow, it all seemed to work, given the spirit of the man everyone had come to pay their respects to.

Guest Editorial

Conspicuously absent from the proceedings was Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The official explanation as to why he declined the invitation was that his flight and security requirements would have cost too much – 7 million shekels (about $2 million) to be exact – but, pardon the pun, that's rich. The prime minister hasn't been shy about spending Israeli taxpayers' money frivolously, as evidenced by recent revelations he shelled out tens of thousands of dollars on luxuries such as scented candles, a vacation home and an ice cream fetish. Netanyahu, it was reported in May, even spent $127,000 on a special sleeping cabin for a plane ride to London – to attend Margaret Thatcher's funeral. Now he's suddenly pinching pennies?

I suspect Netanyahu was fully aware of how lame his excuse sounded, and that, even so, it was preferable to voicing the real reason he avoided the memorial, which was politics, plain and simple. Mandela was a champion of the Palestinian statehood movement and a friend of Yasser Arafat – there's no doubt about it. That's why Netanyahu stayed away: to show the world he's in no mood to discuss a Palestinian state. (Apparently no one told him that Mandela was a friend to Israel, too, even though Jerusalem was decidedly unfriendly to him and his cause at times – Mandela was able to see more than black and white, good and bad, Israeli and Palestinian. That was his special gift.)

In his stubbornness, Netanyahu displayed a crucial character flaw: an inability to read the geopolitical winds and act accordingly. The central theme of the memorial in Johannesburg was reconciliation, as it was for the vast majority of Mandela's political career and all of his post-presidential years. Last Tuesday was a manifestation – a very rare one – of global goodwill, or at least as close as we ever get to it, and Netanyahu failed to take advantage by joining in. That has quite likely cost him points on the world stage.

No one was asking the Israeli prime minister to deliver a eulogy. All he had to do was show up and smile – that would have been appropriate enough. And who knows? Maybe Netanyahu would have learned a thing or two while he was in Johannesburg – such as that great leaders have the power to make us all believe in each other's inherent goodness, even if the effect only lasts for the briefest of moments.

Yoni Goldstein

Tuition still an obstacle

Rabbi Lee Buckman ("The value of Jewish high school," *The CJN*, Dec. 5) makes a clear and cogent argument for the benefits of a Jewish day school education, in specific reference to high school. Unfortunately, he prefaced and concluded his argument by "shifting the conversation from price to value." If only it was so easy.

The implication of this rather dated perspective is that Jewish families are able to afford a Jewish education, but are choosing not to because they do not see its value. The sad truth is that many Jewish families would cherish the opportunity to provide a day school education for their children but simply cannot afford it. What is often overlooked in this discussion is that choices are not just made by families. Many choices are made by schools and communities in determining the cost of day school education. While a quality Jewish education is important, quality does not have to mean expensive. While designing Jewish day schools as exclusive prep schools and pricing them accordingly may appeal to the affluent part of the Jewish community and its major donors, it fails to meet the needs of the community as a whole in not making Jewish education accessible to all. A more tempered approach to "value" would still provide a very solid Jewish and secular education, with the added benefits of inclusiveness, while planning for the continuity of our Jewish community.

Rafael Kleiman
Hamilton, Ont.

• • •

It was hard to say which was more disturbing about the front-page *CJN* article on limiting tuition ("Plan limits day school tuition to 15% of income," *The CJN*, Nov. 28): the fact that $200,000 to $300,000 is considered "middle income," or that a family in such a situation should need to rely on community philanthropy, or that current programs "provide relief for families making under $200,000 per year." Any normal Canadian reading this article could only think it is satire! Unfortunately it is the sad truth. It is not unusual to hear from friends with older kids that their tuition bill is $100,000 per year of after-tax income.

Philanthropy or creative accounting is not a solution to this problem – it perpetuates it and is an insult to families. The government of Ontario must pay for a significant portion of the secular curriculum, as is done in almost all other provinces, where families pay a fraction of what we pay in Toronto. The political process has failed and left the issue a hot potato. The only solution to achieve education equity and justice for non-Catholic Ontarians is to pursue the issue through the courts again and again and again, until we are successful.

Barry Pakes
Toronto

Netanyahu embarrasses

We were informed that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would not be attending former South African president Nelson Mandela's memorial service ("Netanyahu to skip memorial," *The CJN*, Dec. 12) because of the travelling costs. I have never been so embarrassed by the actions of the Israeli government in my life. Israel's leaders could have come up with a less embarrassing excuse. They have given the world a legitimate reason to condemn Israel, to go along with all the illegitimate ones. For shame.

Cheryl Rosenthal
Thornhill, Ont.

Dry Bones

AMERICA'S MIDEAST PEACE PLANS ARE LIKE SNOW IN JERUSALEM . . .
THEY COVER UP REALITY WITH A BEAUTIFUL AND SUPERFICIAL BLANKET OF PHOTO OPS THAT SOON MELTS AWAY.
©13 Brookins

Refugee policy needed overhaul

In response to the letter,"Harper honours not deserved" (*The CJN*, Nov. 28), indeed, the Harper government significantly altered more than half a century of "progressive policy regarding Canada's treatment of refugees." Thankfully, we have a leader who has the guts to quash a policy that has fostered the parasitic abuse of Canada's immigration system for financial gain.

Under the new act, refugee applicants (e.g. the Lev Tahor sect) would not be able to enter our country and recklessly consume our ever-dwindling financial resources. Too many of our tax dollars are spent on bogus refugee claims. In particular, refugee claimants from generally non-refugee-producing countries such as Israel, Japan or the European Union would be processed in 45 days on average, compared to the more than 1,000 days it takes under the current system. It is time to send a clear message to those who wish to abuse our generous asylum system: if you are not a true refugee, you are not welcome here.

Rachel Yane
Westmount, Que.

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Israel must act to avoid civil war

Arie Raif

The interim nuclear deal with Iran is "far from perfect" but it's a fait accompli, said Israeli Justice Minister and chief peace negotiator Tzipi Livni. Nevertheless, Israel has to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and must maintain good relations with the United States, because it has given Israel $233 billion in aid since 1948!

These two issues are critical for Israel's future and aren't isolated from each other. The deal with Iran should encourage Israel to achieve a final status agreement with the Palestinians. It's an opportunity for Israel to act in its own best interests and present a new front with Arab countries against the threat of an Iranian nuclear weapon.

If "we solve the conflict with the Palestinians and reach an agreement, we can create a strong and significant new front with Arab countries against Iran," Livni said. Furthermore, she argued, without a peace deal, Israel is in danger of becoming an "isolated state" whose "Jewish and democratic character" is under threat.

But what are the implications of reaching an agreement with the Palestinians? Is a civil war inevitable? The answer, probably, is yes. This point was made in 2008, when Yuval Diskin, then chief of the Shin Bet (Israel's internal security service) cautioned that a civil war with the settlers was imminent.

"Our investigation found a very high willingness among this public to use violence – not just stones, but live weapons – in order to prevent or halt a diplomatic process."

Last month, five years after Diskin's warning, some "hilltop youth" at a Jerusalem yeshiva were arrested in a string of violent attacks against a Palestinian who was seriously injured when a boulder weighing 17 kilograms was thrown over the wall near his workplace and fell on his back. Four days earlier, his Israeli employer was wounded when he was attacked with an iron pipe and knives.

Since Diskin's blunt warning, the government's tendency has been to regard so-called "price tag" gangs as a nuisance rather than an actual threat. In recent years, settlers have been acting with increasing violence toward government, army and security authorities, as well as any Palestinians and Israelis whose political views differ from those of these "hilltop youth." Their "price tag" attacks have damaged mosques, Palestinian property and army vehicles. A sharp escalation in violence, primarily aimed at churches and non-Jewish religious orders, has included vandalism, desecration of cemeteries, burning cars and rock-throwing. Christian clergymen have been spat at and cursed.

A Palestinian holding a child walks past a house that was torched overnight by suspected Jewish extremists in an apparent revenge attack Nov. 14 in Sinjil, a West Bank village northeast of Ramallah. Five Palestinian children suffered from smoke inhalation. The attackers spray-painted the words "Regards from Eden, Revenge!" in Hebrew on a wall outside the house. A Palestinian man stabbed an Israeli soldier, Eden Atias, to death in Afula the previous day. (*Flash90 photo*)

The Shin Bet believes that extreme right-wing Jewish activists in the West Bank have gone from spontaneous acts against Arabs to organized planning in the form of terror cells. More settlers and haredim declare that their duty is to obey their rabbis over their duty to obey the laws of the state. They believe that the laws of the state are secondary to the commands of Halachah.

Defining their activity as "terrorism," the Shin Bet has been busy identifying and mapping these networks. But the Shin Bet must embark on a pre-emptive operation before both Israelis and Palestinians pay a high price for this vacillation. The heads of the security branches, restrained and officious as they are, don't name names, but it isn't hard to figure out who bears supreme responsibility for the difficult situation behind the dire warnings. They also punctiliously observe the principle of separation of powers and give the political leadership its due. But the image created by remarks of former holders of the most sensitive positions – army chief of staff and leaders of the Mossad, Military Intelligence and the Shin Bet – was a terrifying one, namely, a lack of confidence in the prime minister.

In stark contrast to all his predecessors, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has never enjoyed the trust of the security establishment. On more than one occasion during his first term, the IDF chief of staff (Amnon Lipkin-Shahak), the Shin Bet chief (Ami Ayalon) and the police commissioner (Assaf Hefetz) spoke out against Netanyahu. Subsequently, former chief of staff Gabi Ashkenazi, former Mossad head Meir Dagan, former Shin Bet chief Yuval Diskin and even former head of Military Intelligence Amos Yadlin did as well.

Civil wars in Jewish history are well documented and frequent, and they cost us our independence. We just celebrated Chanukah, so let's remember the clash of armed Hasmonean priests and their comrades from the town of Modi'in, attacking urban Jews, priests and laity alike who supported Greek reforms. The Hasmoneans imposed, at sword's edge, traditional observance. After years of protracted warfare, the priests established a Hasmonean state that never ceased fighting Jews who disagreed with its rule.

Seven centuries earlier, the Kingdom of Judah resulted from the break-up of the Kingdom of Israel (1020 to about 930 BCE) after the northern tribes refused to accept the son of Solomon as their king. The two kingdoms, Judah in the south and Israel in the north, fought each other after the split, until the destruction of the northern kingdom by the Assyrians in 722/721 BCE.

In 1948, three years after the Holocaust, the Altalena affair was a violent confrontation that took place between the newly created IDF and the Irgun, one of the pre-state Jewish paramilitary groups. The confrontation involved a cargo ship that the Irgun had loaded with weapons and fighters. Sixteen Irgun fighters were killed in the confrontation and six were killed in the Kfar Vitkin area, while three IDF soldiers died.

Israel must take pre-emptive action against Jewish terrorists whose doctrine of arrogance, messianism, militarism and nationalism will lead to civil war.

Avoiding civil war is as historically significant as finding peace with our enemies. Failure would destroy what we most often seek – hope for survival.

Arie Raif is an Israeli political activist and a former Israeli diplomat to Canada. He's currently vice-chair and CEO of the Canadian Peres Center For Peace.

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It's time for *that holiday* once again

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Well, it is almost time for *that holiday* – you know, fat man in a red suit (not the mayor of Toronto), shop till you drop, deck the halls and hit the malls, etc.

The lead-up to Christmas is fraught for North American Jews. We live in a world overwhelmingly Christian. Despite public schools' best efforts to provide a holiday celebration, it always begins to look a lot like Christmas. Most people will celebrate it, one way or another.

My Christmas was always celebrated as a religious and family holiday. We shunned the secular and emphasized the religious basis – there were all those ministers in the family, not to mention choir directors and organists. We shared it with cousins and uncles and aunts and had a grand time.

Presents were modest, since no one was rich. There was no alcohol in the eggnog or brandy in the mince pie.

We celebrated it without a thought for those for whom it would be a problem. Who knew? Well, now we know.

To step back a bit, let's look at a current public issue.

Like their Tea Party fellows to the south, the Parti Québécois government clings to the notion that a homogeneous society is the only way to go. Ironically, by taking charge of their own immigration policy, Quebec has created the multicoloured and multi-religious society it now seeks to control.

In 1950, we might have been excused for not seeing the growing multicultural nature of our society. But no more. C'mon people, it's no longer 1950, even though many Canadians wish it were.

When my husband and I left the United States to settle in Canada, we left behind a segregated society. There were still chain gangs, and less conspicuous but still segregated facilities everywhere. My high school had a colour bar you could chin yourself on. I grew up in a monochrome world and now live in a polychrome one.

We have been very happy in Canada as the flavours of the world have come to our doorstep. We have become accustomed to Christmas as it plays out in the larger society. Why not? Its celebration, crass as it may be at times, gives joy to most Canadians. (And take heart: few Jews are converting to Christmas.)

The larger question of sharing a cultural divide, however, as reflected in the current crisis in Quebec illustrates the need for a lot more work on everyone's part.

Vali Nasr has written in another context (*The Shia Revival*): "Religion is not just about God and salvation; it decides the boundaries of communities." In the old days, people lived pretty comfortably within those boundaries. As Tevye had it, "everyone knew who he/she was and what God expected them to do."

In North America, that is no longer true. Again, Nasr: "Our world is expanding and contracting at the same time." So our neighbours, Christian or not, may now know that we celebrate a different December holiday. They may still wish us a happy Christmas and wonder why we all go to the movies on Christmas Eve instead of opening presents. But they celebrate theirs, and we ours, with little or no friction.

We can see, just by opening the morning paper, that this is not true for many countries. Christians and Muslims are killing each other in the Middle East, across Africa, in Pakistan and in India. Certainly, while factors of power and control of resources are certainly a part of the equation, religion has to take some of the blame for the bloodshed. The "boundaries of communities" are not, as they are by and large here, ones that we take in stride. They are matters of life and death – often a gruesome death.

So I have to say that I do not need to have the word Christmas erased from public discourse. Some may find it impossible, but the fact that we can acknowledge and live with each other's holidays – let's not forget Diwali and Ramadan – expresses to me exactly what the Canadian spirit of multiculturalism is all about. I hope that others will agree.

My granddaughter will partner with her friend Ayesha in their Grinch-themed school play. Yet when I picked her up before Chanukah, as she hopped out of the car, she asked: "Know what my favourite holiday is, Savta? Chanukah!"

On education

Norma Raumel Joseph in Montreal

I am a teacher. I have been a teacher for 50 years. During that time, I have seen many phases in education come and go, as well as different regimes and diverse practices. In all that time, I have never been as worried as I am now.

The current crisis seems to arise from the high costs, or rather government concerns about cost overruns and lack of interest in adequate funding at realistic levels.

For example, our universities are terribly underfunded. And the funding we do have is often misspent. There are constraints on budgets, I know. But administrations put forward proposals for programs whose goals are merely numbers, without any consideration of their educational value. It begins to feel as though all that matters is that we have bodies in seats. Count the numbers. It matters not if the students want to study Buddhism – just bundle them all into a class on Hinduism. What difference does it make? Numbers dictate, not pedagogic principles. No one is asking what works educationally. We are only told to go by the numbers. How can that be healthy?

The results are drastic. Students are less interested and less motivated. In general, I am appalled at the reading and writing levels of most students. It used to be that some students could not participate at university levels. Now I see that many students may have the ability but do not have the drive or enthusiasm to do the work. Why bother? This is not just a problem in my classes. I have discussed these issues with colleagues in many institutions at all levels of schooling. This is not what we mean when we look for education.

What is it I do when I teach? In Judaism, we have the concept that education is a parent's job. In the Torah, we hear a variety of phrases that focus on this exchange: *v'shinantem* (study with them repeatedly), *v'limadetem* (learn with them) and *v'higaditah* (you will relate). All these commandments for teaching involve a dialogic pattern, a discussion between teacher and student in which the participation of both is necessary. Interaction is essential to this type of pedagogy. And today we understand the command to involve both sons and daughters.

So, whether the teacher is parent or hired professional, our tradition expects that both participants are active in the process. We don't want a passive student. But in order to have an active student, we must make the system interactive, open to the student's abilities and needs as well as to the system's demands. These requirements take time and attentiveness, not just some management's list of numbers and bottom-line accounting. Teaching is a creative and demanding ongoing task.

When I teach, I consider that there are three necessary components. First, there is the subject matter. Whatever topic I am teaching, I want my students to learn something about it, something substantive. Many people think that's all there is. Learn about women in Judaism and you are finished. But they are wrong. To begin with, I cannot teach all there is to know on that subject in one semester.

So what are my goals?

Aside from introducing the topic and teaching about many of its laws and ritual aspects, which are the substantive issues, I have two other goals in every topic I approach.

My students must learn where to go to learn more about any topic that we study together. In other words, my task is to teach them how to study about the issue we are discussing. Where are the resources? Where will they be able to go to find future good sources and new authors writing on these issues? How will they be able to further their knowledge after they leave my classes? That is a key principle of education: give the student the tools for future learning.

But by far the most important lesson, as far as I am concerned, is to teach the ability to think about any topic critically. Most students have not developed the ability to evaluate the material they read. They do not ask the serious questions about reliability and applicability.

Our task as educators is to show students how to read and think analytically, searching the material for sources and reasoning that fits the evidence and the world as they know it.

This is how I teach.

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Group mobilizes against United Church boycott

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

A group of United Church leaders is speaking out against the call from the church's General Council to boycott products made in Israel settlements.

"We believe that this decision of the General Council has damaged relationships that are vital to growing a just peace," the 47 members of United Against Boycott wrote in an open letter on the group's website. "We will work against the boycott campaign and the other policies including divestment and sanctions against Israel."

The General Council originally announced its intentions to boycott in August 2012, in a campaign called "Unsettling Goods," but the church reiterated the call last month, sending out packages to its congregations encouraging them to speak to their members about the issue.

Rev. John Joseph Mastandrea, who is both a minister and chair of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto (CJDT), wrote a letter to the head of the church, Moderator Rev. Gary Paterson, rejecting the General Council's boycott call.

Rev. Mastandrea is the minister of Metropolitan United Church, the Toronto church where the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI), a group consisting mostly of United Church members, hosted a Dec. 3 press conference launching a holiday boycott drive. The group then headed to a Canadian Tire store where members handed out leaflets urging shoppers to boycott home carbonation products made by SodaStream, which has a factory in the West Bank.

In his letter, co-written with CJDT executive director Barbara Boraks to Rev. Paterson, Rev. Mastandrea wrote that the boycott has "significantly damaged Christian-Jewish relations here in Canada, an inevitable consequence of the United Church lending its name to a movement that can only be characterized as anti-Israel."

He said his past conversations with Rev. Paterson about the boycott made him think the moderator was opposed to it, but he said Rev. Paterson's letter in the package sent to congregations last month showed otherwise.

"With [the Unsettling Goods campaign] efforts, we join with many other striving to bring peace with justice to the Holy Land," Rev. Paterson wrote. "This outstretched branch and these courageous actions for peace are signs of our belief that God calls us to embody and pass the peace of Christ so that all might live with fullness of life."

A spokesperson for Rev. Paterson said he wasn't available to comment for this story, but Patti Talbot, a United Church team leader, said that the "the boycott is not about Israel" but to show that "the settlement project is diminishing the possibility of peace."

She added: "The attempt is to focus not on Israel but the action of deepening the occupation through the building of settlements, and so this action has been to try to focus on the settlements as an obstacle to peace."

Rev. Mastandrea told *The CJN* that he and many United Church members resent the boycott initiative so much that they threatened to leave if their own individual churches endorse it.

"I contemplated rescinding my ordination, that we had crossed the line in the sand," Rev. Mastandrea said.

One member of the United Church's pension plan advisory committee did resign because of the boycott, according to the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

"I find the [United Church's] position on these matters to be offensive both personally and professionally," the anonymous member reportedly wrote. "Sometimes in life, things reach a point where one has to take a stand. That point has been overreached for me in this case."

Rev. Andrew Love, an Ottawa-area United Church minister, wrote a letter Dec. 7 in the *National Post* in which he criticized the boycott movement.

"[T]he heart and soul of the [church] is not embracing this boycott," he wrote. "Still further, a lot of congregations are strengthening ties with the Jewish community in their own neighbourhoods and distancing themselves from the boycott."

Rev. Mastandrea said one of UNJPPI's members attends his church and asked to book it for the group's press conference. The person who confirmed it didn't realize what it was for, he said.

He considered cancelling the group's reservation, but decided against it.

"We thought, if we cancel this, then it might draw more attention to it," he said. "As it was, nine people attended and there was no press, no media. It was a non-event, which is what we were hoping would happen."

He said average church members aren't concerned with boycotting Israel.

"People are more worried about their church staying alive. People are worried about day to day, caring for the sick and helping to feed the hungry," he said.

Len Rudner, director of community relations and outreach for the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, which is affiliated with CJDT, said Rev. Mastandrea's letter is helping to further Christian-Jewish relations. Rev. Mastandrea is hoping Rev. Paterson will read his letter and help bring together both supporters and opponents of the boycott, but because of church protocol, it may not be possible to change course until the next General Council meeting in 2015.

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Liberal Judaism in Israel gaining strength, Reform leader says

Ron Csillag
Special to The CJN

Rabbi Gilad Kariv

Is it lonely being a Reform Jew in Israel?

Rabbi Gilad Kariv has the short answer: "Not anymore."

Many progressive Israelis "want something more profound," said Rabbi Kariv, who heads the Reform movement in Israel. "Today, we are part of a growing movement. Today, we are definitely not alone anymore."

Indeed, a recent poll by the Israel Democracy Institute's Guttman Center for Surveys showed that nearly four per cent of Israelis self-identify as Reform (with another 3.2 per cent saying they are Conservative; 26 per cent saying they belong in the broad "Orthodox" camp; and 56 per cent saying they do not feel a sense of belonging to any denomination).

While some might dismiss the Reform numbers as paltry, to Rabbi Kariv, they reflect a movement toward liberal Judaism that is getting stronger.

Some observers put a certain spin on the survey, pointing out that the combined Reform and Conservative numbers outnumber the seven per cent of Israeli Jews who are haredi and garner a lot of attention.

Rabbi Kariv, executive director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, doesn't dwell on that. "You can understand that the Israeli Jewish mosaic is much more colourful than some institutions and figures are trying to present," he said.

"Reform Judaism is not a marginal force in Israel anymore," he argued. "Take for example that the same surveys that showed the four percent [Reform] figure also indicated that more than 30 per cent of all Israeli Jews have already encountered a Reform rabbi in action more than once: at a bar mitzvah, wedding, at a High Holiday service."

Rabbi Kariv was in Toronto recently for a series of meetings sponsored by ARZA Canada, the Canadian Reform movement's Zionist arm. He met with Reform congregations and communal agencies to spread the word about Reform in Israel.

He painted a picture of a movement that is no longer swimming against an Orthodox current.

There are 63 Reform preschools in Israel, up from 25 a decade ago, and 41 congregations, double the number from five years ago. There's a Reform youth movement, pre- and post-army programs and student groups.

"I'm the first to admit that what we are doing is only the beginning," Rabbi Kariv, 40, told *The CJN* in an interview between meetings. "When you look into what's happened in the last five to seven years, I think that we can honestly claim that Reform Judaism, from a generational perspective, is about to become one of the central players in the Jewish character of the State of Israel."

But is Reform still seen in Israel as an American and European import?

"I always remind people that [David] Ben-Gurion had a very heavy Polish accent," Rabbi Kariv replies. "Everything in Israel was built with the knowledge, help and the devotion of Jews who came from overseas. I'm proud of the fact that a few decades ago, it was newcomers from central Europe and North America who brought the notion of egalitarian Judaism to Israel."

The "vast majority" of Reform rabbis in Israel today were born there, he said, adding that when he was studying at the Reform seminary, there were four students in the program. Today, there are 40.

"I'm glad to say that today, the Israeli Reform movement brings into the global progressive Reform family a very clear Israeli taste." He points out that the latest siddur of the North American Reform movement contains a selection of Israeli songs – "a reflection of the input of the Israeli movement."

Non-Orthodox numbers in Israel have been buffeted by two Supreme Court rulings: In 1989, the court recognized as Jews immigrants who had undergone non-Orthodox conversions abroad.

In 2002, the high court ruled that Reform and Conservative conversions in Israel were valid and binding in the government but not on the rabbinate for "personal status" issues such as marriage, divorce or burial.

Rabbi Kariv said that since the latter ruling, the Reform and Conservative movements have been converting about 400 Israelis a year.

Because marriages in Israel are still controlled by the Orthodox establishment, "thousands of Israeli couples every year choose a Reform wedding and then go overseas to have a civil marriage," Rabbi Kariv pointed out. "They prefer this long journey to lying to themselves and to their families and going to an establishment they do not believe in."

Reform is a "very critical agent of change" in Israel today, the rabbi said, reflecting a "growing demand by a vast majority of Israelis to change what is happening not only in marriage but in basic democratic values of gender equality and freedom of religion."

Former CBC official describes life in 'Fort News'

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

From his position as executive vice-president of CBC, Richard Stursberg got a first-hand education about "Fort News," the affectionate nickname by which the corporation's news department was known.

"Like many, I thought the news department had a kind of left-wing cant to it," he said. When he joined the CBC in 2004, he saw it as anti-American, anti-Israel and anti-business.

To defend itself, Fort News had set up a moat, crenelated barriers and archers firing down on outsiders, he quipped.

Critics were considered outsiders who didn't know anything about the news business and didn't have a right to express an opinion.

"You're received in a hostile fashion," he said.

Stursberg outlined his experiences at the "Mother Corp" in the final instalment of Honest Reporting Canada's 2013 Insider Briefing Series. He spoke to about 60 people at the home of businessman Howard Sokolowski and Sen. Linda Frum. His subject: "Understanding the CBC bias against Israel."

His address, however, went beyond the narrow scope assigned to him, as he outlined the corporate culture he found at the CBC, its resistance to change, its siege mentality, and a news organization that "bites aggressively" if "you try to get involved with them."

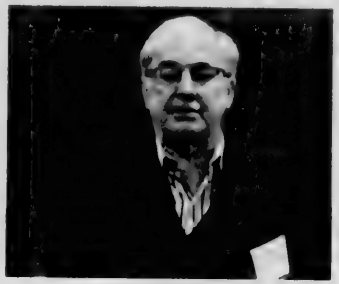
When he joined the CBC as vice-president in charge of English programming, only about 15 per cent of viewers watched the news. The rest opted for coverage from private networks. Suggestions on journalistic matters were received with accusation of compromising the integrity of the news department, he said.

One topic on which Stursberg clashed with the department was on use of the term, "terrorist." "Why are you characterizing terrorists as militants?" he asked.

He was told the department did not wish to take sides, that one group's terrorist is another's militant and that it was unclear how to define terrorism, even though there were internationally recognized definitions available.

"To my mind, that compromised the journalism and put everyone into the stance of moral equivalency, when there is no moral equivalency," he said.

Stursberg, who left CBC in 2010 and set down his experiences at the Corporation in a book titled, *The Tower of Babel: Sins, Secrets and Successes Inside the CBC*, said he found bias also in the coverage of the 2006 federal election. "The coverage was OK, except



Richard Stursberg

when it came to questions of social issues, such as abortion, religion and gay marriage." On those topics, he found coverage was "dismissive."

Afterwards, he set in motion an internal study to determine whether CBC reporting was fair, with a focus on three important stories: the SARS crisis, climate change and the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, and the Haiti earthquake.

The study looked at CBC's choice of spokespeople; the tone it set for items, whether positive or negative, and how issues were framed.

The findings were posted online with the expectation they would stimulate discussion. However, "It simply fell stillborn from the press." Nobody wanted to talk about it, Stursberg said.

When asked in a question period about the CBC being biased against Israel, Stursberg said a similar extensive study would be required to determine whether the CBC's coverage is biased, and that would prompt a discussion on the corporation's coverage of the region.

He acknowledged that former Jerusalem correspondent Neil Macdonald was a lightning rod for criticism over his reporting. (Honest Reporting has called Macdonald's reporting on Israel biased, unfair, and advancing a personal political perspective.)

Complaints about Macdonald dissipated somewhat after he was re-assigned to Washington, D.C., Stursberg said.

One questioner asked whether dissenting views were tolerated on the use of the term terrorism when Tony Burman ran the news department.

Stursberg said too much criticism could be "career limiting" and it was only after Burman left – he went on to head Al Jazeera's English language network – that the internal survey into fairness and balance was conducted.

In recent years, CBC's coverage has become "less tilted and is more balanced," though its reticence to use the word "terrorist" hasn't changed, he said.

Friends group to aid Holocaust survivors in Israel

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Avi Dichter wasn't retired for long as Israel's minister of Home Front Defence before he took on a new assignment last April as head of the Foundation for the Benefit of Holocaust Victims in Israel.

Like others of the "second generation" – children of survivors – he was intimately aware of the perils his parents' generation had experienced. He had heard their stories, or at least bits and pieces, since many, including his parents and uncle, kept much of it to themselves.

But this much he knew: His parents hailed from Rozisht, a shtetl in the Volyn region of prewar Poland. His father had been recruited into the Polish army and was the only member of his family to survive. He lost his parents, grandparents, brother and many members of his extended family.

His mother was one of eight brothers and sisters, but only she and a single brother survived. She witnessed her 10-year-old brother shot dead by the Gestapo for simply playing with Gentile friends outside the village ghetto.

Dichter, who also served as director of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security agency, tells his family's story by way of explaining why he is now dedicating himself to a volunteer position as head of the foundation.

He was in Toronto recently to meet supporters and help lay the groundwork for creation of a Friends group to support the foundation's work in Israel. An informal group is currently headed by businessman and philanthropist Joseph Lebovic, who provided $120,000 in seed money, which was matched by five anonymous donors.

Avi Dichter

Given the passage of time, survivors are elderly – a child survivor would be in their late 70s – and many are in poor financial shape. The agency's mandate is to ease the situations of survivors so they can live out their lives with dignity, he said.

The foundation operates on a budget of 500 million shekels ($152 million), provided by grants from the government of Israel and the Claims Conference. The majority of the funds – 410 million shekels ($124 million) – is earmarked for home care. The foundation is raising additional funds so it can boost home care visits from 16 hours per week to 25.

Marcus Benayon, a Toronto activist, said "a lot [of survivors] want to stay at home... Holocaust survivors are more prone to separation anxiety and not trusting others."

There are an estimated 192,000 Holocaust survivors living in Israel, of which 50,000 live below the poverty line. Thirty-five pass away every day.

One of the foundation's proposed projects is to help in the upkeep of survivors' homes, whether it be repairing pipes, replacing baths with showers to enhance their safety, or other maintenance items, said Dichter.

In addition, the foundation's goal is to help survivors pay for certain medical expenses, such as eyeglasses or dental implants. Dichter tells of a survivor who, thanks to the foundation's support, was able to enjoy a simple pleasure denied him for years. The elderly survivor had lost all his teeth and couldn't be fitted with dentures. Foundation funds helped get him implants. He called back to say that he was finally able to enjoy an apple after many years.

"When you hear that message, it gives people in the foundation [a boost] for a whole year," he said.

Dichter derives plenty of personal satisfaction from his work as well. After he left the military following the Yom Kippur War, he decided to join the Shin Bet and went to his mother to explain his career choice.

"She was a typical Jewish mother. When I finished my term in the army 40 years ago, my mother said, 'Where are you going to study medicine?' I said, 'Mom, I'm not going to study medicine.' She said, 'A lawyer is not bad.' I said, 'Mom, I'm not going to the school of law.' 'So what are you going to study?' 'I'm going to learn a new language.'

"'English is important today,' she said.

"'It's not going to be English.'

"'What language are you going to study?'

"I said, 'Arabic.'

"She turned to my father and said in Yiddish, 'The kid should see a doctor.'"

"She couldn't understand it to the last day of her life," said Dichter.

"My mother in heaven now probably has a little bit of naches [satisfaction] from her son," he said.

Dichter on Iran

You can include Avi Dichter as among those skeptical about the recently concluded agreement between Iran and the P5+1 nations.

Contradicting official pronouncements that followed the deal, Dichter said there is nothing in it that speaks about dismantling Iran's nuclear enrichment program. It merely calls for a temporary halt for six months.

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UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Rich culture of Sephardi Jewry is preserved and revived

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

In an effort to preserve and promote Sephardi Jewish culture, Yehuda Azoulay, founder of the Sephardic Legacy Series Institute, is leading the charge in providing English-speaking Sephardim with the resources to explore their rich culture and history.

Azoulay, who founded the Toronto-based organization in 2007, believes that if Sephardi Jewry is not promoted and information for English-speaking and second-generation Sephardi Jews is not made available, the Sephardi traditions and culture are at risk of being lost.

Azoulay said his inspiration to launch the organization came about when he was just a teenager studying at Yeshivat Mikdash Melech in Jerusalem, when he would attend lectures delivered by the former Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, Ovadia Yosef, who died in October.

"I was attending his speeches and lectures. That is one of the things that inspired me. My relationship with Rabbi Ovadia Yosef was really big. I also had that passion growing up with my family," he said.

When Azoulay would visit Judaica stores in North American and Israeli cities looking for books written in English about his Sephardi heritage, he thought to himself, "Why can't I find any information about Sephardi Jewry?

"I thought, 'This is crazy, and it frustrated me.' There is nothing out there on our awesome heritage and it's time to make a difference… I was waiting for someone else to do it, but I was getting older and by 20 years old, I came out with my first book."

His first book, *The Legacy of Leaders*, is a biographical history of Sephardi rabbis, published by the New Jersey-based Israel Book Shop Publications.

Yehuda Azoulay

"There was material out there, but not enough. Before my book on Sephardic rabbis, there were maybe two or three, but nothing well-researched, nothing well-done, nothing professional and that bothered me," he said.

Azoulay, who holds a rabbinical degree and is enrolled in a master's program at Yeshiva University, has since published a total of five books, written numerous articles and organized programming for Sephardi communities across North America.

Perhaps most impressive was his recent undertaking, which brought together Sephardi community leaders, rabbis, U.S. senators and philanthropists in Washington D.C. for the first time in history to celebrate more than 360 years of Sephardi Jewry in America late last month.

"The Inaugural Tribute Luncheon Honoring the Contributions of Sephardic Jewry in America" attracted politicians including Texas senator Ted Cruz, Minnesota congresswoman Michele Bachmann, and New York senator Charles Schumer.

Florida congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen spoke about the legacy of Emma Lazarus, an American-born Sephardi Jewish poet, whose famous quote, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," has been immortalized in bronze on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty.

Jacob Abecassis, founder of Sephardic Community of Toronto (SCOT), a Toronto-based non-profit organization, was an honouree at the U.S. event.

Abecassis said he thought the Sephardic Legacy Series is an important initiative that will better document Sephardi heritage, culture and figures, which are not as well documented as Ashkenazi traditions.

"[Sephardim have] already done it in France, where they are very organized, and in Latin America – the Spanish-speaking Sephardim are very well organized as well," he said.

"I think for the English-speaking Sephardim, it's getting lost. We haven't documented as much and we don't practice it as much."

But Azoulay, Abecassis and many others are working to change that.

"This is a revolution. People are joining, people are funding, getting involved. There are events non-stop. In Ottawa, we're going to honour Sephardic Jewry at Parliament Hill next year," Azoulay said. "We're going to bring [Liberal MP] Irwin Cotler, [Canadian Foreign Minister] John Baird, and we want to try to bring [Prime Minister] Stephen Harper in as the keynote speaker."

Until then, Azoulay promises to keep producing material that promotes his culture.

"I want to finish about a dozen books on rabbis, and then after that, totally shift myself into cultural documentary films, which I'm starting to look into," he said, adding that he's working on a documentary about the roughly 10,000 Sephardi Jews in Toronto. "I don't want to stop. I'm addicted."

For more information, visit www.sephardiclegacy.com.

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Hadassah College's career focus attracts haredi

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Israel's haredi community, perhaps best known for its devotion to Torah learning, appears to be developing an interest in biotechnology and optometry as well.

At least that's the conclusion one might derive based on enrolment patterns of young haredim signing up for a course of studies at Jerusalem's Hadassah Academic College.

The college, which was founded in 1970, last year announced a special course of study aimed at the city's haredi community.

"When we opened the program for the ultra-Orthodox one year ago, we received 1,000 applications in six days," said Shimon Arbel, the school's director of institutional advancement. "We had budgeted for 50 students."

In the end, thanks to supplementary government funding, the school was able to accept 260 haredi students, 60 per cent of them women. In the program's second year, some 560 students were accepted and the college expects the number to grow to 700 in future years, Arbel added.

Arbel was in Toronto last week to raise the profile of the little-known college and pitch its merits to potential supporters.

"Toronto is known throughout the Jewish world as perhaps the strongest Zionist Diaspora community," said Arbel, himself a native of Hamilton who made aliyah 40 year ago.

The college's outreach program with local haredim is one aspect of its work and is part of a broader cultural change re-shaping the haredi community. "There is tremendous change in that community," Arbel said. "Large parts of it want to enter the workforce, because they do not want to be poor."

Shimon Arbel

Special accommodations have been put in place for them – from ensuring teachers of the same gender to adding a preparatory year of study in Meah Shearim on top of the college's four-year programs. Those who have devoted their lives to religious studies are offered a one-year remedial course in math, science, literature and languages. They make up in one year all the courses they missed in 12, Arbel stated.

So far, the program appears to be paying off. "They've proven to be excellent students," and seem to be gravitating to biotechnology and optometry, Arbel said.

The college has implemented similar preparatory programs for Israeli Arab students, who make up 18 per cent of the student body. They hail mostly from the country's north. The extra year is geared to improving their language skills.

An additional program, paid for by the city government, is aimed at young Palestinians from East Jerusalem.

Both the Israeli Arab students and the East Jerusalem Palestinians seem to favour the school's in para-medical courses, Arbel said.

The college offers bachelor's and master's degrees in career-focused professions. Courses include those in health and life sciences, computer science, design and communications, government and social services.

Hadassah College was established by the Hadassah-WIZO movement but severed ties with the organization in 2008, when the woman's group decided to focus its efforts on the Jerusalem hospital that bears its name.

The move proved advantageous for the college, which has become the fastest growing educational institution in Israel, expanding at a rate of 10 per cent per year, compared to 1.2 per cent growth for other Israeli universities, Arbel stated.

About 2,600 students attend courses at the college's downtown Jerusalem campus. It prides itself on its low drop-out rate – five per cent – and the fact that 90 per cent of graduates find jobs within six months of leaving the school.

"Half the students are the first in their families to go to a college, so they come to us highly motivated to succeed," he said.

There are lots of other pluses associated with the college, Arbel continued: it plays a strategic role in revitalizing the downtown core and is the only institution of higher learning in central Jerusalem; half the student body originates outside the city, and is representative of the diversity of the entire country; Jews, Arabs, men and women study together; the school is student-centred and is invested in each one's success.

The government of Israel is the school's main financial benefactor, providing 40 per cent of its budget. Ten per cent derives from tuition. The remainder comes from supporters both inside Israel and in the Diaspora. Hence Arbel's visit to Toronto. The college is playing an important role in the development of Jerusalem and should be an institution looked on favourably by philanthropists within the Jewish world, he suggested.

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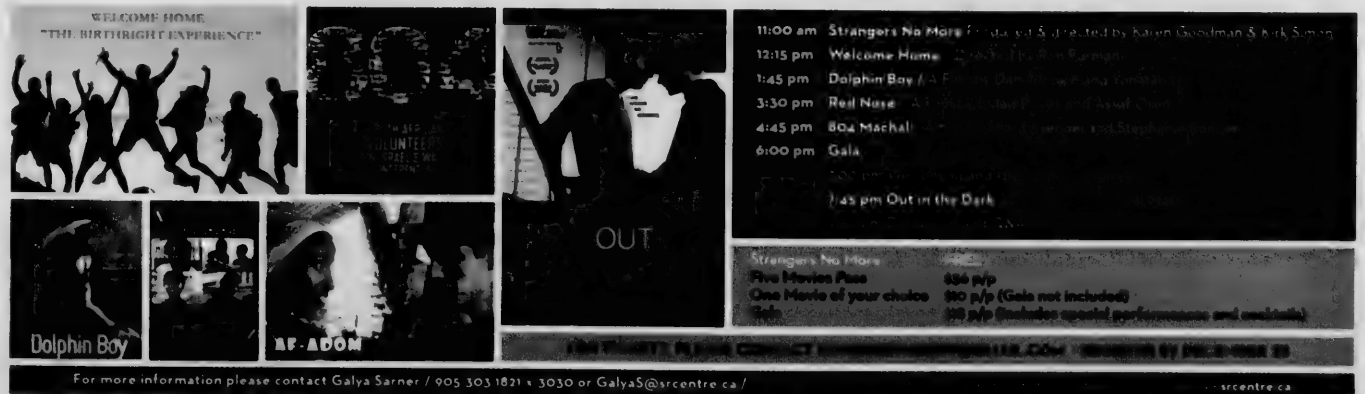
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Pushing the door on tuition wide open

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Between the time of my writing my last article on making Jewish high school free and its appearance in the paper, I was thrilled to see the announcement that Robbins Hebrew Academy (RHA), UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Avi Chai Foundation have joined together to cap tuition at 15 per cent of gross income for parents with three or more children in the school who are earning between $200,000 and $300,000.

This is a great start, but it does not begin to scratch the surface. As the sponsors themselves acknowledge, this will affect somewhere between six and 12 families and does nothing to help pay for any additional children who may be in high school. The importance of this initiative lies not in its initial impact – minimal at best – but in creating a model to expand and implement in all schools for all grades. The door is ajar and we must now work to push it wide open.

Doing so is much less costly than one might think. To cap every parent in this city's tuition at 15 per cent of gross income would cost $10 million to $15 million a year – or approximately 10 per cent of the current cost of Jewish education. A token investment with a great return!

I have often written about the billions of dollars sitting in Jewish foundations, distributing three to five per cent a year, ensuring that funds will be available in perpetuity. While they worry about what will be in 100 or 200 years, thousands of Jews are assimilating simply because they lack a solid Jewish education. It is startling that only 25 per cent of children in the day school system are on tuition subsidy. It is not that 75 per cent of Jews can afford the $65,000 a year it takes to send three kids to day school. Rather, the vast majority doesn't even consider it, the costs being beyond anything they can possibly afford. If foundations would distribute just 10 per cent of their funds yearly, hundreds of millions would be available to help produce Jews who will be contributors to our community for generations to come.

This is where the Avi Chai Foundation can serve as a model for us. This innovative foundation, set up in 1984, distributes millions every year to help ensure a dynamic Jewish future. They can do so because the foundation is set up to cease to exist come Dec. 31, 2019. The trustees have the wisdom and foresight to understand that it is not their responsibility to fund the Jewish people in perpetuity from the grave. They will do their part for a generation or more, but then Jewish leaders of the future must take over. They understand very well that there is no such thing as funding in perpetuity. It would be beyond shocking if more than one per cent of foundations today, regardless of their spending habits, will still exist 150 years from now.

The best way to guarantee eternity is not by preserving assets, but by spending down those assets so that there will be a greater Jewish future. I plead with those of you who are blessed to be sitting on millions of dollars to distribute it in your lifetime or soon thereafter. That will be the greatest gift to the community and your eternal legacy.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

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Debunking those Internet rumours

Jewish & Digital

Mark Mietklewicz

Did you get that email about the company that's boycotting Israel? Or the message about what that anti-Semitic actor said? Or the politician who trivialized the Holocaust? Actually, those events may never have happened. You could be on the receiving end of an Internet hoax.

I regularly get emails warning me not to patronize a company because it's adopted an anti-Israel policy. After a bit of investigating, I find the rumour often turns out to be just that. Israel and world Jewry have enough real enemies without maligning innocent organizations or individuals. When you blindly forward something that's not true, you provoke fights against injustices that simply aren't there.

Here's how you can spot whether that accusation really is true – or merely unsubstantiated lashon hara:

• Be wary about statements like "This is NOT a hoax." It probably is.

• Look for the telltale phrase, "Forward this to everyone you know!" The more urgent the plea, the more suspect the message.

• Watch for overly emphatic language, as well as frequent use of UPPERCASE LETTERS and multiple exclamation points!!!! [http://bit.ly/jrumor1]

(Oh, and one more thing. If you happen to get a letter from a wealthy benefactor in Nigeria, don't give up your day job just yet. [http://bit.ly/jrumor2])

Once you've discarded those emails, you are left with some that seem plausible… but you're just not sure. Here are some that made the circuit recently:

• CNN has fired Israeli Jews at its Jerusalem bureau while keeping its Arab employees. FALSE. According to CNN, it reorganized its bureau in 2012, employing four Jewish employees out of seven.

• Celebrity chef Paula Deen has blamed "the Jews" for her firing from the Food Network. FALSE. The rumour originated at the humour website, *The Daily Currant*.

• Norway will soon be "Judenrein" (clean of Jews), as its last 819 Jews are emigrating due to the rise of anti-Semitism. FALSE. The Jewish population of Norway is approximately 1,700 and there has not been any significant emigration recently.

These are all examples of falsehoods gathered – and debunked – at the "Internet Rumors" page of the Anti-Defamation League website. [http://bit.ly/jrumor3]

When deciding whether to spring into action, I recommend the ADL and two other sites that do a very good job of disproving – or validating – online rumours: snopes.com and truthorfiction.com. These sites deal with ALL types of rumours, but there seems to be an inordinate number of questionable stories about Israel and Jews out there.

Slightly different but also worth visiting is factcheck.org, which focuses on setting the record straight on American politicians and politics.

Sometimes mistakes occur and the party involved takes responsibility, apologizes and corrects the record. Or at least tries to. The steamroll of angry emails fails to take note of the apology or offer forgiveness. A few years ago, an Israeli-based travel agency did receive a letter from the Marriott hotel chain designating Jerusalem as an "occupied Palestinian srea." Emails went out calling for a boycott. Marriott corrected the error and acknowledged that it was remiss in not sending a letter of apology to the offended Israeli travel agent earlier. But who knows how many accusatory emails are still travelling through cyberspace? [http://bit.ly/jrumor4]

Keep that in mind BEFORE YOU FORWARD that piece of email!!!!!!

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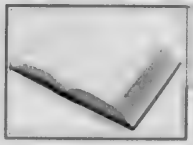
Rabbi N. Daniel Korobkin



Rabbinic Reflections

I write this on a bus travelling through the Galil, the northern part of Israel. Our shul, Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto (The BAYT), goes on an annual mission - partially to tour, but mostly to lend support and solidarity. We often travel to Judea and Samaria, as a show of support to areas that are under constant criticism over issues of sovereignty. But this year, we decided to go north.

No one contests Israel's sovereignty over cities like Haifa and Safed. But there's a different kind of battle that is taking place on a daily basis in Israel's northern cities.

The city of Nazareth Illit has approximately 60,000 people, 82 per cent of them Jewish. It is a very important industrial city, housing the great Elite-Strauss food conglomerate and many other manufacturers. One of the highlights of our trip was touring the Elite factory, seeing how all the chocolates and confections are made, and then sampling all-you-can-eat chocolate at the end of the tour!

Adjacent to Nazareth Illit is the much larger city of Nazareth, the largest Arab city in Israel. In all, there are approximately 250,000 Arabs in the area. Sadly, while the Arab numbers are growing, the Jewish numbers in the area are not. Even in the predominantly Jewish Nazareth Illit, Arabs are coming forward with cash offers on homes in Jewish neighbourhoods, offering above market value.

Without a bullet being fired, without a protest in the UN, Arabs are slowly taking over the northern cities of Israel. Since so much attention is being (rightfully) placed on the "territories," many of us are losing sight of the important demographic struggle that is taking place in the Galil.

That is why the "Garin Torani," the religious Jewish community of Nazareth Illit, was so grateful for our visit. They are lonely in their struggle to hold on to the north, and they were greatly encouraged that a group from Toronto would wish to support them in their efforts.

The north is no less Israel than Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. Please remember this the next time you visit Israel. Take a trip to Nazareth Illit, to Carmiel, to the Galil and Golan. See the ancient city of Tzippori, which was the home of Rabbi Judah the Prince, and where the Mishnah was written. See Gamla, where a stronghold of Jews resisted the Romans shortly before the 1st century CE siege on Jerusalem, in an episode of our history as important as Masada.

During your travels, don't forget the mystical city of Safed, home to the great Tannaitic sage and author of the Zohar, Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, and host to the great 16th-century kabbalistic movement of Rabbi Isaac Luria and his disciples. You will see vestiges of a magical Judaism that is filled with art, music, and spirituality.

As Canadians, we should appreciate the great north. By visiting the Galil and Golan, you'll not only see a breathtaking part of Israel; you'll also strengthen our brethren in the process.

Rabbi Daniel Korobkin is senior rabbi of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation (The BAYT).

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Smaller shuls offer room for growth

From the Bimah
Rabbi Catharine Clark

To build a full Jewish life for you and your family, it is time to become part of a small Jewish community. This Shabbat at Congregation Or Shalom in London, Ont., three members of the synagogue will lead services, one member will chant Torah, another will chant Haftorah and two more will prepare kiddush for their fellow members. On Monday evening, another community member will teach at the JCC in an adult Jewish education program organized almost entirely by volunteers. Later in the week, our youth director, a lifelong member of the congregation, will lead the elementary school children in fun, experiential learning activities. A similar story could be told about the Jewish community in Halifax and Saskatoon or about one of the few small congregations in Toronto or Montreal.

But in one of the mega-shuls in Canada's largest Jewish communities, the senior rabbi, cantor, assistant rabbi, chazzan sheini, education director, membership liaison, events coordinator and caterer will perform these duties for you. It will be convenient and easy that these professionals will fulfil all the essentials of Jewish communal life for you. Unfortunately, convenience and ease do not create an empowered spiritual life for anyone, especially not for a Jew.

Judaism sets high standards for each of its adherents. In contrast, in Catholicism, only a priest is required to follow certain behaviours that are considered holy, such as celibacy, and only a priest can perform many of the rituals, called sacraments, in that religion. Our theology of religious leadership is different. Each adult Jew is obligated in the 613 commandments. Any of us could witness a marriage and, with some Hebrew and extra study, perform a funeral. With more Hebrew and the ability to carry a tune and keep the beat, any Jew could serve as *shaliach tzibbur*, the prayer leader who carries the prayers of the congregation to God.

For lay leaders to perform these sacred tasks, however, there must be room for them on the bimah, in the classroom, in the synagogue kitchen and on the programming calendar. In communities with many Jewish communal professionals, it is difficult to create this space. The cantor, assistant rabbi, synagogue program director, Jewish educator and caterer, understandably, want to keep their jobs. Small Jewish communities, though, have long relied on lay leaders to fill at least some of these vital roles.

You could be one of these lay leaders. You just need to be in a community where there is room for you. For some of you, finding the space to develop your Jewish skills will mean switching membership from a huge congregation to a smaller shul in the same city. For others, you might decide to move to a smaller Jewish community.

If the latter option is right for you, I hope the smaller Jewish community you choose is London. You will find an absence of gridlock and more affordable housing. You will find a community that soon knows you, welcomes your interests and helps you develop your talents. I look forward to meeting you – and to seeing you on the bimah.

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THOMAS (MINUK) ALI

New dementia home aims for 'quality of life'

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Anne Snowdon has a personal interest in One Kenton Alzheimer's Centre of Excellence, B'nai Brith Canada's new Alzheimer's home, built in partnership with the Ivey International Centre for Health Innovation.

Snowdon, who chairs the centre and is a nurse by training, said that her mother, 87, has Alzheimer's, and she understands first hand the impact the disease has on families. "The project is especially relevant to me because it [caters to] a population that is near and dear to my heart."

Alzheimer's and dementia are increasing around the globe, she said, and research is relatively limited. "That means there is no cure on the horizon. Wonderful strides are being made, but there is no magic pill to curb it."

The impetus for One Kenton, she said, is to create a meaningful environment for Alzheimer's and dementia patients, and their families.

"Up until now, the focus has always been on managing patients, but we want to create the best quality of life for them."

As a nurse, she said, she realizes that there have been no gains in caring for Alzheimer's patients in decades.

"I trained 30 years ago, and things are still the same. I don't mean patients are getting bad care. They are safe and cared for, but the institutions are not promoting meaningful and purposeful lives," Snowdon said..

"This is the impetus that drives this project. [We] got involved because it is an important one. Our goal is to promote quality of life."

When Ivey was approached by B'nai Brith, she said, "I thought, 'Wow, this is a match made in heaven.'"

Isaac Weinroth, 37, executive director of One Kenton, speaking on Dec. 9, the day the first residents were due to move in, said B'nai Brith first got involved in building One Kenton in response to unmet needs in the community.

"B'nai Brith realized that Alzheimer's was increasing in the general community, and the only option available to care for patients and their families was long-term institutions."

Weinroth, who has a master's in health administration and a degree in gerontology, said that at age 13 he volunteered at a geriatric health centre and went on to work with seniors. "I'm passionate about it."

He said that One Kenton, which can accommodate 45 people in 44 suites – one is for a dementia patient and a spouse – is a retirement home for people with Alzheimer's and dementia.

"The whole residence is designated for dementia care. It's built in a retirement home model, but with care for the residents."

The One Kenton brochure stresses that it's "not a home. It's home.

"Everything from the architectural layout to the colour selections, lighting, furnishings, patterns, and common areas has been designed to promote a calming, comfortable environment."

Weinroth said residents can bring in their own furniture and personal items if they choose. "They can also eat on their own schedule. They do what they do at home, and eat when they're hungry. There is no such thing as missing a meal. If someone is not ready to eat at lunch time, they can eat at 2 p.m. There is always food available, and all food is certified kosher under COR."

He said it's the only retirement home in Canada that caters exclusively to residents with dementia.

"The setting is adaptable, and every individual has their needs met."

He added that each resident has a core team made up of a nurse, personal support staff, dietary staff, program staff, housekeeper and a laundry person. "All staff, though, is hands-on. If someone asks me to take them to the dining room, I'm happy to do so, and so will any other staff. We're all personally involved in residents' care."

He said residents can have visitors at any time, and can have them stay for meals or holiday celebrations."

"One Kenton is a place to live, not a place to be. It will be full of life with musical performances, holiday celebrations, and High Holiday services."

Reena in the News

Volunteer Services at Reena

By: Arlene Margolese
Manager, Volunteer Services / Faith & Cultural Services

Everyone has something great to offer so why not consider making that important difference in someone's life by sharing your skills, talents or energy volunteering at Reena?

Reena is blessed with many caring and talented volunteers who share their high energy and skills throughout the agency. We are deeply appreciative of the exceptional efforts they so enthusiastically contribute to almost every department and program within Reena. From direct service and administration, gift shop sales, reception coverage, greenhouse gardening care, young to seasoned volunteers work with young to seasoned individuals supported by Reena. Many of our volunteers have received rewards for their great work and we applaud their achievements and appreciate all that they bring to the people they so wholeheartedly support.

Our latest initiative centres around the ***New Senior*** or ***Boomer Volunteers***, utilizing their many years of experience, expertise and maturity to enhance our agency. Boomer Volunteers facilitate the health and fitness of the people Reena supports by acting as fitness coaches to help Reena participants improve their health and wellbeing. In the long term, we anticipate that Boomer Volunteers will be in an ideal position to set an example for the rest of the community by becoming ambassadors and spokespersons for the inclusion of individuals with a developmental disability into fitness programs and healthier lifestyles. This will promote their broader inclusion in the community at large.

There is still a need for more Boomer Volunteers to fill positions in the program.

We ask you to join our team and call Arlene Margolese, Manager, Faith & Cultural Services - Volunteer Services, at 905-2690 ext. 2111 or email: amargolese@reena.org for further details.

Your participation as a volunteer will improve the lives of people with a developmental disability supported by Reena on so many levels.

www.reena.org

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Four people killed as a result of the storm

Continued from page 1

"Thanks to the preparedness of security and rescue forces, and thanks to the co-operation of civilians, many lives were saved," he said at the weekly cabinet meeting, which was postponed from morning to mid-afternoon because of difficulty in accessing Jerusalem.

Netanyahu said Israel had grappled well with the storm, but that there are still challenges ahead. He dismissed criticism of the way national and local governments prepared for the storm, echoing a statement made a day earlier by an Israel Electric Corporation official that "we functioned better than developed countries that such storms afflict more often."

Netanyahu said the priority was and remained "saving lives," and warned drivers to take particular care on the still-icy roads that were expected to refreeze overnight Sunday.

Public Security Minister Yitzhak Aharonovitch said there were certainly "lessons to be learned" from the crisis, but rejected criticism of the authorities' handling of the storm. He denied there had been a major failure, and said there was no place for a commission of inquiry.

According to the electric company, as of Sunday evening, 14,000 homes remained without power, 6,000 of them in Jerusalem. It said great efforts were being made to return electricity to hard-hit areas around the capital and in northern Israel. Many of the homes were in settlements in the West Bank isolated by the storm.

Snow snarled traffic in Jerusalem. *(Israel Sun photo)*

Four people were reportedly killed as a result of the storm, which brought snow as far south as Dimona and heavy rains elsewhere, although there were no fatalities in Jerusalem.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem said it would hold classes only after 12 p.m. Monday.

Earlier in the day, police finally reopened all the main roads to and from Jerusalem, after more than 2-1/2 days of closures because of the heavy snow.

Buses started to run again inside the city in the early afternoon, but mainly in central areas. The light rail system was still out of service and was unlikely to restart before Monday. The municipality was bringing in 100 tons of salt from the Dead Sea to help de-ice city roads. Drivers were told to stay off the roads inside the city if possible.

Still, several neighbourhoods in the capital, as well as in the northern city of Safed and in the Golan Heights, remained under several centimetres of snow.

Some 80 villages and communities around Jerusalem were without power at the height of the storm, and 30 were still disconnected on Sunday. At least three villages in the Golan Heights, which is better equipped to handle storms and snowfall, had been without electricity over the weekend, but were reconnected Saturday night. Power to affected Upper Galilee areas was set to be restored by Sunday night.

Israel went through another freezing night Saturday, with roads icing over nationwide, but the storm was winding down and no further snowfall was forecast. Much of Jerusalem and northern Israel were still deep in snow, and much of the rest of the country was still grappling with stormy conditions.

In the West Bank, IDF helicopters were used to evacuate those who needed emergency medical attention, including, on Sunday morning, a mother and her three children in the settlement of Haresha who were suffering from hypothermia.

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat said Saturday night that the capital was still in "a state of emergency," grappling with a "storm of extraordinary proportions." Netanyahu called it a "once-in-a-century" storm, and said efficient co-ordination had averted the kind of loss of life that other countries have suffered in similar circumstances.

There were 40 to 60 centimetres of snow in Jerusalem and between 60 centimetres and one metre in the Golan.

The storm, which hit hard in Syria, Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza and Egypt as well, was largely over in Israel by Saturday night.

On Saturday afternoon, the bodies of two men from the Bedouin town of Rahat were found by rescue services after three days of searching. The men had set out on Wednesday in an SUV and went missing near the Dead Sea. Overnight Friday into Saturday, a one-year-old toddler in Lod died of injuries that he sustained when a heater placed in his room to combat the severe cold caught fire. The toddler's father sustained light injuries trying to save him.

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Netanyahu stresses need for peace deal with Palestinians

Kotel belongs to all, PM tells Reform group

Times of Israel and JTA

The Western Wall belongs to all Jews, including Reform Jews, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said emphatically in a Dec. 15 address to the Union for Reform Judaism Biennial 2013 via satellite.

"I'm committed to making sure all Jews feel at home at our holiest site," he said. "Israel is and must continue to be the homeland of the entire Jewish People. That is the place where all Jews, including Reform Jews, experience nothing less than audacious hospitality."

He said the Wall, though in Israel, belonged to the entire Jewish People, and that he was determined to ensure that all Jews felt at home there. "The Western Wall is in Israel, but it belongs to all of you – it belongs to you and to me, to all of us," he said, promising to ensure that the Wall "is a source of unity, not division, a place where all Jews feel at home."

Netanyahu thanked Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the Reform movement, for his efforts in support of an interdenominational compromise at the Western Wall. He also thanked the Reform movement for its efforts to strengthen Jewish identity and American Jews' connection to Israel.

Rabbi Jacobs, in turn, praised Netanyahu for his role in securing an agreement with the Women of the Wall movement over an alternative section of the wall to be used for non-Orthodox prayer.

"To us, it is a symbol of the day when those from the non-Orthodox streams will stand equal with the Orthodox rabbinate and community in the eyes of the state," Rabbi Jacobs said.

"It is a symbol of your efforts and ours to resist the attempts of those who would turn back the equality advances of women in Israel. Before all those assembled here, I want to acknowledge your personal role in achieving at the Kotel something that, when fulfilled, will be a historic transformation."

Benjamin Netanyahu *[Flash90 photo]*

Netanyahu also warned the audience about Iranian duplicity and discussed the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Netanyahu began by repeating his frequent message that the best way to stop Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons is through maintaining economic sanctions alongside the threat of military attack.

"Iran is bent on a nuclear weapons program," he said. "We would seek a peaceful solution. We cannot allow this regime to have a nuclear weapons capacity."

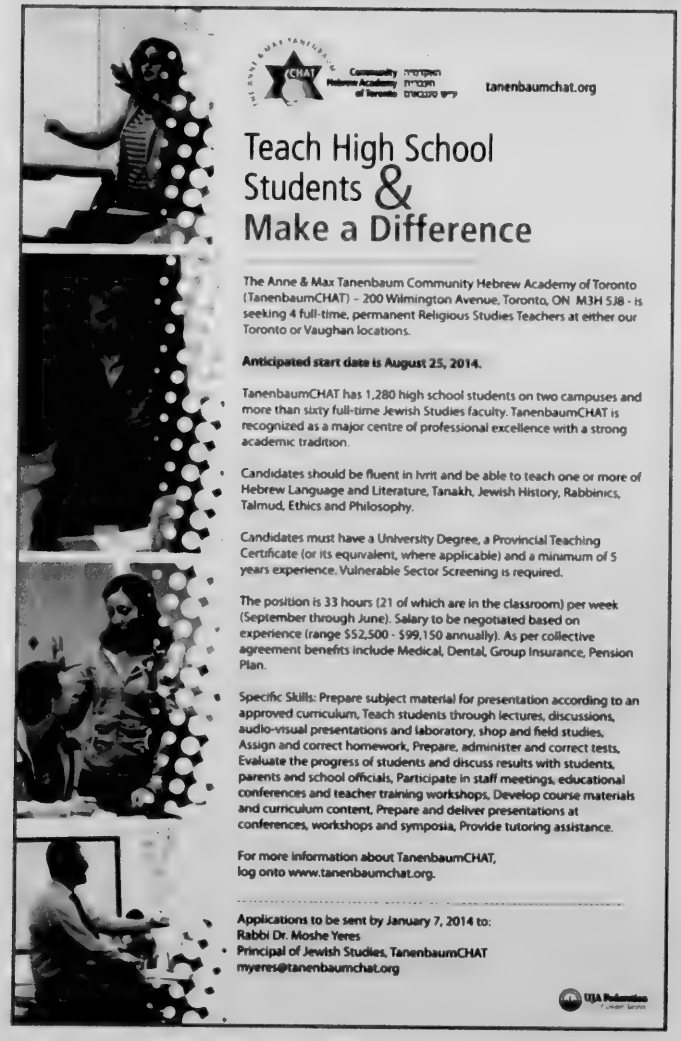
Netanyahu said that Iran's repression of civil rights at home, as well as its support for terror abroad, belie the friendly diplomatic posture its leaders have struck recently. "It talks the talk, but it walks the walk of death every day," he said.

Netanyahu repeated his call for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to recognize Israel as a Jewish state. He also emphasized the need for a peace deal that will ensure Israel's security.

"To reach this historic peace, I'm ready to make difficult decisions," he said. "I made these decisions because I wanted to give negotiations a chance. Peace is not a one-way street. It's a two-way street."

Netanyahu's speech Sunday via video feed to the conference's closing plenary in San Diego repeated many of the principal points of his address to the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly last month in Jerusalem.

TimesofIsrael.com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UJA Federation

CERN accepts Israel as full member

The Times of Israel

Israel was admitted Thursday as a full member of CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, after the governing council of the prestigious facility voted in favour of accepting an application submitted by the Israeli government.

Israel will be the atomic research centre's 21st official member and its first non-European associate.

The resolution to accept Israel was unanimously adopted by the CERN Council last week.

CERN, located in Switzerland, operates the $10 billion Large Hadron Collider, which creates high-energy collisions of subatomic particles.

Israel joined the organization as an observer in 1991, and dozens of Israeli scientists had taken part in various research projects associated with the organization, including the discovery of the Higgs boson, known popularly as the "God particle," last year.

Israel's admission to the research facility will allow the country to participate in tenders related to the particle accelerator, to be represented in the management of the organization and to submit applications for scholarships for Israeli students.

"The Israeli scientific community has brought a great deal to CERN over the years," CERN director general Rolf Heuer said. "I am looking forward to welcoming Israel as our 21st member state and to intensifying our collaboration."

Israel will have to allocate close to $14.3 million a year to the institute, *Ha'aretz* reported.

"As a member of the fact-finding mission that assessed Israel's readiness for CERN membership, I was extremely impressed with the quality of Israeli research and researchers," said CERN research director Sergio Bertolucci.

The formal signing ceremony will take place next month.

"This is a day of pride and satisfaction for Israeli science and we congratulate all the scientists involved in this achievement and whose abilities bring honor to the State of Israel," Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman said following CERN's announcement.

"The decision is also an impressive achievement for Israeli diplomacy and a sign of respect to the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has led this effort for many years," he said.

"This is a very special moment for Israeli science and Israel," said Eliezer Rabinovici, chair of the Israeli Academy of Science's National Committee for High Energy Physics and professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

"It reflects decades in which many Israeli scientists, technicians and Israeli industry have contributed significantly to the European scientific effort at CERN. It also has a sense of return. We are becoming full members of the crew at a most exciting period in which CERN is about to scan new horizons."

TimesofIsrael.com

Peace remains U.S. goal: Kerry

JTA

JERUSALEM — A final status peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians remains the U.S. goal, Secretary of State John Kerry said.

"Our goal remains as it always has been – for the Israelis and Palestinians to reach a final status agreement – not an interim agreement, a final status agreement," Kerry said Dec.13 in Jerusalem after meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas.

"And both parties remain committed to fulfilling their obligations to stay at the table and negotiate hard during the nine-month period that we set for that."

The meeting Dec. 12 between Kerry and Abbas was cut short due to a major snowstorm. Officials were concerned Kerry's motorcade wouldn't be able to leave the area. Kerry met Dec. 13 with Netanyahu in Jerusalem in a meeting postponed a day because of the storm.

Kerry told reporters that the sides continue to discuss the "critical issues," which he identified as borders, security,

John Kerry

refugees, Jerusalem, mutual recognition, and an end to conflict and to all claims.

He also reiterated the United States' commitment to Israel's security.

"We are working on an approach that both guarantees Israel's security and fully respects Palestinian sovereignty," he said.

Kerry also said the third release of Palestinian prisoners, pledged by Israel to bring the Palestinians back to the negotiating table more than three months ago, would take place Dec. 29 as scheduled, despite his calls for a delay.

He wants to prevent another Israeli announcement of new settlement construction approvals that could disrupt or potentially halt the current peace process.

Plundered Syrian Torah scrolls said to be held by Al Qaeda linked rebels

Elhanan Miller
The Times of Israel

Torah scrolls and other Judaica plundered from an ancient Damascus synagogue are being held by an Islamist group inside Syria, which is demanding the release of prisoners captured by the Assad regime in return for the items, *The Times of Israel* has learned.

Reports on the destruction and looting of the millennia-old Jobar synagogue in Damascus emerged as early as March, but those responsible for the theft have never been clearly identified, as government and opposition forces traded accusations.

The Jobar synagogue – said to be 2,000-years-old – was built on the site where the prophet Elijah is said to have concealed himself from persecution and anointed his successor, Elisha, as a prophet. It was badly damaged in March by mortars reportedly fired by Syrian government forces. Some reports say the building was destroyed.

A source involved in negotiating for the release of the Judaica items and their extraction from Syria, speaking to *The Times of Israel* on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, said the objects were being held inside Syria by a group affiliated with the Al-Nusra Front, an Islamist group associated with Al Qaeda and labelled a terrorist organization by the United States. He said the stolen items include at least three or four Torah scrolls as well as ancient Jewish scrolls and silverware.

Timesofisrael.com

IDF soldier killed while on border patrol

JTA

JERUSALEM — An Israeli soldier patrolling Israel's border with Lebanon was killed by what is believed to be a rogue Lebanese soldier.

Master Sgt. Sholmi Cohen, 31, of Afula, was killed Sunday night when the Lebanese soldier fired up to seven shots from a pistol at an Israel Defence Forces patrol near an IDF outpost at Rosh Hanikra.

Israeli reports say several Lebanese soldiers attempted to stop their fellow soldier from perpetrating the attack, jumping on him as he began shooting.

The Lebanese soldier, who went missing after the incident occurred, turned himself in to his base Monday morning, according to Lebanese media reports.

Several hours after the incident, Israeli troops shot and injured two Lebanese soldiers after seeing "suspicious movement" along the border, according to an IDF spokesperson.

Both the IDF and the Lebanese army announced that they are investigating the incident that led to the death of the Israeli soldier. Israel also protested the incident to UNIFIL, the United Nations peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, which secures the border with Israel.

Representatives of the Israeli and Lebanese militaries and UNIFIL officials were scheduled to meet to discuss the incident, Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon said, according to *Ha'aretz*. Ya'alon said in a statement that Israel holds the Lebanese government and its army responsible for the incident.

"We will not tolerate aggression against the state of Israel, and maintain the right to exercise self-defense against perpetrators of attacks against Israel and its civilians," an IDF spokesperson said.

Knesset bill would penalize pro-boycott NGOs

JTA

JERUSALEM — A Knesset committee approved a bill that would heavily tax foreign donations to organizations that call for a boycott of Israel.

The bill, which has spurred controversy, passed the ministerial committee on legislation on Sunday by an 8-4 vote.

The measure taxes at 45 per cent foreign donations to non-profit foundations and organizations whose directors or managers have publicly expressed support for a boycott, divestment or sanctions against Israel or denies Israel's existence as a Jewish and democratic state.

Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein has called the bill unconstitutional and Justice Minister Tzipi Livni has vowed to fight it.

The bill was proposed by Ayelet Shaked of the Jewish Home party and Robert Ilatov of Yisrael Beiteinu.

In Ukraine protests, young Jews are marching with ultranationalists

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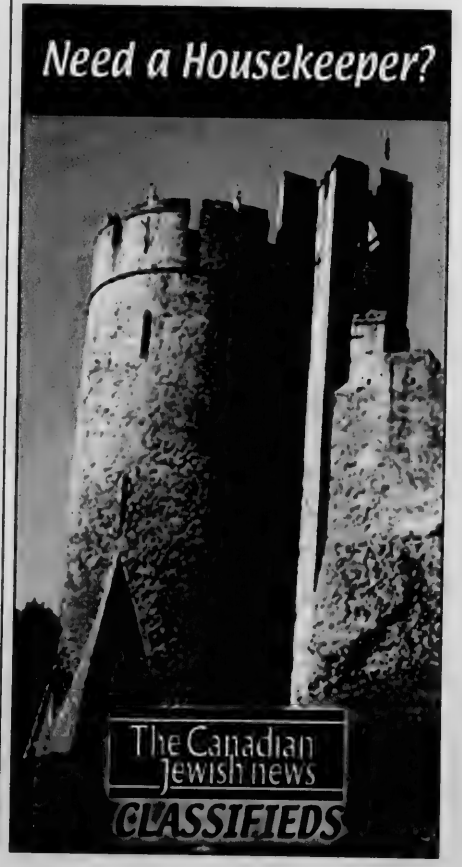
Deadlines for December 26 issue are as follows:
Display Advertising - Wed. Dec. 18 at 11:00 a.m.
Classified & Organizations - Tues. Dec. 17 at 11:00 a.m.

THERE WILL BE NO JANUARY 2 EDITION

We will resume printing in the new year with the January 9 edition.

The CJN offices will be closed the week of December 23 and will re-open on December 30.



Antagonism to Lev Tahor generates in Israel, says Yakov Rabkin

Prof who studied radical sect offers perspective

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A Université de Montréal professor who has been in contact with the Lev Tahor community since it settled in Quebec says he never observed abuse of children in his visits to its former Ste. Agathe des Monts base.

Yakov Rabkin would not comment on whether the children are in danger, but he suggests that the "antagonism" toward the extremely anti-Zionist Jewish sect has originated with the Lev Tahor members' secular relatives in Israel.

"I don't know whether or not there has been abuse, but the times I went to visit the community – sometimes without notice – I didn't see any violence. The boys appeared similar to other chassidic boys.

"However, in recent years, the girls and women started to wear veils and came to look different from women in other chassidic communities," he told *The CJN*.

The women's head-to-toe clothing has led some to dub the group the "Jewish Taliban."

Rabkin, an observant Jew, is a professor of contemporary history and author of the 2006 book *A Threat from Within: A Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism*. He visited the community on average once or twice a year.

Rabkin said Lev Tahor members almost all grew up in non-religious families in Israel, including its leader and founder, self-styled rabbi Shlomo Helbrans.

"While most Lev Tahor children were born in Quebec, the majority of adult members, about 50 people came from Israel, where they had been raised with the ideology of Zionism. Some are former officers of the Israeli army."

Rabkin has been studying Lev Tahor since Helbrans settled his followers in Ste. Agathe in 2001 from Israel, where Helbrans had been deported from the United States after serving a jail term for the second-degree kidnapping of a child.

Yakov Rabkin

A few years ago, for a film project, Rabkin interviewed several members – men and women – about their background and motivations for joining the group.

During a visit last summer, Rabkin learned that Lev Tahor had been planning for several months to move to Ontario because they would not comply with Quebec's education laws.

The vast majority of the approximately 250 members left Ste. Agathe Nov. 19, ahead of a youth court hearing into allegations of child abuse and neglect. They're now living in Chatham, Ont.

On Nov. 27, a Quebec youth court judge ordered 14 children to be immediately placed in foster care for at least 30 days because they were at risk of harm.

Local children's aid workers are seeking a court order to take custody of the 14 children, who remain in Ontario. Their two sets of parents appealed that request Dec. 11. The case will be heard Dec. 23.

Rabkin believes it's the formerly secular Lev Tahor members' rejection of Zionism, as much as their extreme religious practices, that has aroused such rancour against them in Israel.

"I understand the antagonism Lev Tahor generates in Israel," Rabkin said. "The relatives of those who joined Lev Tahor are almost all secular Zionists. They are horrified by the new lifestyle of their children and by the education given to their grandchildren…

"They protested outside the Canadian embassy in Tel Aviv and mobilized Israeli authorities, which put pressure on child protection agencies in Canada."

A Knesset committee has been hearing testimonies of ill treatment of children, including physical abuse and forced marriages of girls, from these relatives and ex-Lev Tahor members, including one of Helbrans' sons.

Rabkin believes that's why Quebec youth protection officials began investigating the group earlier this year.

"For several months children were checked for signs of beatings and homes, including refrigerators, were inspected almost daily," he said.

Although living conditions in Ste. Agathe were humble, even squalid, the group has not been without means. In a Dec. 7 investigative report, the *Toronto Star* uncovered that Lev Tahor has benefited from sizeable donations from unknown donors since it set up in Canada, and had amassed about $5.6 million in land and property assets at its peak.

The money was received under two registered tax-exempt charities: Congregation Riminov, which lost its charitable status in 2007, and the Society for Spiritual Development, established in 2004 which last year transferred its assets of $3.3 million to another charity, the Canadian Friends of Holy Land Institutions.

Helbrans (also known as Elbarnes) entered the U.S. illegally in 1990 from Israel. In 1994 a Brooklyn, N.Y. court convicted him of kidnapping a 13-year-old boy whom he held for two years at his yeshiva against his mother's wishes.

After spending two years in jail, Helbrans and his wife, Malka, who was convicted on lesser charges, unsuccessfully appealed the kidnapping conviction.

They were deported to Israel in 2000. The following year, Helbrans came to Canada on a temporary visa with about 30 families and settled in Ste. Agathe, a Laurentian resort town, and they began building homes and a synagogue.

He applied for refugee status, claiming he'd be in danger if returned to Israel because of his opposition to the state. An Immigration and Refugee Board panel in Montreal granted him asylum in 2003.

The federal government appealed the decision, but the Federal Court of Canada threw out the case. Prominent civil rights lawyer Julius Grey represented Helbrans.

In 2003, the Vaad Hoaskonim, the rabbinical council of Orthodox communities in New York, warned that Helbrans' group "constitutes a great threat, spiritual and physical, to the Torah observant community in general and to every individual in particular."

In early 2012, a reporter for the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* spent several days among the normally reclusive Lev Tahor in Ste. Agathe and published an in-depth series, weighing the horrific allegations against the group with what he saw, ultimately drawing no firm conclusions.

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Nancy Pila	Nov 30/13	1 Brendan Court
Al Cheslo	Dec 2/13	765 Steeles Ave. West
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Margaret Wayne	Dec 3/13	18 Lower Village Gate
Dolores Smith	Dec 3/13	70 Rosehill Avenue
S. Miles (Mickey) Snow	Dec 5/13	2600 Bathurst Street
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PR firm stays current with rebrand, new name

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

David Eisenstadt has been in the PR business for 40 years, so he knows which buttons to push to get media attention.

And the one that's most effective in catching the attention of news hounds is to offer up something that's, well, news. "We spend a lot of time...to determine what is newsworthy and what isn't," he explained. "We're story tellers and truth is at the basis of it anyways."

So here's Eisenstadt's story, truth be told. The Communications Group, the company he runs with his wife and partner, Rhoda, recently marked its 40th anniversary. They didn't rent a hall or hire a band to celebrate, but as part of the anniversary, the firm rebranded itself as "tcgpr, PR Consultants to News Makers" and launched a new web site. The firm retained its broader message of "Outside the box thinking."

"Our clients were referring to us as tcgpr," Rhoda explained. "We needed an update. This is more reflective of what we've been doing for many years, using social media.

"We are developing programs that leverage new mobile and web strategies, offering the range of digital and social marketing and modern market research and social analytics capabilities for many of our clients," she added.

"The reality is that the client today is clearly more sophisticated than they've ever been because we live in an information age," said David. "The client who understands where PR fits in the marketplace is ideal for us."

The company collaborates with marketing agencies to advance clients' strategic objectives. Canadian-owned but with international representation, tcgpr is the Toronto partner of IPREX Global Public Relations, an international network of independent PR firms.

tcgpr is a medium-sized shop in the public relations realm, with 15 consultants and employees, give or take, and a roster of clients that span a variety of sectors: technology; real estate; professional services; and not-for-profits.

"Public relations and advertising work together to support the marketing objectives, whether of a for-profit or a not-for-profit," Rhoda explained.

So how exactly do these areas overlap? "We do everything in a strategic way. We develop a strategic public relations plan that fits within the overall marketing objective of what the organization is trying to achieve," David said.

"When we represent a client, we help identify what is newsworthy and what is not newsworthy. The PR gives everybody the news story first and draws attention to the other aspects of the marketing campaign.

"Our value-added is that we see and make the news element and make it attractive." The company will reach out to print media, and employ social media like Facebook and Twitter, he said.

David points to a successful strategic campaign that boosted the prospects of one of tcgpr's clients, Two Men and a Truck. In 2010 when they acquired the account, news reports surfaced of Toronto police busting a ring of interrelated moving companies – none of them their client – for fraud.

At the time, Two Men could boast five franchisees, but the police arrests cast a pall on the industry and hardly helped their prospects of expanding.

The Eisenstadts learned from their clients that the company marketed itself based on its clean trucks, accurate estimates, on-time arrivals, good service and the like. All well and good, said David, but not news.

"We noodled it and came back to them with a strategic creation – a consumer's bill of rights for the moving industry in Canada."

The "consumer's bill of rights" was formally announced at a news conference in July 2010 and the news media "jumped all over this."

Three years later, the number of Two Men's franchisees had jumped to 21. "That PR event got them on the map," David said.

"Today, coverage in social and traditional media is what it is all about. Our job is to help our clients manage their news and generate coverage," he added.

Other services provided by the firm include crisis management, speech writing, employee communications and media training for executives.

"Not how to bob and weave," said David, "but how to communicate effectively in plain English."

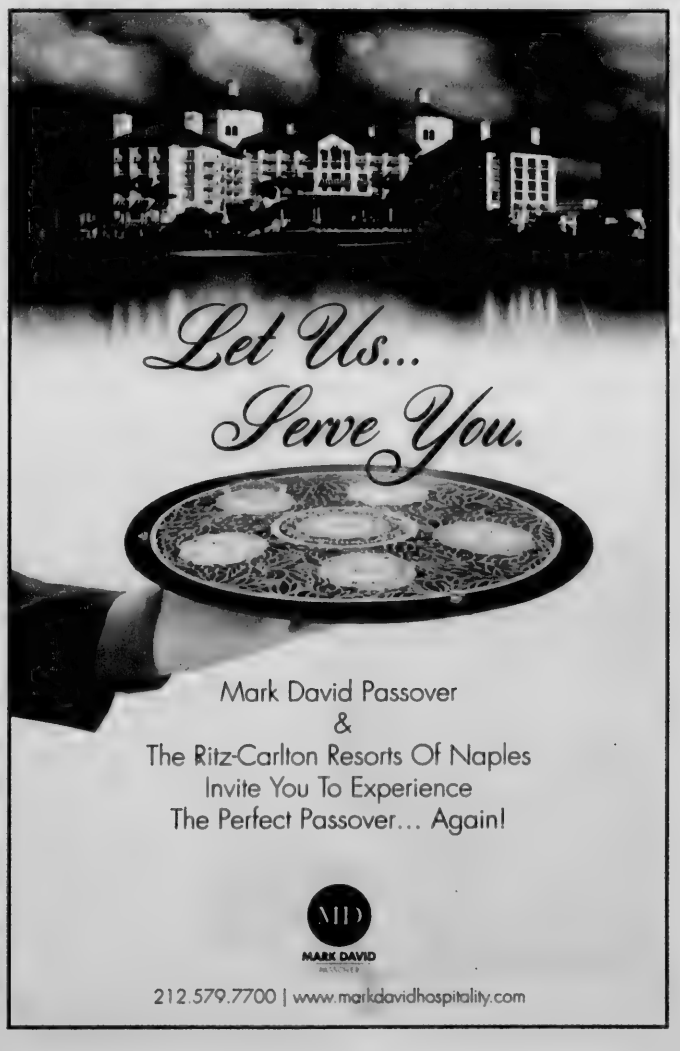
He points to a successful campaign on behalf of an actuarial firm that came to them by word of mouth. "They wanted to reposition themselves for faster growth."

After some research, tcgpr came up with a new brand name and the slogan: "Actuaries who care."

"We literally helped give them a new identity and helped redesign their web site," said David. "That's strategic planning, so their look changed.

"We did the very same thing for ourselves."

Rhoda and David Eisenstadt (Arthur Mola photo)



Biography's Challenges: Janet Malcolm's Answer

Reviewed by Norman Ravvin

Forty-One False Starts: Essays on Artists and Writers
By Janet Malcolm
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Janet Malcolm is well known to aficionados of biography. She has done excellent work on Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas and on Chekhov, as well as in the realm of non-fiction crime reporting, where she has returned often to what she views as the troubling relationship between the journalist and her subject. In her new collection, *Forty-One False Starts: Essays on Artists and Writers*, she returns, in essays written over a period of nearly thirty years, to what she calls the "congenital handicaps" of biography.

It's unusual for a practitioner to highlight the weaknesses of her chosen craft, but Malcolm does this with incisive, even savage insistence. She does this in a revealing piece on Bloomsbury and Virginia Woolf called "A House of One's Own," by comparing autobiography, letters, the writing of insiders and the outcome of more traditional biographical writing.

Biography, she tells us, "functions as a kind of processing plant where experience is converted into information the way fresh produce is converted into canned vegetables. But, like canned vegetables, biographical narratives are so far removed from their source – so altered from the plant with soil clinging to its roots that is a letter or a diary entry – that they carry little conviction."

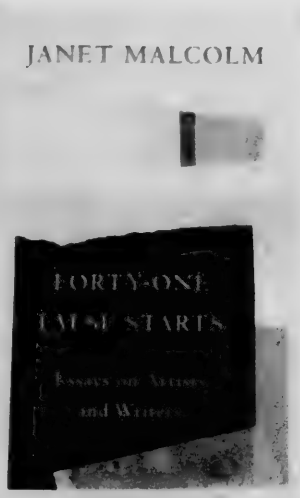
A related problem, which Malcolm highlights in relation to Woolf, is biography's status as a "workshop where biographical narratives are manufactured." With Woolf, and the Bloomsbury group more broadly, mythology replaces real contact with the subject at hand, leading to guesswork and nonsense. In Woolf's case, this includes, according to Malcolm, unrealistic and fabricated notions regarding the Jewishness of Virginia Woolf's husband and creative collaborator Leonard Woolf.

By examining the faults in biographical writing, Malcolm triumphs in the genre. With regard to her chosen subjects she aims not to please, nor to tie up loose ends, nor to seem to master her subject. Rather, she studiously highlights the rough edges and irresolvable aspects of the lives she studies.

The best example of this can be found in her title essay, a tour de force published in *The New Yorker* in 1994 on the Manhattan-based artist David Salle. Salle's figurative paintings, built from a pastiche of images that include startling female nudes, brought him to the forefront of New York's art world in the 1980s. But by the time Malcolm began to spend time with him in his studio and at gallery openings, Salle's "declining reputation in the art world" became a guiding theme in their discussions.

The effect of such writing is a certain edginess and surprise, and even a touch of mischievousness. But Malcolm's interest and commitment to her subjects is so sustained and deep – in part thanks to her editors at *The New Yorker*, who support her kind of journalistic work – that her attitude toward her subject inevitably deepens our understanding.

Another idiosyncratic aspect of Malcolm's essays is their tendency, especially in the set gathered for *Forty-One False Starts*, to choose subjects whose story might be told from the point of view of



Jewish identity, which is only mentioned in the most digressive, even offhand way. The impact of Virginia Woolf's misrecognition based on her marriage to Leonard is one example of this. Again and again, a paragraph or two, in essays of thirty pages or more, is all one gets. Malcolm has apparently decided that Jewishness is in some way a secret code or key to the lives of her subjects, and she leaves it almost hidden, like a recessive gene.

This is true in the Salle piece, where we learn little about the artist's upbringing in the American Midwest, including the stray detail that he is the son of "second-generation Russian Jewish parents."

This approach recurs in almost every piece in *Forty-One False Starts*, and the careful reader may begin to feel that it is one of Malcolm's unsettling but fully intended writerly strategies. In the recent essay, "Depth of Field," about the major German photographic artist Thomas Struth, we learn, as an aside, that his "mother was in the Hitlerjugend and his father served in the Wehrmacht from 1937 to 1945 ... Like many, if not most Germans of his generation, Struth has been haunted by the Nazi past, and speaks of the Holocaust as a major influence on his life and work."

In a novelistic piece, some 75 pages long, on the young, preternaturally energetic and influential New York art magazine editor Ingrid Sischy, aspects of Malcolm's subject remain out of focus. These include Sischy's sexual identity, though subtle details are suggestive, and her Jewishness. The most substantial comment on the latter is Malcolm's characterization of Sischy as a "kind of reverse Jewish princess: she goes through life gratefully accepting the pleasures and amenities that come her way, and if they are not the particular pleasures and amenities she ordered – well, so much the better. Her relationship to the world of consumer objects is almost bizarrely attenuated ... She has no credit cards, no charge accounts, no savings account ...."

In a wonderful essay entitled "Salinger's Cigarettes" Malcolm makes the act of burying one's Jewish identity an overt part of her appreciation of the writer's work. As critics lost patience with Salinger's stories in the late 1950s, a routine complaint arose that he was intentionally downplaying his own Jewish ancestry by presenting characters whose ethnicity was elaborately coded or unclear.

Malcolm challenges these critical assaults with the following remarkable anecdote: "As it happens, Salinger is himself honestly half Jewish: his mother, née Marie Jillich, was an Irish-Catholic who, however, changed her name to Miriam and passed herself off as a Jew after she married Salinger's father, Sol, with the result that Salinger and his older sister, Doris, grew up believing they were wholly Jewish; only when Doris was nineteen, and after Salinger had been bar mitzvahed, were they told the surprising truth."

Hiddenness, mistaken and misapprehended identity were themselves part of Salinger's life. The reappearance of such troubling and rough-edged themes in his stories makes perfect sense if one takes into account the stories' biographical context.

Malcolm is so much livelier and surprising than the bulk of her colleagues in the "workshop" of "biographical narratives" that one might be tempted to declare the genre moribund but for work like *Forty-One False Starts*.

Norman Ravvin tries his hand at biography in the forthcoming Wordless Leonard Cohen Songbook, *as well as in talks on Leonard Cohen to be delivered in Poland in the spring.*

"A MIRACLE
Called 'Britain's Schindler,' (Winton) easily could be the subject of a big-screen Spielberg epic."
- S.C. JOURNAL
★★★★★
"A MIRACLE."
- S.C. JOURNAL
"ENTHRALLING, EVOCATIVE."
A TRUE STORY OF HEROISM"
- THE NEW YORK TIMES
(WINNER 14 U.S. AUDIENCE AWARDS)
"AMAZING!"
- JEFFREY LYONS
★★★★★
"PURE INSPIRATION"
"A CINEMATIC PAEAN TO BRITAIN'S SCHINDLER"
- THE TIMES OF ISRAEL
"DON'T MISS"
"SO INSPIRING AND DEEPLY MOVING, YOU'LL WANT TO BE PART OF THIS 'FAMILY'."
- THE BOSTON HERALD
Nicky's Family
One Act Of Kindness By One Man Changed The World
Watch the trailer at videoservicescorp.com
EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT STARTS FRIDAY IN TORONTO
KINGSWAY
Check Theatre Directories for Showtimes

'British Schindler' saved 700 children

Joseph Serge
Interim Editor

Around 10,000 children, mostly Jews, were rescued from Nazi Germany and central Europe and put into British foster homes in what became known as the *kindertransport*.

Among them were almost 700 Czech and Slovak children rescued by the efforts of one "British Schindler," Sir Nicholas Winton, whose feat is explored in the documentary *Nicky's Family*, by Matej Minac and Patrick Pass.

The film, narrated by CBC correspondent Joe Schlesinger, one of the children rescued by Winton, opens Dec. 20 at the Kingsway Theatre, 3030 Bloor St. W. in Toronto.

What is amazing about Winton's story is that he kept quiet about these events for more than half a century and they would probably remain unknown had his wife not discovered a suitcase with a scrapbook and other documents from that time.

The story is told through dramatization plus interviews with several survivors, now scattered all over the world, which includes teachers, engineers, hoteliers, dentists, one member of the House of Lords and a pastor. It also has several scenes with Winton himself, who is 104.

In 1938, Winton was an otherwise normal London stockbroker who loved the good life including skiing and travelling. Instead of going on a ski vacation that year, however, he decided to visit Prague and saw first-hand the plight of Jewish refugees. He became concerned for them when he saw that they lived in terrible conditions.

Realizing they had nobody to help them, he thought the least he could do is try to save the children. "If something isn't blatantly impossible, there must be a way to do it," he says.

He started a letter-writing campaign, even addressing one to U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, but his efforts didn't bear much fruit. He compiled a list of 2,000 children who he hoped to rescue.

As word of his campaign to save the children spread, he drew the attention of Nazi intelligence agents who, in a twist that could be from an Alan Furst spy novel, used the lure of a beautiful woman to seduce him for information, pretending to be the Prague representative of the Swedish Red Cross.

Sir Nicholas Winton, seated right, with some of his "children" in the film *Nicky's Family*.

With war approaching, Winton tried even harder to save the children, and eventually, the British Home Office told him that if he could find a family for each child, they would give them visas.

Back in England, he opened an office and looked for foster homes. Eventually trainloads of children left Czechoslovakia and got to Britain through Germany, the Netherlands and the English Channel.

The documentary shows the recent reunion of survivors as they took that same journey once again.

After the war, Winton moved on, and wasn't in touch with any of them, although he remains philanthropic to this day. When his wife found the scrapbook in an attic 50 years later, he finally told her about his pre-wartime deeds. His wife gave the scrapbook to a historian and his story was finally made public.

In the most emotional part of the movie, we see Winton on a BBC show, *That's Life*, in 1988. He was unaware that he was sitting in a studio full of his rescued children. "They got me there… under false pretences," he says. As they each stand up and applaud him, he is moved to tears, the results of his efforts finally obvious. The families of Winton's children have now grown to almost 6,000 people.

What's even more remarkable, as the film shows, is that his legacy continues. Today, thousands of young people all over the world, inspired by him, have taken part in a program to create various charity projects mostly for children worldwide. Around 3,000 students have taken part in the Nicholas Winton program.

It is Winton's legacy and its hopeful message that make this documentary stand out in a crowd of similar films.

Running to, and in, Israel in '14

CJN Staff

Showcasing its unique natural landscapes from the Galilee in the north to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and the Judean and Negev Deserts in the south, Israel will host a variety of running competitions in early 2014.

The 37th annual International Tiberias Marathon (Jan. 10) will bring runners to the Sea of Galilee, where they'll participate in the "lowest" full marathon in the world at 650 feet below sea level and will bring participants through the main streets of Tiberias, crossing the Jordan River to Kibbutz Ein-Gev and back.

The Isramam and Ironman competition (Jan. 17) will challenge athletes with a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and a 26.2-mile run in Eliat.

The Ein Gedi Experience half-marathon (Feb. 7-8) will feature an unusual running experience along the Dead Sea. The race will also include a shorter run for children.

The Tel Aviv Samsung Marathon (Feb. 28) is expected to attract thousands of runners for an urban and beach-side running experience.

The Jerusalem International Marathon (March 21) will include a 26-mile, 13-mile and 6-mile run through the city's historic sites and modern attractions, including the Old City, Mount Scopus and more.

VACATIONS FOR JEWISH SINGLES
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ISRAELI FILMS OFFERED AT DIFF FILM FESTIVAL

The Daring Independent Film Festival is a four-day fest that this year is devoting one full day to screening Israeli films. The films, to be shown at the Schwartz-Reisman Centre on Sunday, Dec. 29 include:

• *Strangers No More*, **Karen Goodman**'s film about Bialik-Rogozin, an exceptional school in Tel Aviv where children from 48 countries and diverse backgrounds come together to learn;

• *Welcome Home*, **Ron Furman**'s documentary that follows several young Jewish adults on their journey to rediscover and strengthen their Jewish identity on Birthright visits to Israel;

• *Dolphin Boy*, **Dani Menkin**'s film about a boy whose father takes him to be treated by dolphins in the Red Sea after he is traumatized by a violent attack;

• *Red Nose*, **Eldad Prives**'s film about a Tel Aviv street clown who attempts to conquer the sadness in Sderot;

• *804 Mahal*, **Etienne Naude**'s look at South African volunteers in Israel's War of Independence and

• *Out in the Dark*, **Michael Mayer**'s dramatic film about a love affair between a Palestinian student and an Israeli lawyer.

For tickets and times, please visit the website www.diffest.com.

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Holocaust Rescue: *Nicky's Family*, an uplifting Holocaust documentary by **Matej Minac** and **Patrick Pass**, tells the story of **Sir Nicholas Winton**, the Englishman who organized the rescue of 669 Czech and Slovak children just before the outbreak of the Second World War. Winton, now 104 years old, did not speak about these events with anyone for more than half a century, until his wife found a suitcase in the attic full of documents and transport plans. The film, narrated by **Joe Schlesinger**, opens at the Kingsway Theatre, 3030 Bloor St. W., on Dec. 20. www.nickysfamily.com.

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Spielberg Series: Film critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** examines the cinematic legacy of arguably the world's most famous director in Defining Greatness: Director Steven Spielberg, a series of lectures with film clips. Despite an enormously impressive filmography that includes *E.T. the Extraterrestrial*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Jaws*, *Lincoln*, *Schindler's List* and *Jurassic Park*, Spielberg continues to be a lightning rod for critics who refuse to acknowledge his talent and influence on world cinema.

$90 for eight lectures, $11.25 drop-in. Miles Nadal JCC, Mondays from Jan. 20 to March 17, 2014, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0 to register.

• • •

Names in the News: Vancouver-based artist **Lilian Broca**, whose large stone mosaic panels depicting the biblical story of Esther and Purim have received wide critical attention, has been pleased in recent years when some of her mosaics were licensed in the fashion industry for use on designer gowns. Broca was of course delighted when pop-culture icons Katy Perry and Vanessa Hudgens were photographed wearing the gowns.

The subject of at least one book and one documentary film, Broca has been angered and frustrated recently to learn that unscrupulous designers have ripped off her Byzantine-style art for use in their own inferior fashions. "This is not the trickle down of a fashion concept, this is theft," observed the website Mosaic Art Now.

"In the past I have seen my mosaics reproduced badly and cheaply by unscrupulous companies in Third World countries," Broca has said. "This time the designs were stolen and printed on clothes. It pains me to great lengths to see my art reduced to decorative patterns on mass produced fabrics intended for wear." Check out Broca's majestic mosaics at www.lilianbroca.com.

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Arts in Brief

• Klezmer Music Ensemble with conductor **Eric Stein**, allows participants to develop solid arranging and ensemble-playing skills while exploring the fundamentals of klezmer music. Ongoing through May at the Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesdays evenings, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. music@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 0 to register.

• Award-winning actor **David Gale** offers Broadway Goes Yiddish, a lively Yiddish-theatre workshop for would-be thespians or theatre lovers, no matter your level of Yiddish. Sherman Campus, Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St. Ten sessions, Thursday Jan. 23 to March 27, 7 to 9 p.m. $150. www.committeeforyiddish.com, 416-635-2883, ext. 5189.

• • •

At the Galleries

• *Times and Toys*, by Rob Croxford, consists of original vintage-style work that's playful, clever, slightly twisted, unapologetically upbeat and with a political edge. Miles Nadal JCC Gallery until Jan. 23.

• **Gary Clement**, the brilliant cartoonist for the *National Post*, has produced *Paintings for Modern Homo Sapiens*, a showing of pieces that presents an overview of human activity from the dawn of history to the space race and beyond (albeit omitting almost everything in between). Clement's acrylic paintings on birch panels touch upon subjects as diverse as Olympic diving, zero gravity, 19th century Russian literature, and life on other planets. Also showing, *Temporal Matter*, an exhibition of works by **J. Lynn Campbell**. Loop Gallery, 1273 Dundas St. W., until Dec. 29.

Glee club brings joy to Baycrest residents

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

At a recent Chanukah concert put on by Buddies Glee Club at Baycrest, Sydney Press, 85, sang at the top of his lungs.

A Baycrest resident who has Alzheimer's disease, Press joined the club – it has members ranging in age from 75 to 103 – with his wife, Vivian Rosenberg, 76, who attended each rehearsal with him.

Rosenberg said that her husband, who sang and played trumpet from a young age, has always been musical. "When he came to Baycrest, I looked for a program for him, and when this came up, I jumped at [the chance to join.]

"There is absolutely no question. When he starts to sing, his whole mood changes. He perks up, and enjoys every minute."

The glee club is part of a research study, which began in 2011 as a 16-week program for adults who attend Baycrest day programs. Phase 2 of the study was for residents of the nursing home, and Phase 3 combined nursing home residents and their caregivers, who were required to attend each rehearsal.

The recent concert was made up of participants in the phase two and three components of the study.

Amy Clements-Cortes, senior music therapist at Baycrest and an assistant professor at the University of Toronto, said that participants were tested before and after the program, and some rated themselves, about whether singing made them happy and less anxious, if they felt uplifted, and if they had a good time.

Vivian Rosenberg sings with her husband, Sydney Press.

"We have learned from our research that the choir is beneficial and enhances their quality of life. All participants reported that their happiness increased, energy increased, and pain decreased, after each weekly session."

Overall, she said, research shows that music reduces pain, enhances perception, elevates moods and facilitates sleep and relaxation. It can also help participants to pay attention and focus. "There are so many benefits to music.

"The glee club is so successful, that we're continuing it now without a research component."

Chrissy Pearson, a Baycrest music therapist who leads the glee club, said participants look forward to their weekly practices.

"We warm up with breathing exercises and scales so they get oriented. For those who are cognitively impaired, this is a cue for them to participate.

"We then start singing, and we do only three or four songs so they become familiar with them. To change things up a little, we change the tempo, sing the songs louder or softer, or sing an alternate arrangement."

Being a music therapist, she said, she is able to tailor the choir to everyone's needs. "For example, I know where each participant should sit, who they should or should not sit with, and in what order the songs should be practised. Some people need to start off with energetic songs, and others need to work up to that."

After each practice, she said, she asks participants about their mood, and "I can honestly say that no one ever reported being in a bad mood. Those who were agitated or confused when they began the practice, seemed more relaxed and alert. That is the goal of the program, and it seems we have reached that goal."

She added that she has witnessed a wonderful connection between the residents and caregivers, whether they be children, spouses or hired caregivers. "They interacted by smiling at each other, sharing memories or hugging and holding hands. This was one of the great benefits of the study."

Monty Mazin, 86, who is a part of the glee club with his wife, Blema, who has Alzheimer's disease, said it is "joyful" for him to see her sing. "She played piano when she lived in Montreal, and in her better moments, she can remember some songs."

He said that he is an ambassador for the program. "It's so important to bring people together in an atmosphere that makes them happy."

For the recent 45-minute concert, which was a huge success, Pearson said, they sang about 18 songs, including show tunes, jazzy songs and Chanukah tunes.

More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca

HEEBONICS

Maple Leafs' Smith making the most of his opportunity

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

For those of you deep into advanced statistics, or hockey analytics as it is also known, the score at the last game between the Toronto Maple Leafs and the San Jose Sharks was, House of David, three.

As in, there were three Jewish guys on the ice in the same game, perhaps even at the same time – I'll have to review the tape on that – which must have been some sort of record. After all, there have been times in the history of the NHL when you'd have been hard pressed to find three guys in the entire league who were Jewish.

On Dec. 3, 2013, when the Sharks recently schooled the Leafs on playing "the right way," two of the guys playing the right way were Sharks forward Mike Brown and defenceman Jason Demers. Brown, who hails from the Chicago area, played for the Leafs a couple of seasons ago before being traded to Edmonton and then swapped again to San Jose. Not a bad career trajectory.

Demers, whose bio indicates he hails from Dorval, a suburb of Montreal, has been rumoured to be Jewish and has declined *CJN* requests for an interview. Perhaps another time…

Maple Leaf centre Trevor Smith rounded out the Jewish contingent in the game. A native of Ottawa whose parents hailed originally from Montreal, the family spent a few years in Toronto before moving to Vancouver, where Smith grew up. Smith, 28, has been a standout player in the American Hockey League (AHL). He's had the proverbial cup of coffee with a number of NHL franchises, including Tampa Bay (16 games), Pittsburgh (one game) and the Islanders (seven games). A free agent last summer, he signed a one-year, one-way contract with the Leafs for a reported $550,000.

Signing in Toronto marks something of a homecoming for him. Like lots of Canadian kids, he relishes the idea of playing for a franchise with the kind of storied history and tradition possessed by the Leafs. It was "a no-brainer," Smith said in an interview shortly after a Leafs practice.

Early in the season, Smith bounced back between Toronto and its AHL affiliate team, the Marlies, where he was named captain. "In the American League, I'm a veteran guy. I won a championship (2011-12, Norfolk Admirals). I know what it took to win a championship."

To date, he's played way more games with the Leafs than the Marlies, and filled in admirably when given the opportunity.

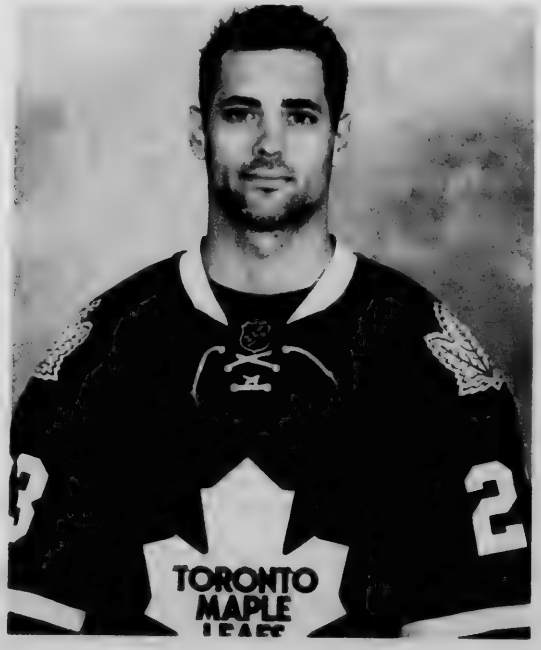
With injuries to Tyler Bozak, suspensions, and other incidents that depleted the centre ice position, he's played on an energetic third line consisting of Mason Raymond on one wing and David Clarkson on the other.

Smith has acquitted himself well. In 17 games, he's scored three goals and added four assists, was at -1 and had a more than respectable shooting percentage of 18.8. He shared the team lead in points for November, with seven.

Playing in a hockey-mad market like Toronto does put pressure on the players, he acknowledged, but "it's how you take it and run with it and how you put on yourself" that will determine how well you do.

Given the circumstances, "it's more of an opportunity to make a name for myself and show management and teammates that I can play in the NHL. It's a great opportunity for me," he said.

The jump to the NHL was admittedly a challenge. The guys are bigger and faster than in the minors, and they're very good positionally, he said. The Leafs' coaches constantly preach that the team has to play the right way all game long, without the wild changes of momentum that has the Leafs excelling one minute, and hemmed into their own zone the next.



As he's gotten more games under his belt, Smith's on-ice performance has improved. He was a little "hesitant" in his first game; when he got the puck, he tried to move it as quickly as possible. "Now, I hold on to it and [set up] a play," the six-foot-one, 195-pound centre said.

"It's a learning curve," he continued. "Every game I feel more comfortable and confident."

During the summer, Smith was recruited to play for the Canadian team at the Maccabiah Games in Israel. His father, Harvey, served as an assistant coach on the team, which won the gold medal. Smith was recovering from an injury and had just signed with the Leafs, so he had to turn down the offer, but with regret.

"I would have been upset if Canada had lost because I had not gone," he said.

The trip would have been Smith's second to the Holy Land. About eight years ago, he and his brother, Derek, visited the country on a Birthright trip. "It was unbelievable," he said. "It was a lot of fun. I met a lot of cool people. I still keep in touch with them.

"What a beautiful country. I'd love to go back."

In the meantime, he's got more pressing items on his agenda, like helping the Leafs play the right way and get out of their doldrums. Oh, and making sure the advanced Jewish stats don't take one step back.

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: *The CJN* is not publishing an issue on Jan. 2. The deadline for the issue of Jan. 16 is Jan. 6. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Saturday, Dec. 21

GAMES NIGHT

Congregation B'nai Torah, 465 Patricia Ave., holds a games night with games, food, prizes and a silent auction, at 8 p.m. $25. For tickets, call 416-226-3700, ext. 21.

QUICK PICK SHABBAT

Choose from 4 different topics of learning at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, at 11 a.m. Classes include "The Roots of Jewish Prayer; Conservative Judaism and the Pew Study; Jewish Music in the Synagogue and Images of Women in Jewish Religious Life."

Sunday, Dec. 22

YIDDISH SONGS

Singer **Faye Kellerstein** performs a program of Yiddish songs, accompanied by **Jordan Klapman,** at 1:30 p.m., Kensington Place Retirement Home, 866 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-636-9555.

Wednesday, Dec. 25

FAMILY FUN DAY

Enjoy crafts, sports, games, music by the **Magen Boys,** and tikkun olam projects at Beth Tzedec's family fun day, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. $10 per person, $40 per family. Lunch available at additional cost.

Other News

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Reena is looking for a female volunteer to assist during swim time at the Holland Bloorview Pool, Mondays, 6 p.m. The volunteer doesn't need to be a strong swimmer, but must be comfortable in shallow water. Call **Mille Chadwick**, 905-889-2690, ext. 2112, or email mchadwick@reena.org.

NARAYEVER CENTENNIAL

First Narayever Synagogue celebrates its centennial next year and is looking for memorabilia (photos, documents, newsletters etc.), as well as memories and stories from people who were connected with the shul or surrounding neighbourhood. Call 416-927-0546, or email centennialcelebrations@narayever.ca.

MORASHA CLASSES

Barrie Wilson teaches a class on "Reading Paul's Letters through Jewish Eyes," 11:15 a.m., Jan. 8-Feb. 5, Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner teaches a class on "Giants of Sephardic Jewry," 10 a.m., Jan.8-Feb. 5, Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call **Loretta** to register, 416-789-7400.

TALLIT WORKSHOP

Temple Har Zion holds a one-day tallit-making workshop Jan. 19. Register before Dec. 20. Email lisarosefox@gmail.com.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Learn how to cope with stress, and learn healthy habits, yoga and more. Tuesdays, 2-3:30 p.m., Jan. 14-Feb. 11, Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St. To register, call **Revital** at 416-635-2900, ext. 463 or ext. 592.

HEBREW CLASSES

Temple Sinai offers Hebrew classes for adult beginners (starting Jan. 14) and intermediates (starting Jan. 9). Call 416-487-3281.

Conversational Hebrew ulpan method with **Yael Lev** is offered at Pride of Israel Synagogue. Learn modern vocabulary and discuss current events, for intermediate students (Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.) and advanced students (Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.). Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

SHABBAT SHIRAH

Cantors David Edwards, Tibor Kovari, David Rosen and **Eyal Bitton,** accompanied by a live band, perform Israeli and chassidic melodies for Shabbat Shirah, Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $10/$15. For tickets call 416-221-3433 or 416-633-3838.

BAT MITZVAH CLUB

Chabad of Markham's bat mitzvah club begins Jan. 12. To register, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

SKATES FOR SINAI

Temple Sinai is collecting gently used skates and helmets to donate to the children of Flemingdon School. Drop off your donation at the temple or email social_action@templesinai.net.

Continued on page 33

YIDDISH
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YIDDISH LIVES!
YIDDISH LEBT!
ייִדיש לעבט

YIDDISH - ENROLL TODAY!
"IF NOT NOW - WHEN?"
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Yiddish Language Classes
Sundays, starting January 12, 2014

Adult (All levels)
10 classes - to March 30, 2014
10am-12 noon | Cost: $150

Children - Ages 4 - 12 years
to June 15, 2014
9:30 am- 12 noon | Cost: $20 for materials

Beth David Synagogue | 55 Yeomans Road

Yiddish Theatre Workshop

A lively and informal reading in Yiddish
Broadway Goes Yiddish
with Gemini Award-winner David Gale
10 classes - Thursdays, January 23 to March 27
7:00-9:00 pm | Cost: $150 + HST

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4600 Bathurst Street

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E: committeeforyiddish@gmail.com
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Continued from page 32

SONGS OF THE SEPHARDIM

Musicologist **Judith Cohen** will perform traditional songs of Morocco and the former Ottoman lands. Her daughter, dancer and singer **Tamar Ilana** will add traditional flamenco vocal repertoire, Jan. 9 at 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Have you been through the mental health system? Would you like to be a peer support to others going through the system and soon to be discharged from the hospital? Baycrest is starting a new support program. For more information, contact **Janis Sternhill** at 416-785-2500, ext. 2575 or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

YIDDISH PROGRAMS

David Gale leads a Yiddish theatre workshop focusing on "Broadway Goes Yiddish," 7-9 p.m., Jan. 23-March 27.

New beginners, and ongoing intermediate and advanced Yiddish classes to improve conversation, reading and writing skills begin Jan. 12. Yiddish culture for kids through arts and interactive activities, Sundays, 9:30 am.-noon. Classes held at Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.

To register for programs, visit www.committeeforyiddish.com or call **Barbara** 416-631-5843.

SILK PAINTING WORKSHOPS

Paula Miller leads a 7-part series on painting on silk. Create something special for your home for Shabbat. Starts Jan. 14 at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $30/$35. Call 416-633-3838.

SHABBAT SHIRAH WORKSHOP

Adam David discusses "Middle Eastern and Afro-Latin Influences on Modern Jewish Music," at a Shabbat Shirah brunch, Beth Emeth Synagogue, Jan. 12, 10 a.m.

JF&CS GROUPS

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244 or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila**, 416-665-3333 or **Marcia**, 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea**, 416-487-7630.

Beth Tzedec Haverim. Author **Rona Arato** discusses her book *The Last Train*, Jan. 6, 1:30 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Casino Woodbine, Jan. 29. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (first class free); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112. Dec. 19, **Jackie Hickey** discusses "Roadmap to Healthy Aging," 1:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis**, 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Special classes: Dec. 25, family yoga 11 a.m.; Dec. 26, family Zumba 11 a.m.; Dec. 31, family yoga 11:30 a.m.; Jan. 1, family Zumba 10:30 a.m.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267 or register online at centrecamp.ca/register.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com. or ext. 4103.

Register now for winter programs: **Beverlee Swayze** discusses "The History of Symphony," Jan. 21, 1 p.m.

Osnat Lippa presents "Treasures of the Guggenheim," Feb. 11 and Feb. 18.

Iain Scott discusses "Four Jewish Operas," starting Jan. 16.

Kevin Courrier discusses "Produced and Abandoned 111: Yet More Best Movies You Have Never Seen," starting Jan. 15.

To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org.

Register now for winter fun and learning. Pottery classes start Jan. 8; Klezmer ensemble begins Jan. 14; Hebrew Institute begins Jan. 20; fiction and poetry workshops start Jan. 20.

Aviva Chernick hosts a symposium and celebration in honour of Shabbat Shirah featuring local musicians and leaders of prayer, Jan. 12, 1-6 p.m. $15/$20. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Times and Toys, paintings by **Rob Croxford,** is on display in the gallery until Jan. 23.

Register now for film studies with critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** focusing on the work of **Steven Spielberg**, Mondays 7-9 p.m., Jan. 20-March 17.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Got Shabbat? Shabbat program (songs, games and stories) for children ages 0-4 with an adult starts Jan. 10. Ext. 388.

Register now for the Shoresh Food Conference, Feb. 2, 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. Join rabbis, farmers, foodies and activists to explore the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary food ethics. www.shoresh.ca.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein**, 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

Enjoy free fun zone, jungle gym and movies, Dec. 25. Pre-order food by Dec. 20. Visit srcentre.ca.

The Daring Independent Film Festival shows Israeli movies Dec. 29. Some of the films shown are *Strangers No More*, *Welcome Home*, *Dolphin Boy*, *Red Nose*, *804 Machal*, and *Out in the Dark*. Register by Dec. 25 at comeseethediff@gmail.com.

TWINNING WEEKEND: The Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims (CAJM) held its sixth annual Weekend of Twinning Nov. 17 at Temple Emanu-El. Participants watched a film featuring two young female teachers, one Muslim and the other an Orthodox Jew, who became close friends. Pictured, from left, are Aziza and Samira Kanji, from the Noor Cultural Centre; Shahid Akhtar and Barbara Landau, co-chairs of CAJM, and Rabbi Deborah Landsberg of Temple Emanu-El.

[Mollie Rothman photo]

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מזל טוב

Family Moments

Mazel Tov!

Thrilled parents Rebecca & Roman, grandparents Sarah, Gord, Lana, Arkadi and great-grandparents Irene, Fania & Laizer Golts celebrated Nathan Samuel's debut on June 22, 2013!

Rochelle and Michael Silverberg and Gabriela and Simon Weiser are delighted to announce the engagement of their children, Cantor Ben Silverberg and Karen Weiser

Adrienne & David are thrilled to announce the birth of Zackary Tyler Ely Greenspan on Nov. 2. Proud great-grandparents, grandparents & mispachah all love you.

Sandra Shapiro, Bram Goldstein, brother Jonah welcomed Ezra Simon (Simcha) Sept. 23 in San Diego. Ecstatic grandparents Tina & Dr. Robert Shapiro, Fruma Goldstein & Rhoda Shapiro.

Email your digital photos to **cblackman@thecjn.ca** or go online to **www.CJNews.com** and click the "**Family Moments**"

Interfaith challenges

Ask Ella
By Ella Burakowski

Dear Ella,

My daughter married a man who isn't Jewish, and this is the first year that I'm invited to their house for a holiday/Christmas dinner.

When Rose first brought Richard home, we really liked him. He's a gentleman, educated, has a good career, and he treats our Rose with respect and love. His parents are soft-spoken, fine people and we all get along very well. However, religion has always been the elephant in the room.

Rose warned me in advance that they have a Christmas tree in their home, and that she doesn't want to hear a word about it. I raised both my children in a Jewish home and they both went to Hebrew school. We celebrated every holiday with family, from Passover seders to attending High Holiday services – even the lighting of the Chanukah candles was always done as a family.

I never for one second thought there would be a possibility that our grandchildren would not be raised Jewish, but it looks as if organized religion is not important to either my daughter or her husband.

When I try to bring up the subject to Rose she puts her hand out and stops me immediately. She doesn't want to hear my opinion, and she tells me very firmly that she and Richard will bring up their children the way they see fit, and it's a private and personal choice that will be decided between them alone.

I know this is premature, as Rose has only been married since June and there are no children yet. But I think this is a very important decision they should have made before they got married. I don't want to lose my daughter. I love her dearly, and if it means that I have to sit back and let it happen, then I'll have no choice.

But I am heartbroken and my husband has taken this very personally. I hope it doesn't break up our family. What would you do?

Religious Woes

Dear Religious Woes,

You and your husband have done your best for your two children. You have raised them in a loving home, put a roof over their heads, made sure they had a Jewish education, celebrated all the holidays as a family and attended synagogue on High Holidays. You've done the best job as a parent that you could. Rose is right in saying this is a private and personal choice. Trust that the values you've instilled in Rose are pure and wise.

Rose has made her choice with Richard, and by your own admission, he is a decent, fine young man who comes from a good family.

According to Jewish law, if a child is born to a Jewish mother, that child is Jewish. However, if the child is not raised with Jewish values, that point may be moot.

It's not your place to dictate to Rose how to raise her children – in fact, if you do, it may backfire. Instead, you need to support Rose and Richard. That doesn't mean you can't make your wishes clear: you are entitled to your opinion, but why not wait and see? Don't make a problem where there isn't one yet.

If and when the time comes that Rose and Richard have children, you can continue to invite them over to your home for Passover seders, lighting of the menorah and latkes, have them eat in a sukkah, teach them the traditions in which their mother was raised. Invite Richard's parents too, let them learn about Judaism along with their grandchildren. Make sure those times are about family, love and learning. Tell them why you are eating matzah, or why there are eight candles on a menorah. Don't preach, make it a relaxed and positive experience.

This way you can contribute to making sure your grandchildren have a taste of what their Jewish heritage is about. Richard's family may do the same with their faith, but in the end, it will be Rose and Richard who will decide what kind of a home they will raise their children in. Raising a child in an interfaith marriage can be confusing, especially if the child is raised to follow both religions. Rose and Richard will do what they feel is best for their family.

Take control where you can. Do your part as grandparents, teach and show the beauty and history of the Jewish faith, while, at the same time, teaching tolerance and acceptance of other faiths as well. Armed with knowledge, cloaked in love of family, these children will eventually end up making their own choices.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ellacjn@gmail.com. Ella is not a professional counsellor. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Chicken dishes are easy and creative

Elleen Goltz
Special to The CJN

Most everyone likes chicken. It's economical, readily available and is the go-to food when you don't know what else to make. You can roast it whole, broil it, boil it and even bake it with the skin on or off.

However, taking the skin off and getting rid of the bones does tend to make it more versatile. The skin and the fat attached to it are where most of the calories seem to be hiding so I tend to suggest going right to the boneless, skinless breasts or thighs.

"Chicken creative" is easy when you have the main ingredient already prepped and since the boneless and skinless breasts and thighs seem to go on sale every few weeks I say stock up when they're cheap and freeze them in packs of four breasts or eight thighs until you need them.

The following recipes run the gamut from super easy to "what the heck is Herb de Provence". Whichever one you decide to try, I can promise they won't resemble any chicken dish you've ever had before.

SPICED APPLE CHICKEN

2 apples, McIntosh, Granny Smith or Braeburn, peeled and thinly sliced
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
3 tsp. olive oil, divided
3 tsp. margarine, divided
1-1/8 tsp. herbs de Provence, divided
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1-1/2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed and pounded to ½-in. thick
1 cup chicken broth
1 tsp. lemon zest

In a bowl, combine the apple slices with the lemon juice and cinnamon. Toss to coat and set aside. In a skillet, heat 1 tsp. oil and 1 tsp. margarine. Add the apple mixture and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 5 minutes. Remove the apple mixture from the pan (don't clean the pan, you'll need it shortly) and set the apple mixture aside.

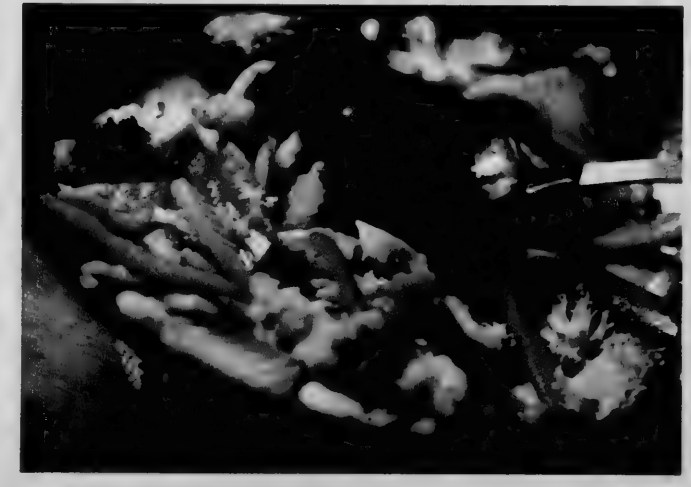
In a bowl, combine 1 tsp. herbs de Provence, salt, and pepper. Sprinkle the mixture on both sides of the chicken. Heat 1 tsp. oil and 1 tsp. margarine in the skillet. Add half the chicken and cook until no longer pink in the centre, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove to a platter and keep warm. Add the remaining 1 tsp. oil and 1 tsp. margarine to the pan; heat over high heat. Cook the remaining chicken in the same manner. When done place it on the platter with the other cooked chicken. Don't clean the pan. Add the broth, lemon zest and the remaining 1/8 tsp. herbs to the pan. Cook, stirring until slightly reduced, about 3 minutes. Spoon the sauce over the chicken and serve with the sautéed apples.

Modified from foodandwine.com

Herbs de Provence is usually available at most grocery stores but to make your own, mix together 1 tbsp. each (or equal proportions) dried thyme, rosemary, oregano, marjoram. You can store it in a glass jar or container with a lid.

SPICED PECAN CHICKEN

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, flattened
1 cup pecan halves
1/2 cup toasted breadcrumbs
1-1/2 tsp. grated orange zest
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. ground chipotle pepper
1 egg, beaten
1 tbsp. orange juice
4 tbsp. oil



In the bowl of a food processor, combine pecans, breadcrumbs, orange zest, salt and ground chipotle and process until the mixture is completely combined. Place the mixture on a plate. In a bowl, combine the egg and orange juice and whisk to combine. Dip each chicken breast into the egg mixture then dredge both sides in the pecan mixture.

Heat 2 tbsp. of the oil in a skillet and cook 2 of the coated chicken breasts for about 3 to 4 minutes on each side. When done place them on a serving plate, cover and repeat the process with the remaining oil and chicken. Serve immediately. Serves 4. This recipe can be doubled or tripled.

Submitted by Raquel Montvesto, Chicago, Ill.

SESAME & BROCCOLI CHICKEN

1 pound skinless, boneless chicken thighs cut into 1-inch pieces
salt and freshly ground pepper
flour, for dusting
1/4 cup sesame seeds
1/4 cup oil
2 tbsp. minced fresh ginger
1 large garlic clove, minced
1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper
1-1/2 cups chicken broth
1 lb. broccoli (stems peeled and cut into 1/4-in.-thick rounds, tops cut into florets)
3 tbsp.soy sauce
1/2 tsp. sesame oil
steamed rice, for serving

Preheat the oven to 350. In a large bowl, season the chicken with salt and pepper, and toss with flour to coat thoroughly. Let the chicken stand for a few minutes, until the coating gets soggy. Pour 3 tbsp. of the oil over the chicken and toss to coat, then coat the chicken with the sesame seeds.

In a large nonstick skillet, heat the remaining 1 tbsp. of oil. Add the chicken in an even layer and cook, (don't move it), until browned on the bottom, about 3 minutes. Turn the chicken and cook until browned on the second side, about 2 minutes. With tongs, transfer the chicken to a rimmed baking sheet and put it in the oven while you finish the dish.

In the oil remaining in the skillet, cook the ginger, garlic and crushed red pepper over moderately high heat until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the chicken broth and boil over high heat until reduced by half, about 4 minutes. Add the broccoli, cover and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Stir in the soy sauce, season with salt and remove from the heat. Gently stir in the chicken and sesame oil and serve with steamed rice.

Modified from recipeoftheday.com (Oct. 2010)

CROCK POT CHICKEN STEW

2 tbsp. oil
4 chicken thighs
4 chicken drumsticks
3/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1 tbsp. flour
1 cup apple cider
1-1/2 cups chicken broth
1 onion, cut into thin slices
1 lb. parsnips cut into 1-inch pieces
2 carrots cut into 1-inch pieces
3 potatoes cut into 1-inch pieces
1/2 tsp. dried thyme

Place the oil in a skillet and heat to high. Season the chicken thighs and drumsticks with 1/4 tsp. of the salt and the pepper. Sear the outside of the chicken until browned, turning, about 8 minutes in all.

Place the chicken in the crock pot. Pour off all but 1 tbsp. of the fat from skillet. Reduce the heat to moderate and stir in the flour. Whisk in the cider and the broth and bring to a simmer, scraping the bottom of the pan to dislodge any brown bits.

Pour the mixture over the chicken in the crock pot. Add the onion, potato, parsnips, carrots, thyme, and the remaining 1/2 tsp. of salt to the crock pot. Cover and cook on high for about 2 hours, until the chicken is done. (Can also do this in the oven in a covered roasting pan and cook for about 45 minutes to an hour).

My file, source unknown.

SEVEN LAYER TACO DIP

1 pkg. taco seasoning mix • 1 16 oz. can refried beans • 1 8oz. package cream cheese, softened • 1 16oz. container sour cream • 1 16oz. jar salsa 1 lg tomato, chopped • 1 green pepper, chopped • 1 bunch chopped green onions • 1 small head iceberg lettuce, shredded • 2 c shredded Cheddar cheese • 1 8oz. can sliced black olives, drained

In a medium bowl, blend taco seasoning mix and refried beans. Spread mixture onto a large serving platter. Mix sour cream, cream cheese in medium bowl. Spread over refried beans.

Top layers with salsa. Place layer of tomato, green bell pepper, green onions and lettuce over salsa; top with Cheddar cheese. Garnish with black olives.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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A father pushes his daughter on a sled in Gan Sacher on Dec. 17, three days after a major snowstorm hit Jerusalem. *(Hadas Parush/Flash 90 photo)*

Anti-Israel activity on campus

To protest or not to protest?

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Should students tackle anti-Israel activities on campus head-on – setting up counter-events or even urging universities to ban groups and events from taking place – or is it best to downplay them in the hope of minimizing their impact?

That's the central question for young pro-Israel advocates facing groups and individuals at their schools who are hostile to the Jewish state.

As it stands, some advocacy groups, most notably the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) and its local affiliates, urge students to counter misinformation at anti-Israel events, but not through direct confrontation.

Judy Zelikovitz, CIJA's vice-president of university and local partner services, argues that the right way to connect with "mainstream" students – who she says are usually not interested in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – is to demonstrate that Israel is a "normal, flourishing liberal democracy that shares Canada's values."

"When confronted with anti- and pro-Israel messages, rather than looking to take sides in a divisive foreign conflict, mainstream students are really determining which side is more moderate, relatable and relevant to their own interests," she told *The CJN*.

But some student leaders say that such an approach falls short.

Sarah Bernamoff, a 2013 University of Calgary graduate and founder of Calgary United with Israel, which has both student and community members, said she started her advocacy group as a direct response to what she felt was a lack of support from mainstream Jewish organizations like CIJA and its affiliate, the Calgary Jewish Federation, in tackling anti-Israel campus activity.

Continued on page 26

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Israel seeks to tap Canada's expertise in natural gas, new ambassador says

David Lazarus
Staff Reporter

OTTAWA — Barely a couple of weeks into the job, Rafael Barak, Israel's new ambassador to Canada, already has a to-do list that will take full advantage of a bilateral relationship that's never been more friendly.

The 63-year-old diplomat said in a Dec. 12 interview at the Israeli Embassy that he was greatly looking forward to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's historic visit to Israel next month – which Barak will be a part of.

The trip, he indicated, will almost certainly result in bilateral agreements, one of which will tap into Canada's expertise on natural gas.

Eighteen years ago, Israel discovered it had natural gas deposits off the Mediterranean, but the amount is much greater than first thought, and Israel wants to take full advantage of it, with Canada's help.

"Israel may be the land of milk and honey, but outside, we discovered gas, and we have to learn what to do with that gas," Barak told *The CJN*. "Canada is a good example for our scientists, our engineers, our regulators – for all who are part of the project.

Continued on page 19

Rafael Barak

Va'era
Candlelighting: 4:31
Havdalah: 5:34
Greater Toronto Area

Immigration minister defends health benefits policy

Please see page 24

The CJN will not publish Jan 2. Our next edition will be Jan. 9, 2014.

CANADA

Israeli Tours Coming

MONTREAL — Two renowned Quebec-based cultural companies will tour Israel next year. Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal (BJM) and Cirque du Soleil have announced plans for return visits to the country. They made their Israeli debuts, respectively, in 2011 and 2012. The BJM was founded more than 40 years ago, and Cirque du Soleil is close to 30 years old. BJM will perform at the Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv Feb. 2 to 5, at the Jerusalem Theatre Feb. 6, and at the Haifa Auditorium Feb. 8. Cirque du Soleil returns next August to Tel Aviv's Nokia Arena, where it was sold out last summer. It will present 10 performances Aug. 6 to 16 of its show *Quidam*, which has been seen by 10 million people worldwide already.

WORLD

Bris Ruling Appealed

JERUSALEM — An Israeli mother has appealed to her country's Supreme Court a rabbinical court ruling requiring her to circumcise her son. In her Dec. 18 appeal, the unidentified woman said the rabbis cannot order her to circumcise her son, who is now a year old. Jerusalem's rabbinical court last month upheld a ruling of the Netanya rabbinical court ordering her to have her son circumcised as per her ex-husband's wishes or pay a $142 fine each day until she does. The Netanya court presided over their divorce. The boy wasn't circumcised on the eighth day, as per Jewish custom, due to medical problems. The Jerusalem court said it believes the mother is using the circumcision as leverage in her divorce, but she said it's for ethical reasons.

Disarm Iran: Wiesel

WASHINGTON — Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel urged the U.S. Congress to enhance sanctions on Iran and the Obama administration to demand the "total dismantling" of Iran's nuclear infrastructure. He made the appeal in a full-page *New York Times* ad Dec. 18. Philanthropist Michael Steinhardt paid for the ad through This World, a group led by Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, an ex-Republican congressional candidate who's been critical of U.S. President Barack Obama's Mideast policies.

Mirvis Seeks Partnership Minyan Ban

Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

LONDON — British Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis urged Orthodox synagogues to ban partnership minyans, where women can lead services and read Torah.

In a message sent to rabbinic leaders Dec. 18, Rabbi Mirvis said the minyans are "not something that can take place within our synagogues," the *Jewish Chronicle* reported.

"I know that you are working with our communities to find ways, within the boundaries of Halachah, to make prayer, learning, leadership and involvement more meaningful for men and women alike, and I encourage this wholeheartedly," he wrote. "Some of you, together with members of our communities, have approached me for direction with respect to holding services which take an approach different from our traditional understanding of roles in communal prayer, particularly where women would lead a service including a minyan of men, read from the Torah or receive aliyot."

Britain's umbrella body of Orthodox communities, the United Synagogue, has expressed its concern previously over the phenomenon of partnership minyans.

Last month, the United Synagogue condemned London's Golders Green United Synagogue for allowing women to handle the Torah on Shabbat and holidays. Rabbi Mirvis recently supported women becoming trustees of the United Synagogue and shul lay leaders.

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This Toronto hatter is anything but mad

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Stephen Temkin isn't hoping to change the fashion world with his business. He's hoping there's just enough work to keep him busy, but not too much that it becomes overwhelming.

Temkin is the owner of Leon Drexler, a one-man company that makes hats. Leon was his father's first name and Drexler was his mother's maiden name.

These hats aren't your run-of-the-mill head-warmers. They're bespoke beaver-felt hats, made to your exact measurements and customized to your taste.

His profession is a rare one – apart from custom cowboy hatters in the Prairies, he's pretty sure he's the last men's dress hatter in Canada.

"If you're interested in millinery [women's hat-making], there's all kinds of places to learn to do that, but making classic men's dress hats, there's nowhere," he said.

It's only thanks to the generosity of the few men's hat-makers left standing that he was able to learn the techniques.

Temkin began wearing hats 20 years ago, when he bought one purely for functional purposes. It was a panama hat, made of straw and designed to keep the sun off his head.

A little while after that, he moved into felt hats, but he soon discovered the style wasn't particularly popular in stores.

"The ability to buy really nice hats in retail stores has almost disappeared," he said.

That's when he started to make his own hats, which can't be matched in retail stores in terms of the quality of the materials, as well as the precision in the construction, he said.

Temkin uses beaver felt, a material that he called incredibly durable and high quality. It's a big step up from the most popular kind of felt used in men's dress hats these days: wool. Although it's much cheaper than beaver felt, he said it's a far inferior material.

He gets his beaver felt from Tennessee, where he found the only supplier offering the felt in so many colours – 15 options in total, with everything from black, brown and blue to mustard yellow.

All of his ribbon comes from an old stash that he acquired, thanks to a bit of good luck and timing. He heard about a German company that was selling vintage ribbon bit by bit.

Continued on page 12

Stephen Temkin in his hat shop [*Cara Stern photo*]

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Israel's critics often ignore its unique predicament

Because of space restrictions in last week's column about Ari Shavit's book, *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*, some important information about the balance and complexity that Shavit brings to this work was omitted.

The column concluded on the mention, without adequate description, of Shavit's reference to Israel's "predicament."

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

In fact, this predicament – Israel's requiring peace with the Palestinians, the Arab and wider Islamic world while encountering rejectionism and security threats, especially from a looming nuclear Iran – is spelled out in two late chapters ("Existential Challenges, 2013:" and "By the Sea").

Today, perhaps more than ever, Israel's critics (including some who are friendly but naive and increasingly impatient for progress on the peace front) place the entire onus on Israel while ignoring the responsibilities of other parties for ending the conflict. This attitude ignores the fundamental principle of UN Security Council Resolution 242, which, since 1967, has laid out the bedrock of all Arab-Israeli peace agreements: any Israeli withdrawal from territory taken in the 1967 Six Day War is to occur through negotiations with Arab parties (including, since 1993, the Palestinians) in exchange for peace, recognition, security and an end to conflict.

On certain occasions, when Israel had no reliable partner to negotiate with who could fulfil these required conditions, it took unilateral action, though with varying degrees of negative consequences. In "By the Sea," Shavit reminds us that "Israel's unilateral withdrawals from southern Lebanon [in 2000] and the Gaza Strip [in 2005] cleared the ground for terrorist organizations whose rockets and missiles rattle Israel periodically."

This acknowledgement then leads Shavit to capture Israel's current predicament. "Here's the catch: if Israel does not retreat from the West Bank, it will be politically and morally doomed, but if it does retreat, it might face an Iranian-backed and Islamic-inspired West Bank regime whose missiles could endanger Israel's security. The need to end occupation are greater than ever, but so are the risks."

No matter how morally righteous those judging Israel may feel, without recognition of its predicament, such naysayers do not understand key realities of the Middle East. To be sure, as many fair-minded, informed analysts – both Israeli and foreign – have pointed out, Israel should be, and be seen to be, making sincere efforts to fulfil its commitments under UNSC 242. And, indeed, Israel has done precisely that on numerous occasions through the years including its peace agreements with Egypt, Jordan, and even with the PLO in the early stages of the Oslo process – until Yasser Arafat in 2000 and his successor Mahmoud Abbas in 2008 rejected Israel's offers of Palestinian statehood.

One must wonder at the hypocrisy of those who, whether out of sheer ignorance or bias, turn a blind eye to these basic historical facts. Instead, they obsessively single out Israel among all nations for opprobrium (with boycotts, divestment and sanctions, and other anti-Israel campaigns) while ignoring the legion of states committing egregious human rights violations, next to which Israel's alleged failures or sins pale by comparison. At the very time the Iranian- and Russian-backed Assad regime's brutal three-year assault on much of Syria's population has created the world's greatest humanitarian crisis (more than two million are now refugees, millions more are internally displaced and exposed to severe winter conditions, and nine million of Syria's population of 22 million are in need of aid), the American Studies Association (ASA) decided to single out Israel for a boycott of its academic institutions.

According to a Dec. 16 *Times of Israel* report, the group's national council president, Curtis Marez, "admitted that the ASA has never before called for a boycott of any other nation's universities and did not dispute that many other countries, including some of those in Israel's region, are considered to have a comparable [sic!] – if not worse – human-rights record than Israel."

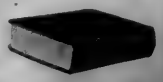
Defending the ASA's decision to single out Israel, Marez declared, "One has to start somewhere."

In short, Marez unwittingly admits that it's convenient to be a bully where Israel is concerned.

Paul Michaels is director of research and senior media relations with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

When someone in your family passes away, you want everything to be done right, according to Jewish tradition. When my mother died, I didn't know half of what these things were. Benjamin's spent time with our family, explaining the significance of every sacred ritual. More than that, they made it ours. It was a beautiful way to honour my dear mother's life.

"They thought of everything."



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SeeJN

BASKETBALL FUNDRAISER: The Jewish Youth Network's (JYN) fifth annual charity basketball tournament was held Dec 15 at the Lebovic Campus in Richmond Hill. More than 100 high school students took part to raise funds for the LivWise Foundation in support of brain tumour research. All of them were entered in a raffle to win tickets to the Winter Classic, a game between the Detroit Red Wings and Toronto Maple Leafs Jan. 1 in Ann Arbor, Mich., and tickets to the Toronto Marlies versus the Grand Rapids Griffins Dec. 30 at Detroit's Comerica Park. Abbey Yermus, centre, a Grade 11 student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy, won the raffle. Pictured with her are JYN director Rabbi Shmuli Nachlas, left, and Josh Pope, president of Teens for the Community.

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Let's wait to pass judgment

What do we know for sure about Lev Tahor, the reclusive ultra-Orthodox sect currently at the centre of child abuse allegations spanning two provinces?

Well, we know that founder and leader Shlomo Helbrans's devotees adhere to a particularly strict interpretation of Jewish law, including mandatory full-body and head covering for women. We know the Israeli-born Helbrans once served a two-year prison sentence for kidnapping in the United States and that after his release and deportation back to Israel, he eventually settled with his followers in Ste. Agathe-du-Mont, Que. We also know that last month, the group abruptly picked up and moved to Chatham-Kent, Ont. Finally, we know that on Nov. 27, 14 Lev Tahor children ranging in age from two months to 16 years were slated to be taken into foster care in Quebec.

Guest Editorial

Of course, we have heard much more about what allegedly goes on in the Lev Tahor community, but it doesn't exactly add up – indeed, some of the evidence directly contradicts other evidence. Throw in an overzealous sovereigntist govèrnment hell-bent on ridding Quebec of outward signs of religion and languages other than French, and the result is a confusing mess.

If you're inclined to indict Lev Tahor, you will cite Helbrans' criminal past, the Quebec court order to remove the children from the community and reports that the group lives in squalid conditions. More significantly, there are the allegations of physical and psychological child abuse – including the one-year-old girl found with a bruised face by an Ontario children's services employee that prompted the young girl and her brother, 4, to be taken into foster care on Dec. 12. Former Lev Tahor members and relatives of current members also claim underage girls are forced into marriage.

But there's another side to the story. Lev Tahor's spokesmen and legal advisers insist there is no culture of abuse in the community, that the children are well fed and tended to, and further, that the Quebec order was motivated by the Parti Québécois's language politics (Lev Yahor members speak Yiddish), not any tangible danger posed to the children.

You don't even have to take Lev Tahor's word for it: as *The CJN*'s Janice Arnold has reported, Université de Montréal professor Yakov Rabkin insists he never saw any indications of child abuse during his time studying the community. As for the wounded girl, an Ontario judge noted the bruise could very well have been the result of toddlers romping around (as they tend to do) when he decided to return her and her brother to their family after just five days in foster care.

If all this has left your head spinning, you're not alone. Still, reasonable people can agree on at least one point: child abuse is an odious crime. If Lev Tahor members are perpetrating the horrifying acts they are accused of, they must be stopped. Ontario officials should undertake a thorough investigation, and the greater Jewish community has a responsibility to lend its support in any way it can. But if nothing turns up, Lev Tahor deserves to have what it wants: for everyone to just leave the group alone.

Yoni Goldstein

Dry Bones AN ISRAELI QUESTION

ANTISEMITISM CAN EXPLAIN WESTERN SILENCE ABOUT THREATS TO
DESTROY ANY JEWISH PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
BUT WHAT CAN EXPLAIN THEIR SILENCE ABOUT
THE ATTACKS ON THE CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?
©'13 Kirschen

Harper no defender of birds

Although Prime Minister Stephen Harper deserves many of the accolades bestowed upon him at the recent Jewish National Fund Negev dinner for his support of Israel ("Harper announces first trip to Israel," *The CJN*, Dec. 5), there is one area in which he is not so deserving. The JNF will name the Hula Valley Bird Sanctuary in northern Israel after Harper. Meanwhile, here in Canada, the Harper government is offering not sanctuary, but open season on hunting the mourning dove, the small, gentle bird that symbolizes peace.

This hunt had been banned in Ontario from 1955 until it was re-opened by our federal Conservative government in September 2013.

What ironic hypocrisy!

Rudy Solomonvici
Toronto

Federation assists with tuition

Michael Kinrys is quite correct that all families make choices and undertake sacrifices to send their children to Jewish day schools ("Tuition help falls short," *The CJN*, Dec. 12).

Kinrys may not be aware, however, that UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Jewish day schools have a unique progressive tuition assistance program for families with low and modest incomes. Federation, through its annual campaign, has been allocating $10 million each year to local Jewish day schools to reduce tuition rates for more than 2,200 children from low- and modest-income families. The innovative iCAP tuition pilot program at Robbins Hebrew Academy, supported by UJA Federation and the Avi Chai Foundation, is a new concept that sets a multi-child discount for families who are otherwise paying full tuition fees.

Federation and the Jewish day schools work very hard to make schools accessible and welcoming. Families interested in ensuring an excellent, vibrant and rewarding Jewish and general studies education for their children are encouraged to contact their local Jewish day school for more information.

Ed Segalowitz, Executive Director
Julia and Henry Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Education
UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

More advocates for Israel welcome

I will gladly be the first to welcome new players into Canada's Israel advocacy scene, both on and off campus ("New group's advocacy methods ruffle feathers," *The CJN*, Nov. 14). But it would be a grave mistake to overlook the significant and continuing contributions of Hillel groups across the country with the assistance of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA).

As a non-Jewish advocate for Israel and a former Hillel advocacy staffer in Ottawa, I saw first hand the game-changing impact of CIJA's innovative, agile advocacy strategies in the hands of Hillel students. Campaigns like Size Doesn't Matter and Truth in Context have shifted the campus conversation in Israel's favour over the past few years. In fact, at schools such as Carleton University, where standing up for the Jewish state was once a dangerous endeavour, standing up for Israel has become a popular mainstream position.

CIJA and Hillels "get" campuses because they listen to campuses and develop meaningful relationships with student leaders based on shared values. Their impact continues to grow, marginalizing those who hate and strengthening the righteous.

Emile Scheffel
Vancouver

Sect not targeted for anti-Zionism

Prof. Yakov Rabkin's suggestion that the extremist Lev Tahor cult is being victimized on the grounds of its anti-Zionist ideology is appalling ("Prof who studied radical sect offers perspective," *The CJN*, Dec. 19).

While youth protection agencies in Quebec and Ontario have ample evidence of the mistreatment of children in the sect, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that Lev Tahor came under the scrutiny of Canadian authorities because of its anti-Zionist stance. Even the Jerusalem-based anti-Zionist Edah HaChareidis organization has denounced the cult.

With the welfare of innocent children at stake, it is irresponsible for Rabkin to inject his entirely irrelevant anti-Zionist views into this unfolding drama.

David Ouellette, Associate Director, Public Affairs (Quebec)
The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs

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Does the community have a future now that he's gone?

South African Jews, apartheid and Mandela

Dov Harris

Imagine yourself, born and bred in South Africa, opening a newspaper one day in 1968 and reading that the police and interior minister, S.L. Muller, had singled out Jewish parents in a warning to keep their offspring from participating in student protests against government policies.

Despite Muller saying his remarks had been misunderstood, the fact is he said it, and being Jewish, it would have sent a shiver down your spine. You would have been wholly oblivious that on Robben Island, South Africa's Alcatraz, a man was in prison who, 24 years later, would be the salvation not only of your community, but of all South Africa.

But even if you knew, would you have waited that long?

For the umpteenth time, you would have been jolted to consider leaving. Having built a decent business or professional practice over a number of years, the thought of selling it to start again in an unfamiliar country, and at your age, would have filled you with untold qualms. Or would you have done as many did until things became intolerable – rationalize the incident away, one of many, as apartheid bit ever deeper into the fabric of society, and ever deeper into your moral conscience?

This scenario was the truth for tens of thousands of South African Jews during the apartheid years, ordinary people wanting no more than to go about their business in the extraordinary loathsome circumstances that apartheid spawned.

Their forbears had left Lithuania, from where most had emigrated decades before, and found in South Africa the one thing that was denied them in *der heim*, their mother country: opportunity. They seized the chance with gusto and rapidly made a name for themselves in commerce, the professions and culture. *"Der goldene medina"* the land of gold wasn't a mirage, it was a fact. But it came at a price.

Nelson Mandela

They were buffeted by their consciences and buoyed by their undoubted success in so many fields, but what strikes one vividly is the overriding ambivalence of the established Jewish community's behaviour toward apartheid. What sapped their confidence as well was their steady attrition in numbers through emigration, which crested in the late 1970s and 1980s, and then at a much slower rate continued to this day, reducing the community from about 120,000 to 70,000 people – an approximately 40 per cent drop.

Not all South African Jews were merely reactive to circumstances. Some aspired to change things – radically. Of the 156 accused in the treason trial of 1956, 23 were whites, and more than half of those were Jews. Of the 17 African National Congress activists who appeared at the Rivonia treason trial in 1963, the five whites among them were all Jews. Nor should we forget that the leading defence counsels were Jews, who also happened to be leading members of the Jewish establishment, nor that the chief prosecutor was an Orthodox Jew!

Some leaders of the South African Jewish community have now appropriated those extraordinary whites, Nelson Mandela's comrades, who were willing to lay their lives on the line in their hatred for apartheid as being representative of the Jewish community. But nothing could be further from the truth. Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein declared after Mandela's passing, "South African Jews have had a long, close and meaningful relationship with former president Nelson Mandela... that involved every stage of his life." In reality, the Jews close to Mandela were individuals who happened to be Jewish. Almost to the person, they had rejected Judaism, and if anything, these friends of Mandela caused much of the community acute discomfort and embarrassment.

On the one hand, then, we had a community that voted overwhelmingly against the National Party – the ruling pro-apartheid party – and strongly supported Helen Suzman, the Jewish MP who won the world's admiration for her fight against apartheid. Yet, on the other hand, Jews were enablers in maintaining the status quo. Practising "apartheid-lite" in their day-to-day encounters with blacks and other non-whites, Jews earned a reputation for being kinder than most other whites (being too friendly socially would have led to awkward questions from the authorities), and the community held together.

Nevertheless, with thriving synagogues, a high standard of living and unabashed support for Israel – even as many were ambivalent about Israel's close military co-operation with apartheid South Africa – the 60 per cent who remained in South Africa awaited a questionable future.

Such was the situation when Mandela took the reins of government. Sweeping aside any rancour he may have felt for their overall behaviour, he reassured South Africa's Jews as a loving father would: "Here in South Africa you can be at your ease. You are fellow Africans. Here we need you." With those words and other meaningful symbolic gestures, ambivalence was laid to rest. At last they could exercise their moral conscience without trepidation.

The ball was now in the community's court. Would it measure up to the challenge of playing a constructive role commensurate with its heritage in a South Africa still recovering from the torments of apartheid?

"Cometh the hour, cometh the man" for the South African Jewish community, and indeed for all South Africans. The advent of Nelson Mandela, of blessed memory, was a miraculous intervention that saved the country from a bloodbath. This man of unfathomable humanity liberated South Africans of their fears and prejudices. All grew taller in his presence.

The community is now enjoying a period of relative calm. Economically, for many, it couldn't be better. How prescient then was the late Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson when he famously urged South African Jews not to leave. Was he right after all? Did he see beyond a South Africa without a Mandela?

We can only hope so.

Dov Harris is a former South African who worked for the South African Zionist Federation for five years. From 1983 to 2010, he worked for United Israel Appeal of Canada as director of financial resource development. He is now retired.

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Boldness and ethics

Sara R. Horowitz
in Toronto

Last month, I wrote about a much-publicized case of *get* refusal – that is, a man who refuses to grant his wife a *get*, although the couple have been divorced in civil law for several years. The man was using the exclusively male privilege to issue a *get* as leverage to attain a financial and custodial settlement that he had been denied in civil court.

What happens to that particular couple is important firstly because their lives matter, as the lives of all people matter. But their story is also important because it may be seen as representative of the many, many other couples in the same situation – or, more accurately, the many, many women in a predicament similar to that of the (ex-)wife of that defunct marriage.

The case was a high-profile one because the woman had taken the extraordinary step of taking on a professional publicist to make her plight known well beyond her personal social and familial circles. She took that unusual step, exposing not only her (ex-) husband, but also herself and her life to public scrutiny in the hope that under the pressure and stress of exposure through the news media, websites, Facebook and blogs, her (ex-)husband would see the wisdom and expedience – if not the rightness – of bringing ritual and halachic closure to the relationship by issuing a *get*, freeing up his (ex-)wife's life.

This couple's case is unusual, too, in that each of the (former) spouses have *yichus*, or prestigious lineage, closely related to important and influential rabbis of the 20th century. No doubt, the combination of these close ties to rabbinic authorities combined with the burgeoning public profile of the case prompted a public statement from the Rabbinic Council of America (RCA) late last month condemning the use of *get* refusal as a weapon in divorce negotiations.

The RCA represents Orthodox rabbis and is linked to the Orthodox Union. The RCA's statement was a welcome comment, enfolding not only halachic but also moral considerations in a realm where those two things have been, sadly, pulled apart. The statement is worth noting for what it says and how it says it, and for what it omits.

Oddly, the RCA takes care to cast its statement in even-handed terms. The statement "strongly condemns the refusal of spouses to participate in the delivery and receipt of a *get*." This is odd, because there's nothing even-handed in the situation of divorcing men and women. The laws concerning divorce stipulate that a halachic divorce occurs when a man gives and a woman receives a *get*, so that it is theoretically possible for a man's life, too, to be held hostage.

But an "anchored" husband has ample halachic remedies, while an anchored wife, an agunah, does not. In addition, in terms of Jewish law, the consequences are more dire, more prohibitive for women than men, with undesired implications for any children that might be born to a woman (but not to a man) in a subsequent relationship if the *get* has not been transacted. Was the RCA afraid of being perceived as being too pro-women?

Get refusal is a women's problem, at least insofar as its prime victims are women. But it must also be recognized as a community problem, throwing off familial and social equilibrium. Most importantly, the enduring radical vulnerability of women is an ethical flaw in the community, all the more so for being promulgated and protected by a narrow reading of halachic sources.

Still – and most importantly – the statement makes clear that a man's absolute power to grant or to withhold a *get* should not be deployed as a nuclear weapon in divorce proceedings. When a marriage is "functionally over" it should be ritually ended, as well. It calls a denial of a *get* under such circumstances "an exploitation of the halachic process and a manifestation of domestic abuse."

This is clear and unequivocal language. It gives back to Halachah its ethical base, recalibrating its moral compass. But as the many unresolved cases of women languishing in limbo indicate – women neither really married nor really divorced – Orthodox rabbinic authorities are not yet willing to take the bold steps necessary to ameliorate this halachic imbalance.

Bar/bat mitzvah celebrations belong in shul

Rabbi Dow Marmur
in Toronto

English parlance has turned the noun bar mitzvah – and bat mitzvah – into a transitive verb subject to the rules of English grammar. I'm often told by people that I "bar mitzvahed," or even "bemitzved," them.

The use of such language is indicative of how the traditional ceremony of admission into a worshipping congregation has become a pre-teen Jewish equivalent of the Christian baptism of infants. I know of many born Jews who erroneously assume that they've been removed from the fold because they've never celebrated their 13th birthday with Jewish trappings.

Non-Jews use similar language. Thus, for example, the December issue of *Toronto Life* carries an article about the Canadian filmmaker David Cronenberg, who tells readers that although he was born Jewish, he "was raised without religion and never bar mitzvahed."

Behind the trivial shift in nomenclature can be discerned a substantial and ominous shift in attitude. Whereas bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies are intended as community events to be celebrated with its members, the decline in the importance of synagogue affiliation has privatized and thus drastically changed the ceremony.

Tradition has been stood on its head in the guise of piety and fidelity to Judaism. Many believe that the ceremony, however trivial and vulgar, is the primary and ultimate manifestation of Jewish identity.

The trend began when bar and bat mitzvahs came to be celebrated in synagogues as private family events by invitation only. Regular worshippers, if they exist, would meet elsewhere on the premises. This is now common practice in many congregations around the world.

Those who choose not to join synagogues often arrange ceremonies, not just parties, in restaurants, hotels, "simchah palaces" or their own homes. Tuition has been reduced to learning by heart a few Bible verses in Hebrew, with scant knowledge of their meaning and little evidence of commitment to Judaism.

People who call themselves rabbis are available to conduct these private happenings according to the wishes of the family and the specifications of the caterer.

The "Zionist" version of the malpractice takes the celebrations to Israel. The Western Wall is hospitable to ceremonies that purport to be Orthodox. Others are relegated to a heap of ruins nearby. Events also take place on Masada, in the desert, on any hilltop with a good view, and sometimes even in synagogues available for hire. Many Israeli rabbis augment their salaries by officiating at such events.

Though it didn't make me very popular when I served congregations in England and Canada, I'd insist on community celebrations in the presence of regular worshippers during Shabbat services. My colleagues and I persevered and were usually supported by lay leaders. This made it possible to teach the young at least the basics of Judaism and, no less important, to instil in them respect for their heritage and its relevance to their own lives.

I urged families to travel to Israel as often as possible, but not in order to keep children away from religious school and from celebrating this milestone in their lives in the synagogue to which they should belong. Travel agents weren't amused.

Failure to celebrate in and with the community both reflects and contributes to the potential disintegration of the synagogue. It's already on the verge of becoming a fee-for-service station where the customer is always right, however eccentric the demands.

"Barkmitzvahs" are a case in point. Dogs are being decked out in something that looks like a kippah and a tallit. Rituals have been invented to reflect the status of the animal as a member of the family. There are no reports as yet of canine clergy.

In this scheme of things, rabbis aren't respected for their learning and their ability to teach but for their talents as masters of ceremonies skilled in providing customer service. Synagogue membership becomes superfluous when you can hire people to do your bidding, however idiosyncratic and contrary to traditional practice, at any location of your choice. Anarchy masquerades as spirituality.

Mercifully, it's not like that everywhere. My family has just celebrated the bat mitzvah of my granddaughter Leone in the same London, England, synagogue where her mother, aunt and uncle marked similar events in their lives. It was a truly communal occasion, memorable for Leone no less than for her family and her congregation.

Similar opportunities are available to all who take Judaism seriously and eschew narcissism in favour of authentic Jewish togetherness.

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History and culture included in program

CHAT puts focus on Sephardi experience

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Teacher Jimmy Bitton says he hopes a Grade 10 program he conceived will help raise awareness among his students in Toronto's Ashkenazi-dominated Jewish community about Sephardi history and culture.

Grade 10 students at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel Family Education Centre in Vaughan, where Bitton is the history department head, will take part in a field trip on Jan. 8 that's meant to highlight the fact that the Sephardi experience is part of the larger Jewish experience.

"The program has two functions – one is curricular and one is to complement the philosophy of the school," said Bitton, a Sephardi Jew.

He added that TanenbaumCHAT values "a transmission and appreciation of Jewish religious and cultural traditions," and is "welcoming of students and families of diverse Jewish traditions. In order to be welcoming, we have to represent these communities."

The field trip consists of tours of two synagogues – Petah Tikvah Anshe Castilla Congregation, which was Ontario's first Sephardi synagogue, founded in 1958, and the Sephardic Kehila Centre (SKC), which is architecturally modelled after a Spanish synagogue.

"There, they will be greeted by members of the community and given lectures on the community, Sephardic history, giving them a taste of liturgy, giving them a taste of the architecture, to see that Jews lived in the Muslim world, the Arab world and developed a unique culture, [in the same way] as the Ashkenazim developed in Europe," Bitton said.

Among the community leaders the students will hear from are Rabbi Amram Assayag, SKC's chief rabbi; Max Benaim, former SKC and Petah Tikvah president; and Yehuda Azoulay, the founder of the Sephardic Legacy Series Institute, an organization that provides English-speaking Sephardim with the resources to explore their rich culture and history.

After the field trip to the two synagogues, the students will come back to the school for a Sephardi-themed festival "that will include music, henna, couscous and things like that."

Although the trip is scheduled for Jan. 8, the program will run for the entire week.

Jimmy Bitton

"Sephardi music will be played through the PA during the morning and lunch periods. The library will display Sephardi books, and so on," he said.

"Beyond that, the classroom will be a place where we can integrate and pull together what we've done with the curriculum, so the students see that connection and solidify the point... We are learning about Jews in the Muslim world and Muslim Spain... and how a culture develops from that symbiosis that existed between Jews and Arabs."

Bitton said that although there are no figures regarding the number of Sephardi Jews at the school, "a significant number of my students definitely are."

But the program is not intended primarily for the Sephardi students.

"Because we live in – in terms of demographics – an Ashkenazi-dominated society, they tend not to hear about these kinds of things," he said.

The program is "intended for everyone else. That's really the target audience from my perspective. It's to bring this world that they may not know to them."

As a member of the Sephardi community, Bitton said it was important for him to have "some representation for the Sephardic community at the school and also to make sure that the rest of the community understands that this is part and parcel of the Jewish experience.

"Just as lox and cream cheese may be considered Jewish food, by the same token, there are other foods from the Sephardic community that are Jewish food," he said.

"I think at our school, there is definitely a representation of Sephardi history, but I think it needs to be highlighted to a greater extent."

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Group aims to change image of Orthodox lifestyle

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Allison Josephs, founder of Jew in the City, will be in Toronto next month to talk about the organization's mission to change people's misconceptions about Orthodox Jews.

As headline speaker for the Mommy Talks seminar titled "Absolutely on Purpose," to be held Jan. 12 at the Schwartz Reisman Centre in Vaughan, Josephs will tell her story about becoming an observant Jew, about her work to improve the Orthodox community's image, and how she came to be actor Mayim Bialik's Torah partner.

Josephs, a 33-year-old wife and mother of four who lives just outside of New York City, said her story begins when she was an eight-year-old girl, living a charmed life.

"I was raised in this very happy, nice, upper-middle-class secular American Jewish family… If you want to picture an idyllic life, thank God, that's what I had."

In a telephone interview with *The CJN*, she talked about the day her life as she knew it changed, when she learned that a girl in her school was murdered by her father.

"This bubble of stability and happiness that my parents had raised me in… it burst, it shattered, and I started having these big questions like, 'How will I meet my end? What will happen when I'm gone and what will become of me when I leave this world?'"

Allison Josephs

As a teen, Josephs was enrolled at a Jewish high school where she connected with one of her modern Orthodox teachers.

"I had been raised to think that Orthodox Jews were all a bunch of extremists, fanatics, backwards women subjugators, science-deniers, and here this guy was… he was educated, he was so good to his wife, he was so similar to me, but he was living with this purpose, with this spirituality, and everything he did was infused with meaning."

Inspired by him, she slowly began to embrace the Orthodox culture. "But I got a reaction. [People said,] 'Don't become one of them. They'll make you have a dozen children, they'll subjugate you, you'll have to dress frumpy.'"

Josephs recalled meeting with a young journalist who wanted to learn more about the Orthodox community.

"Everything she was expecting to see, like a traditionally decorated apartment – our apartment had mustard-coloured walls and funky furniture – and she expected me to be frumpy and meek, and everything she thought about what an Orthodox woman was, I was the exact opposite," she said.

"When she left my apartment, I said to my husband, 'We have the worst PR, the worst image…' Social media was coming onto the scene and so I realized that I wanted to start a worldwide image campaign… and show a real life person that goes beyond the stereotypes."

In 2007, Josephs founded Jew in the City, an organization that started as a one-woman show, until people started reaching out to help her in her quest to rectify the misrepresentations of Orthodox Judaism in the media.

Since then, Jew in the City has grown to include a team of a dozen volunteers, and Josephs was named one of National Jewish Outreach Program's Top Ten Jewish Influencers in 2012 and was one of the *Jewish Week*'s 36 under 36 in 2013.

Josephs also does corporate cultural diversity training to help service providers better understand their Orthodox and chassidic clientele.

At the Mommy Talks seminar, Josephs said she also plans to talk about her work with Partners in Torah, "which sets up Torah learning over the phone between a person with a stronger Jewish background and somewhat of a beginner," work that led to her developing a relationship with *Big Bang Theory* star Mayim Bialik.

"One night… I just thought, 'Whatever happened to [a television character played by Bialik named] *Blossom*?'" she said, adding that she was a fan of the show as a child.

"I Googled her and I saw that she's become more interested in Judaism and minoring in Judaic studies and Hebrew, and I was like, 'Oh, Mayim Bialik probably wants a partner in Torah.'"

She said she tried tracking her down, but was unsuccessful. "Four years later, on her own, she came to Partners in Torah and we got matched."

She said if she ever finds herself feeling disconnected or doubtful about her purpose, "I remind myself of that story."

Among the other speakers at the seminar are Julie Cole, co-founding vice-president of Mabel's Labels; Marci Warhaft-Nadler, founder of Fit vs. Fiction and Sarah Zeldman, an "e-marketing maven" who specializes in helping promote businesses.

For more information or to register, visit mommytalks.ca. Tickets are $30.

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Most of Temkin's sales come from the U.S.

Continued from page 3

He sent the firm a message, saying he was interested, but it took about a year and the help of a friend in Germany to finally get the firm to respond.

When he finally reached the company, he was thrilled to hear it was trying to get rid of its entire stock. Hearing that he was interested in taking the lot, it offered him a price he couldn't refuse.

That's the kind of process that Temkin goes through each time he buy materials and equipment. Since he does everything the old-fashioned way, he has to track down the tools using antique auctions, eBay and anywhere else he can get his hands on them.

Every tool in his studio that isn't actually vintage is modelled after an old-style version of one.

The vintage machines sit in his basement and attic studios in his Toronto home, where he also has a huge collection of wooden hat blockers and a range of mechanical devices, each to perform a different step in the hat-making process.

Each hat takes him six to 10 hours over many days to make. Since everything is made to exact measurements, it takes a lot of skill and care – it took Temkin two years from the time he started making them to the point where he felt confident enough to start charging money for them.

Hats, hats and more hats in Temkin's home studio. | *Cara Stern photo*

Hat prices start at $425, and at the time of his interview with *The CJN*, he had a waiting list 10 to 12 weeks long.

Most of his sales come from the United States, with people sending their head measurements using a detailed guide from his website. Each hat's sweatband is personalized either with the buyer's initials, a name, or even a quote. One hat that he was working on read: "A head only a hat could love," at the request of the customer.

Temkin knows that these fancy hats aren't particularly popular in the fashion world. They remain popular with certain groups and certain cultures.

Despite the fact his hats are a niche product, Temkin isn't concerned. In the end, it's really about being functional and keeping your head comfortable, he said.

If you're going outside when it's very hot out, a straw hat would keep your head cool, he explained. If it's very cold out, a warm ear-covering toque is best. But for everything in between, a felt hat is perfect.

And for Temkin especially, it's an absolute must when going outside. "It's as normal as putting on my coat," he said.

For more information, visit leondrexler.com.

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'98% will test negative, but why not test everyone?'

Women should be tested for cancer gene: expert

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

All Ontario Jewish women should have the opportunity to be tested for BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations, says Dr. Steven Narod, a world leader in the field of breast and ovarian cancer genetics.

"Ninety-eight per cent will test negative, but why not test everyone?" he asked at a panel discussion earlier this month titled "The ABCs of BRCA: Everything you Ever Wanted to Know about Cancer and the 'Jewish Gene' But Were Afraid to Ask," presented by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Also on the panel, held at Beth Tzedec Congregation, was Dr. Ellen Warner, a medical oncologist at the Odette Cancer Centre at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, where her practice and research are devoted to breast cancer, and Dr. Andrea Eisen, head of the Familial Cancer Program at Sunnybrook and co-chair of the Cancer Care Ontario Breast Site Group. The moderator was Libby Znaimer, a journalist specializing in health, arts and lifestyle issues, and a breast and pancreatic cancer survivor.

Dr. Steven Narod

Women who have harmful mutations in either the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes – which are more common in certain ethnic groups such as families of Ashkenazi Jewish descent – are more likely to develop breast cancer at a younger age than the general population and are at a much greater risk of developing ovarian cancer.

If a parent carries a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation, there's a 50 per cent chance of passing it on to a child.

But even though a woman may have relatives who have had breast cancer, less than one in 10 breast cancers are caused by an inherited gene mutation.

A fact sheet handed out by Willow Breast Cancer Support Canada said that a woman who has a history of breast cancer in her family may want to talk to a genetic counsellor who can assess her personal and family medical history to determine her risk for developing cancer. The counsellor can also discuss options available to reduce the cancer risk and provide information to help her make a decision about whether or not to have genetic testing.

Eisen said that a woman should suspect a possible gene mutation if there are multiple cases of breast or ovarian cancer in her family, if there is cancer in both her breasts, or if there is male breast cancer in the family. As well, "being Ashkenazi is one of the strongest risk factors."

Narod said studies have found that 14 per cent of ovarian cancer cases are due to genetics, so "until we offer [the test] to everyone, we will not make the impact we want to make on the risk of cancer. With a proactive program, we could reduce the cancer by up to 40 per cent."

He said there will always be people who say that there should not be universal testing.

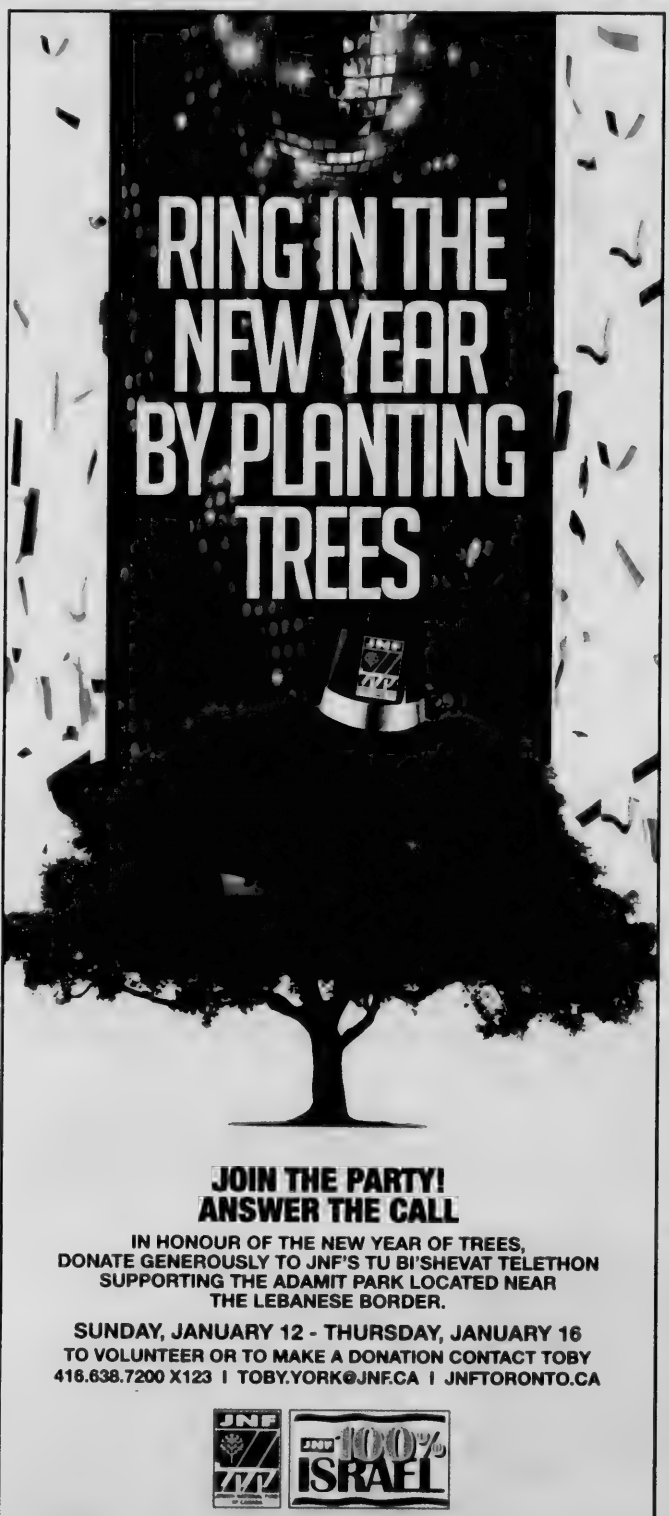
Narod, who headed a 2010 study on familial cancer in Jewish women at Women's College Hospital, in which 7,000 women participated, said that if there is a downside to being tested, it's that women may experience anxiety, "but in the long term, [that is not harmful]. About 20 per cent of the women who tested positive [in the study] suffered some anxiety, and in five per cent of those, it was severe."

Warner said that if a woman does test positive, "she should immediately take a deep breath and relax. She's probably had the gene for 30 or 40 years and does not need to run out and do body-altering surgery. There are many strategies for lowering the risk of developing or dying of cancer in the future."

She said that the birth control pill lowers the risk of ovarian cancer, and a woman can have her ovaries and fallopian tubes removed. "That can be done quite simply, and there is time to complete your family before it is done."

She said that women who test positive should have a mammogram and MRI every year by age 30. "Women think they have to rush out and take off their breasts."

It is important, however, that women who are tested understand the implications. "Some people can't cope with uncertainty, and we have to be careful that they know what they're getting into."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Sharon Baltman

Toronto doctor treats patients by listening

Carolyn Blackman
Staff Reporter

Toronto physician Sharon Baltman, 66, treats her patients by listening.

Author of the memoir *Escape from the Bedside*, Baltman takes us on the journey of her decision to go to medical school until she ultimately gave up being a general practitioner so she would have more time for her patients.

Currently maintaining her two-day-a-week psychotherapy practice, Baltman, who is divorced with one daughter, told *The CJN* that she escaped "from the ivory tower of the hospital into private psychotherapy practice in order to listen closely to my patients, and hear their stories."

She said that when she first announced her plans to enter pre-med at University of Toronto, she was told she'd never be a doctor, "because of her long painted fingernails, her big breasts, and the 'three Ms – marriage, motherhood and medicine.'"

She persevered, however, and went into emergency medicine, then family practice.

"I left emergency medicine because I didn't have enough time for my patients. I barely met [them] and rarely saw them a second time."

She switched to a general practice, she said, "so I would have longer-term connections, but ran out of time trying to deal with both the physical and emotional needs [of the patients.]

"In order to hear more about people's lives, and what made them tick, I finally chose full-time psychotherapy work so I could have time to listen to their tales in a quiet, un-rushed venue. I chose not to be a psychiatrist, because I did not want to go through another residency."

While she started with classic Freudian analytic work, she said, she later moved to cognitive behavioural therapy, "to teach patients to deal with the here and now in a concrete way – to reframe their thoughts more positively, and to find the grey zone between the black and white extremes of life."

It's only in the last 10 years, Baltman said, that medical schools have trained doctors in narrative medicine, a method whereby physicians do not merely treat medical problems, but take into account the specific psychological and personal history of the patient.

"It is a way of listening closely to patients' stories about their illness. Instead of asking 'where is your pain,' narrative medicine has physicians asking patients to tell them what they need to know about them. By telling us a story, we get a lot more information about [our patients] and their illness."

For example, she said, if someone comes in complaining of chest pains, "a doctor typically asks where, for how long, and if they've had it before. With narrative medicine, the doctor keeps interrogating until they get the whole story. Maybe it's stress-related, maybe it happens after a certain activity. They try to dig into the story."

Patient care is much better, said Baltman, if physicians know everything that is going on. "On the [other hand], patients feel heard. An important piece of narrative medicine is that everyone is humanized."

She said that many doctors have been practising narrative medicine for years, "but now it is an important part of medical school curriculum. When students learn about eye disease, they may also read a story about someone losing their vision so students get an idea of what the patient is going through. They learn about a patient's experience by reading about them."

Baltman said that in retrospect, her career was headed to her current practice from the beginning. "My career took me here because I wanted to listen. Now I have the opportunity to talk to my patients."

Court returns two Lev Tahor sect children to parents

CJN Staff

MONTREAL — Two young children from the controversial Lev Tahor chassidic sect who were placed in protective custody by Ontario authorities were returned to their parents on Dec. 17 with several conditions.

The children, aged one and four years, were taken from one family by Chatham-Kent Children's Services (CKCS) on Dec. 12, after a bruise was discovered on the face the year-old girl.

Ontario Court Judge Stephen Fuerth approved reuniting them with their families after the parents agreed to scheduled and unannounced visits by child protection workers, not to use "physical discipline," and not to leave the Chatham-Kent area. The sect settled there last month after leaving Ste. Agathe des Monts, Que., where the community of about 250 had lived for more than a decade.

It was further agreed that one of the parents will get help for mental health issues.

Lev Tahor's lawyer Chris Knowles said the children were taken without warrants after a CKCS investigation. No criminal files were opened.

Fuerth said the bruise was "relatively minor," adding that toddlers often get bumps of this kind.

However, he added, "Any unexplained injury can be cause for concern." The mother had said the mark was caused by the child playing with a marker, but a medical exam confirmed that it was a bruise.

The little girl was found to be otherwise healthy and workers reported that the mother appeared to be "at ease with her children."

Knowles said the parents agreed to the conditions not because they admitted to doing anything wrong, but because they wanted their kids back.

The two are not among the 14 children that a Quebec youth court judge ordered on Nov. 27 removed from their two families and placed into foster care.

The community left Ste. Agathe a week before those two families were to appear at a youth protection hearing into allegations of abuse and neglect.

Those children and their parents remain in Chatham-Kent, where Lev Tahor wants to settle.

On Dec. 4, CKCS sought a warrant to seize the 14 children subject to the Quebec court order, which was denied by an Ontario justice of the peace.

An appeal of that refusal was scheduled to be heard on Dec. 23.

The sect's leader and founder, Israeli-born self-styled rabbi Shlomo Helbrans, settled his followers in Ste. Agathe in 2001 from Israel, where Helbrans had been deported from the United States after serving a jail term for the second-degree kidnapping of a child.

Numerous allegations of neglect and abuse of children, as well as women, have been made over the years, but no charges were ever laid. There have been accounts that Helbrans exerts tyrannical control over his followers.

The women wear headscarves and long dark cloaks, which has led some to dub the group the "Jewish Taliban."

The Times of Israel reported that dozens of family members and supporters held a protest outside the Canadian embassy in Tel Aviv on Oct. 14 to raise awareness of the danger they believe their relatives are in by staying with Lev Tahor.

Silver takes helm of women's coalition

Vivianne Silver

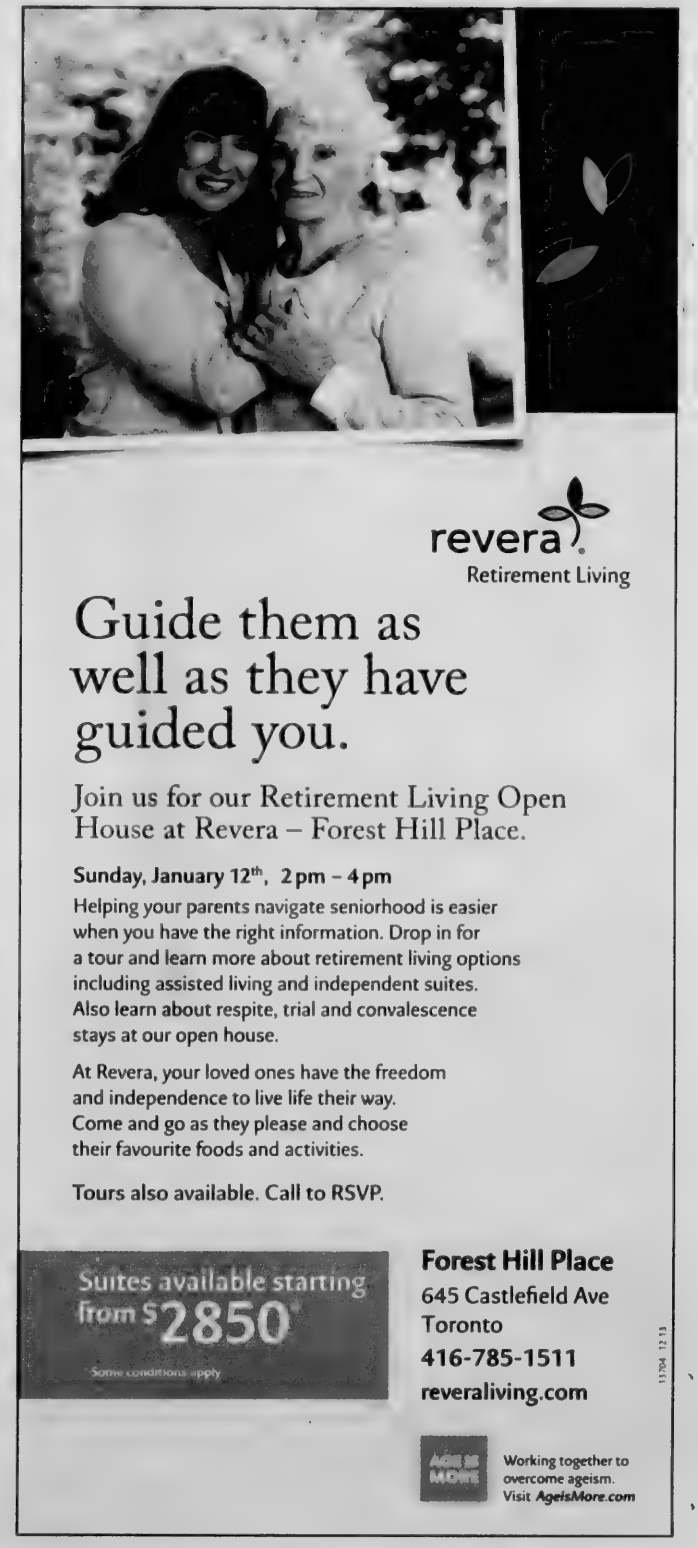
Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Vivianne Silver believes she's well equipped to realize her vision of building bridges between Montreal women of different backgrounds.

Silver is the new president of the Montreal Council of Women (MCW), a 120-year-old umbrella organization with 70 affiliated groups, as well as individual members, representing a total membership of 30,000.

She's only the third Jewish president – an elected position – in its history and hopes to contribute to a better understanding of Judaism and the community during her two-year term.

Four Jewish groups are affiliated with the MCW, and Silver is working on increasing that: the Jewish General Hospital Auxiliary, Montreal Hadassah-WIZO, Act to End Violence Against Women, Balfour chapter (formerly Jewish Women International of Canada), and the Book Lovers' Forum of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom.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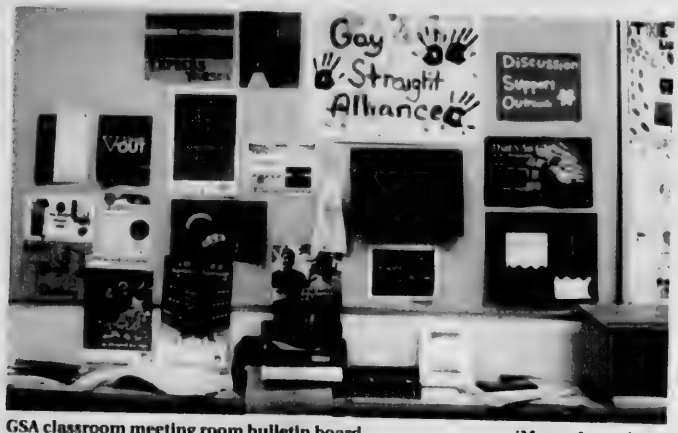

GSA classroom meeting room bulletin board [*Myron Love photo*]

Role model for faith-based schools

Gay-straight club wins human rights award

Myron Love
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — On Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day, representatives of the Gray Academy of Jewish Education Student Gay Straight Alliance group proudly approached the podium at the Union Centre in Winnipeg to accept the Sybil Shack Human Rights Youth award for 2013.

The annual award recognizes the work of a person or group of people under 25 years old who have had an impact on the advancement of human rights. It's named for the late Sybil Shack, a life-long Jewish educator and administrator in the public school system and a leading human rights advocate, and presented jointly each year by the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties, the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

"It was a bit of a surprise to have our students presented with this award," said Gray Academy English teacher Barbera Buffie. "It was also a triumphal moment. The award indicates that our student-led gay-straight alliance [GSA] is having an impact and that others are taking notice."

Head of school Rory Paul added that the awards evening was well attended by members of the two-year-old GSA, along with their families and teachers.

"This is something for all of our students to celebrate," he said.

Gray Academy Hebrew and Judaic studies department head Anat Ekhoiz said that among the positive responses have been emails and tweets from former students expressing pride in the school.

GSA groups have been accepted in the Winnipeg school system for some time, Buffie said, but faith-based schools, however, are another matter.

School vice-principal Lori Binder noted that the Gray Academy's GSA group has become a role model for other faith-based schools.

She noted that while the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and the Gann Academy near Boston also have GSA groups, there's only one other faith-based school in Manitoba with a GSA group.

Gray Academy high school English and debating teacher Andrew Kaplan said there had been interest on the part of students in having a GSA at the school for a number of years.

"It's a scary step to take," Kaplan said. "While the administration and staff are fully supportive, the feeling was that this had to be student-initiated."

He said some students approached the administration two years ago about starting a GSA group.

"We spoke to the student body about being a school where gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students can feel safe," he said "The first meeting was very well attended."

The group meets weekly over lunchtime and plans activities that include outreach to the larger student body.

"Last year, some of our students attended a safe school leadership conference where they met with representatives from other schools, " Ekhoiz said.

Some of the students also attended the Rainbow Resource Centre's third annual Manitoba GSA Conference on Nov. 25.

"Our GSA group has had its successes," Ekhoiz said, "but it is still a challenge. There is still a stigma associated with the group that we are all working to overcome. We believe that the Sybil Shack Award will help fight that stigma."

Montrealer wins insurance battle over Russian anti-gay law

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

David Brody

MONTREAL — An openly gay Jewish Montrealer has won a dispute with his insurance company and been reimbursed for cancelling a trip to Russia out of fear for his security because of the country's anti-gay law.

David Brody, a longtime Congregation Shaar Hashomayim member and onetime LGBT activist, has been promised in writing the full refund of his claim against La Capitale Insurance and Financial Services Inc., but only after threatening to go to court.

"I am particularly pleased that the insurance company finally recognized my legitimate concerns for my well-being and freedom," Brody said. "I see its decision to reimburse me as a direct validation of my civil rights as a gay Jewish man facing an exceptionally discriminatory law in a foreign land I wanted to visit."

In early June, Brody booked a flight with Lufthansa from Montreal to Moscow for October and arranged a land tour in Russia during his planned 10 days there. This was a personal trip, his first to the country, and primarily to visit a nephew working at the Israeli embassy.

On June 30, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed into law a bill banning the "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations to minors," commonly referred to in the western media as "the anti-gay law."

As soon as he heard about it, Brody decided to cancel his trip, as the law also applies to foreigners, who can be detained, arrested, fined or deported.

"All they had to do is Google my name to find out I wrote the novel *Mourning and Celebration*. It scared me, because this could absolutely be interpreted as gay literature. I could have been arrested on the spot and thrown in jail," said Brody, who is over 70.

Published in 2009, the novel imagines the clandestine love affair between two young Orthodox Jewish men in a 19th-century Polish shtetl.

In August, Brody filed a claim with La Capitale for $1,450 – $1,000 for the land arrangements, plus a $450 penalty Lufthansa charged him for cancelling his round trip.

Later that month, the insurance company responded that he was ineligible for reimbursement, because the federal government had not at the time issued a notice advising against Canadians travelling to Russia, as stipulated in the policy, which Brody has held since 2006.

Ottawa had only issued a "caution" about the new law.

Brody, assisted by the Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR), followed up with a legal demand letter in November, stating, "I cannot accept your denial of my claim, which is tantamount to discrimination against your LGBT clientele and a violation of my right to the integrity and security of the person."

He also identified himself as Jewish.

"This might have been another grounds to persecute me," said Brody, who was a founder of the now-disbanded Montreal Jewish gay group Yahkdav.

If he had gone to court, the case would have been the first Canadian civil rights case related to the new Russian law.

In a Dec. 9 letter, signed by Martine Powell, director of health care benefits group insurance, La Capitale relented, stating that "given the circumstances motivating your decision not to travel to [Russia], we are approving your claim on an exceptional basis."

Brody added that, while Canada had not issued a travel advisory, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird in the House of Commons warned Canadians about going to Russia.

Brody said he has no desire to go to Russia anymore. "Polls have shown that over 60 per cent of the population supports this homophobic law. I wouldn't give them the money."

Matthew Chung, one of the two McGill University law students working with CRARR who helped Brody, said, "We were prepared from the start to initiate judicial proceedings, arguing that the company's action constituted an indirect form of discrimination against LGBT travellers to Russia.

"Still, we are entirely satisfied with the outcome of the case. Mr. Brody has received the equal treatment and justice he deserved."

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"There is no question in my mind that Canada will always be, must always be, a strong, true friend to Israel, not just for historical reasons or for moral reasons, but because supporting the only real democracy in the Middle East in an area that is rife with strife and conflict is a path toward a more stable, more peaceful, more accepting world. So I am happy to say that I am a strong friend of Israel and the Liberal Party is a strong friend of Israel." – **Justin Trudeau**, MP, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada

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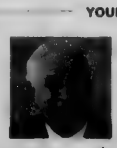

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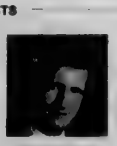

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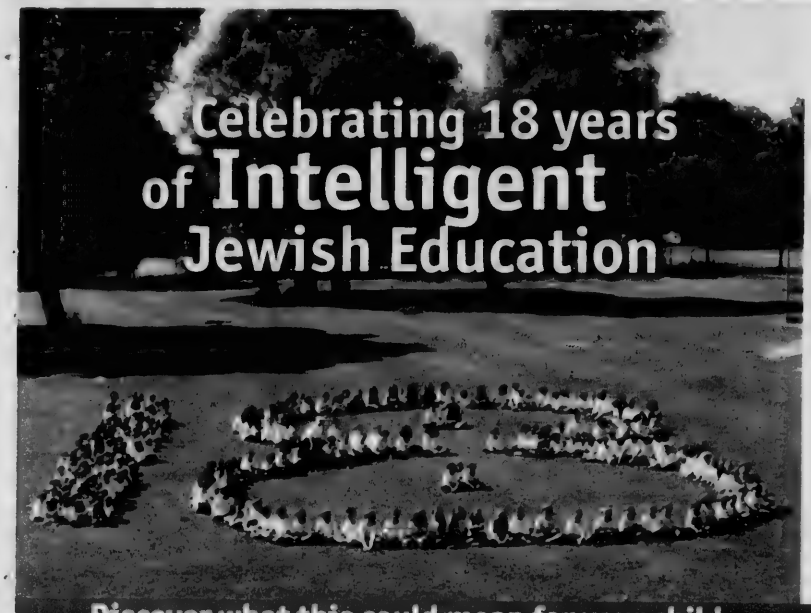

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First ambassadorship for Barak

Continued from page 1

"We would also like to see more Canadian investors in this field, so gas energy will be a very high priority."

Barak – whom family and friends call Rafi – has hit the ground running since arriving in Canada on Nov. 24 to succeed Miriam Ziv.

Almost right off the plane, he handled a conference call on Iran, received his diplomatic credentials from Gov. Gen. David Johnston, attended the Jewish National Fund's Negev Dinner in Toronto honouring Harper, and looked for Canadian winter coats for himself and his wife, Miriam.

This is the first ambassadorship for the Uruguayan-born Barak, who speaks several languages fluently, comes across as genial and informal to a fault, and has worked for Israel's Foreign Ministry for 37 years.

His career has included senior postings in cities as disparate as Lima, Paris, Brussels and Washington, D.C. His position before coming to Canada was as deputy minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Barak was also an important figure in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

An ardent Zionist his entire life, Barak made aliyah on his own at age 18 and joined the ministry at age 26 after working as a tourist guide when he was a student – he earned an MA in political science from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

More than once during his diplomatic career, Barak was the "No. 2" man at an embassy, "doing everything the ambassador doesn't want to do," he said with a laugh, "but it's a profession where you learn through your own experience... on-the-job training."

The hardest part of the job? "Having limited time and plenty of things to do," Barak answered immediately.

In Washington between 2000 and 2005, Barak, as the No. 2 man, was at the heart of the embassy action, in a period that included 9/11 and the second intifadah.

"[Then-]prime minister [Ariel] Sharon came to visit us eight times during my term, and all eight times, he had to cut his visit short because of some kind of attack that made him go back to Israel," Barak recalled.

He also remembered that during his posting there, he and his wife got to visit Canada to see some of the tourist sites.

"This is part of the excitement of starting something new," Barak said about being an ambassador now. "Each and every time, you have to prove yourself again. I start from scratch, and at the end, I know exactly if I did it very well and what the accomplishments were."

Barak plans to make full use of the fact that Canada is one of Israel's staunchest allies. He wants to see trade expand considerably from today's level of $1.3 billion, improve on the Free Trade Agreement signed in 1996, and work more collaboratively on innovation and security issues, as well as on scientific research, Internet technology and biotechnology.

'This is part of the excitement of starting something new'

"Hopefully, [these] will be announced during the visit of Mr. Harper," Barak said.

On the peace process, Barak was encouraged that negotiations are still going on, and while everything is open for discussion, "at the end of the day, this will be a political decision."

He said any deal has to include recognition of Israel as a "Jewish state... because that is what we are."

Even if the basic issues have not changed over the last decades, "like an old marriage with no new surprises... that does not imply that there are not difficult choices."

Barak said Israel is grateful for Canada's skepticism over the recent interim agreement with Iran on nuclear arms development.

"We are skeptical because, over the years, Iran has not stopped their intentions of having a nuclear weapon," Barak said.

Despite Iran's "charm offensive" under President Hassan Rouhani, the "same ayatollahs" are running the show, and, by not going along with deal, Canada is showing its ability to not do the "politically correct" thing.

Canada understands that "what is right is right," Barak said.

Barak said he plans to meet with Jewish Canadians coast to coast, work "hand-in-hand" with them and celebrate the "rich Jewish life of this country."

He will also thank them for their wide co-operation with many institutions in Israel.

"If you go from north to south in Israel, there's not one place where I don't see a Canadian flag."

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Exhibit tells story of the SS St. Louis

The SS St. Louis surrounded by smaller vessels in the port of Havana, June 1939. (*Wikimedia Commons photo*)

Joel Jacobson
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — A display currently at the Museum of Industry in Stellarton, N.S., tells the sad tale of the SS St. Louis and its ill-fated passengers almost 75 years ago.

The story of how 907 potential immigrants seeking refuge from Nazi persecution in Germany and Europe were turned away by several North American countries, including their last hope, Canada, still causes shame among Canadians.

"It's a story that should be told," Debra McNabb, the museum's director, said as the display was seen by dozens of people during a run that will end Jan. 31, 2014. "It's the job of a museum not to censor history. We must not just tell the stories we're comfortable with hearing. We must tell both the light and the dark."

The *Ship of Fate* exhibit includes a metre-long model of the St. Louis and 11 traditional display panels that tell the little-known story of the voyage. Visitors can use interactive kiosks to read scanned documents associated with the ship.

The panels show photos of German-Jewish families holding one another and smiling as the luxury liner turns away from a nation descending into hate and sails off across the Atlantic. The panels also tell how the ship was turned away by governments in Cuba, some Caribbean nations and the United States prior to attempting to land in Halifax. It was forced to return to Antwerp, Belgium, and the passengers found refuge in the Netherlands, Belgium and France, which became overrun by the Nazis, as well as Great Britain. When the Nazi machine moved into those countries months later, 255 were swept up and exterminated in the concentration camps.

The panels were developed a decade ago by the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax. With the help of the Atlantic Jewish Council, which arranged for funding for a graphic designer and researchers, the display was officially opened in 2009.

Even then, there was interest in a travelling exhibit, said Gerry Lunn, the museum's curator of exhibitions. The panels have since visited Pier 21 in Halifax; County Museum in Yarmouth, N.S., and the Confederation Centre in Charlottetown. A website is being developed to give the story of the St. Louis international exposure.

"The exhibit now can go to any synagogue, community centre or town hall – anywhere – if we can obtain funding to enable it to travel," Lunn said.

In their research for the exhibit, Lunn said Maritime Museum staff unearthed Canadian prime minister William Lyon Mackenzie King's correspondence with his then-immigration minister Frederick Blair.

In 1939, King was ready to admit the Jewish immigrants until his immigration chief, Blair, known for his hatred of Jews, sent King a secret memo explaining that the passengers didn't qualify under immigration laws. The oft-quoted phrase "None is too many" has been attributed to Blair. It's a story many have said should still haunt Canadians today.

With the St. Louis heading back toward Europe, but still within reach of Halifax, University of Toronto history professor George Wrong led a group of prominent clergy and academics in petitioning King to grant sanctuary to the refugees on humanitarian grounds.

King, who was travelling in the United States at the time, wrote to Blair, advising that he "strongly consider this request."

But Blair, whose race-based immigration policies saw Canada accept only 5,000 Jewish immigrants (compared to 200,000 by the United States) during the 1930s and '40s, fought the move.

"Much to our shame, King, who had many Jewish friends, didn't force the matter," Lunn said.

In 2009, a survivor of the ship, Lisa Avedon attended the 70th anniversary Halifax commemoration of the events. She was only four years old in 1939, but had vivid memories of her first reception in North America as a passenger on the SS St. Louis.

"There are a few pieces I remember today," the Toronto woman said at the time. "I know I was seasick most of the trip and saw only my stateroom and a bit of the deck. But I'll never forget sitting in Havana harbour, where we were refused admittance at the last minute after being granted visas weeks before."

Lisa said her uncle, living in New Jersey at the time, came to meet Lisa and her family and was sitting in a boat beside the ship. "I called to him, 'Take me with you,' and I was ready to jump off the deck."

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Israel studies minor to be offered at Concordia

Janice Arnold
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — For the first time, undergraduate students at a Canadian university will be able to earn a minor in Israel studies at Concordia University.

Concordia's senate has just approved the program, which will be offered through the Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies, which was established in June 2011.

The program will be launched next fall, but new courses under development are expected to begin in January 2015, said the institute's co-director Csaba Nikolenyi.

While the senate vote was unanimous, it took two years to get the support of all levels of the university hierarchy, he said.

It's a major advancement for the institute, which was established with a $5-million donation from the Azrieli Foundation.

Until now, the institute's work has been to support academically and financially, graduate and post-graduate students doing research related to Israel as part of their studies in a variety of disciplines, such as political science, history, sociology, religion or literature. Institute funding has even assisted one fine arts student.

It has no professors or courses of its own. Nikolenyi, who is chair of the political science department, is co-director with Norma Joseph, an associate professor of religion.

Norma Joseph and Csaba Nikolenyi

Undergraduate courses being developed will range from the government of Israel to introductory Hebrew and Arabic.

In its short history, the institute has already attracted two students from Israel: Alon Burnstein, the first Israeli political science PhD candidate at Concordia, and Liora Norwich, who was granted a post-doctoral fellowship, said Nikolenyi.

Concordia, along with University of Toronto and the University of Calgary, are the only three universities in Canada that offers Israel studies.

The institute is unique, said Nikolenyi, as it is a research centre with the goal of fostering an environment for scholarship on Israel in all its dimensions.

It has no endowed chair in Israel studies as is the case at the other two universities (in either the political science or history departments), and that was intentional, he said.

Rather, the institute looks forward to the day when it has the means to install a visiting professor in a well established academic milieu specifically for Israel studies, Nikolenyi said.

This institute differs from most others in the field anywhere in that it is not limited to study of the modern state or the pre-state yishuv or Zionist movement, he said.

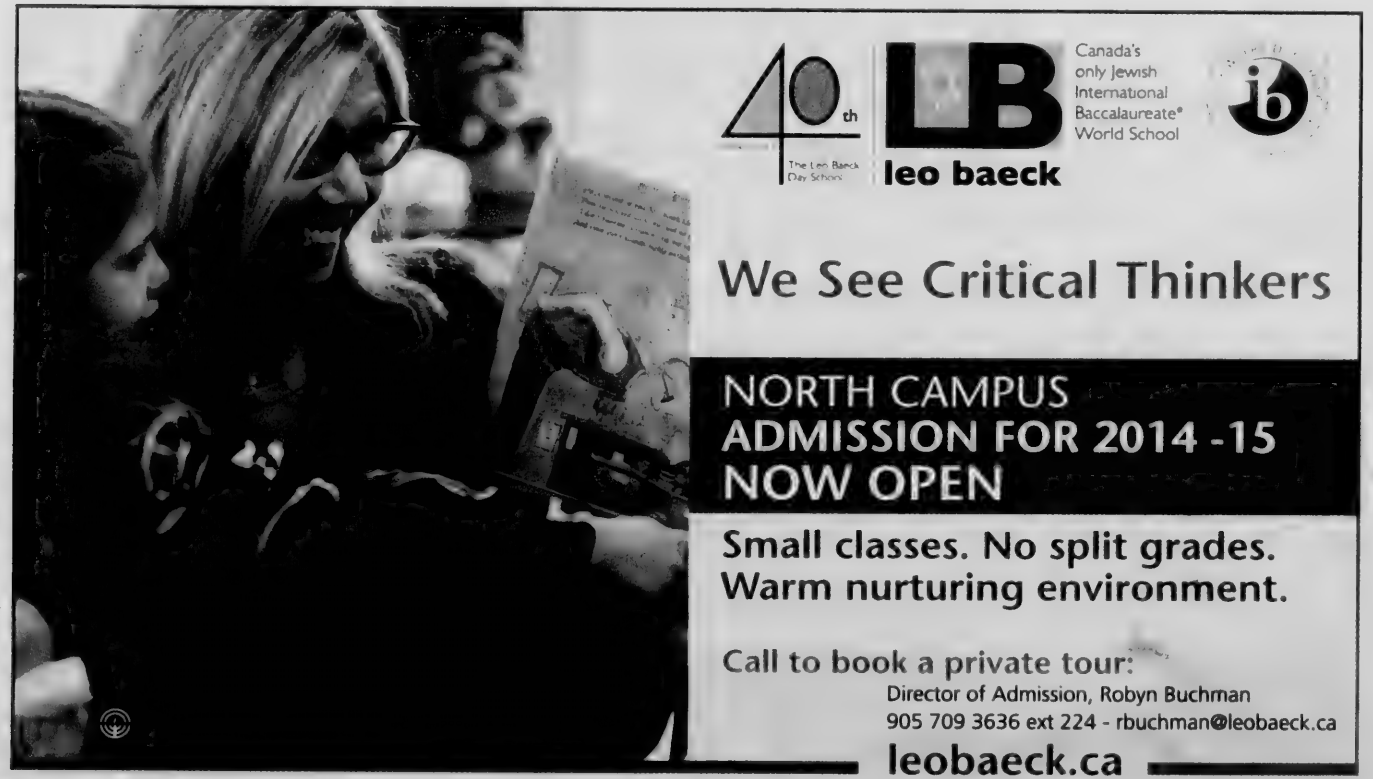
At Concordia, students can, for example, pursue interests in ancient Judaism because the religion department is strong in Judaic studies. Archeology is not offered at the university, but a course of study along that line might be arranged through the classics department, he said.

Israel studies has been a rapidly growing field in the past decade, he said, and there are now more than 40 such programs around the world today, even in such unlikely places as Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.

The institute, which is located in the former Canadian Jewish Congress headquarters' Samuel Bronfman building, also recently received another vote of confidence: it will host the annual conference of the Association of Israel Studies in 2015.

This conference, which alternates between North America and Israel, will bring anywhere from 500 to 700 of the top scholars in the field to Concordia's downtown campus for four days in May of that year.

The daylong inaugural conference in November saw papers delivered by invited scholars from Concordia and McGill University, as well as the United States, England and Israel. The program was divided into sections on politics, culture, ethnicity and religion, which reflect the institute's multidisciplinary approach.



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May his memory be for a blessing.

Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre

Immigration minister defends policy on health benefits

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Christopher Alexander

A few weeks ago, when Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau addressed the congregation at the Beth Tikvah Synagogue as part of its Visions for Canada series, he suggested a question should be posed to Chris Alexander, the next in line in the shul's Q&A program. Ask him to justify the government's decision to deprive refugee applicants of health-care benefits, he suggested.

Well, that's just what happened last week when Rabbi Jarrod Grover asked Alexander, minister of citizenship and immigration, to explain the government's thinking as it tried to balance the needs and commitments to Canadians with the policy of protecting foreigners in Canada.

The government will never agree to provide bogus refugee claimants health benefits that go beyond those provided Canadians, Alexander said.

Until the federal government instituted reforms, Canadian taxpayers were paying for a lot of things Canadians themselves were not getting – something for which there was no public support. Reforms to health care that had been doled out to refugee claimants have saved taxpayers $200 million over five years, he said.

"We say, number 1, that bogus refugee claimants should never have access to health care" but should be in the same position as visitors to Canada, adding emergency hospital care will continue to be provided.

(One day before Alexander spoke, lawyers for refugee advocacy groups asked a Federal Court judge to declare unconstitutional government cuts to refugee health care.)

While reforms to the system were being implemented, Canada continued to be generous in terms of its admission policy, coming behind only the United States among all countries admitting refugee applicants. "It's a record we are proud of that never gets reported," Alexander said.

Immigration issues were one area addressed by Alexander, but the question and answer session led off by Rabbi Grover included queries about Iran, Israel, veterans affairs, unemployment, Pakistan and the new Canadian economy.

This government's policy on Israel reflects the convictions of the top leadership group of the Conservative Party and of the entire government caucus, Alexander said. "It is a deeply held conviction of our entire caucus and our entire party," said Alexander, who greeted the audience with the Hebrew phrase, "*erev tov chaverim*" (good evening friends).

Since those pro-Israel views were first expressed seven years ago, more and more Canadians have come to "recognize the merits of our position...The Arab spring shows how malign the ideologies are in the region" and how difficult it is to transform to democracies, he said.

Israel remains a democracy and since the 9/11 attacks, North Americans have been reminded of the importance of supporting true friends and allies, "with whom we can have truly open conversations."

Questioned about Iran's nuclear program, Alexander said despite the interim agreement between the P5+1 countries and the Islamic nation, Canada would not relax its sanctions.

"We'll judge Iran by its actions," he said.

Iran remains a "soft" totalitarian state that engenders fear among its citizens. "It is a paranoid state" which under its previous president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, "gave voice to unprecedented anti-Semitism."

Iran's policy is geared to acquiring nuclear weapons. "We'd like for Iran to abandon those strategic objectives but we've seen nothing to suggest it," he said.

Alexander, who entered politics after serving in the Canadian Foreign Service, was named Canada's ambassador to Afghanistan in 2003 and two years later served as deputy special representative of the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan.

He said Pakistan seeks regional dominance and employs terrorism as a proxy to expand its power. Asked whether that should make Canada wary of permitting immigration from that country, Alexander pointed out that the top three sources for immigration remain the Philippines, China and India. Pakistan is among the top 10 sources of immigrants, he acknowledged, but all potential newcomers have to undergo security screening to determine whether they are members of the Muslim Brotherhood, terrorist groups or had participated in war crimes.

"You can't have a policy to ban people from one country," he added.

Asked about the recognition of foreign credentials, Alexander said the government is being proactive in informing immigrants early in the immigration process about Canadian standards and what is necessary for them to qualify in Canada.

He pointed out that Canada is most in need of skilled trades, and he drew surprised looks when he pointed out that welders can easily earn $150,000, with top people in the field pulling down salaries of $500,000.

Next on the agenda for the synagogue's series is NDP leader Thomas Mulcair. No date has been set for his appearance.

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Anti-Israel group sponsored talk in Calgary

Continued from page 1

Bernamoff said she and her group felt particularly alone when Israeli-American peace activist Miko Peled, who supports a one-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, made a stop at the University of Calgary during his Canada-wide campus speaking tour this past fall.

After learning of some of the statements Peled had made in his previous lectures, Bernamoff decided she had to do something.

"This is hate speech," she said. "The speaker said, 'Anybody who supports Israel is a terrorist, is a racist. You put feces in the drinking water of the Palestinians.' This is libel."

She had heard that the anti-Israel group sponsoring Peled's talk was inviting Calgary's large local native population to attend, arguing that Palestinians and Aboriginal people have many shared experiences with colonization and oppression.

That's when Bernamoff resolved to hand out pamphlets at the event.

She contacted the Calgary Jewish Federation to find out whether the federation would work with her and perhaps contribute funds to produce the pamphlets, but Judy Shapiro, the federation's associate executive director, declined.

Shapiro told Bernamoff the federation would not be confronting Peled directly, since Shapiro believes that handing out material at such events often leads to screaming matches and only serves to give publicity to the other side.

"We don't find it effective to challenge specific pro-Palestinian speakers," Shapiro told *The CJN*, explaining that it's better to focus advocacy efforts on working with faculty and administrators on campuses to develop an environment where a pro-Israel stance is the norm, and to engage informally with individual students at anti-Israel events who appear to be neutral on the Mideast conflict.

"I'm not going to fund ineffective advocacy," Shapiro said.

Bernamoff disagreed that her decision to pamphlet the event was ineffective and said her group's efforts didn't degenerate into a screaming match with the other side.

She said pro-Israel students needed to directly confront everyone who attended the lecture, in the hope that neutral students wouldn't be swayed by Peled's unbalanced perspective.

Bernamoff's group ended up producing its own materials with financial support from StandWithUs, a California-based pro-Israel advocacy organization that recently launched a Canadian arm.

The group doesn't have local campus affiliates, but does directly support students.

Meryle Kates, executive director of StandWithUs Canada, said her organization thought it was important to support Bernamoff's group.

"We really believe it's more important to show a pro-Israel stance year-round than to react to each speaker they bring," she said, but she added that StandWithUs is happy to support students and community members who want to distribute materials at anti-Israel events.

Even if students don't choose to do that, her group might simply monitor an event, as it did during Peled's Toronto stop.

Bernamoff is emphatic that her efforts were successful.

"We had students who said they came to learn about the topic, could sense it was biased and thanked us for sharing our view," she said.

"I know I had an impact."

Despite Bernamoff's enthusiasm, the non-confrontational approach prevails at campuses across the country.

For instance, many Toronto-area student unions have passed anti-Israel motions over the past year, and each time, the response on campus has been muted, while CIJA and groups such as Hillel of Greater Toronto have stressed that such resolutions are non-issues.

York University students drape Israeli flags to counter an anti-Israel rally in 2009.

Adir Krafman, Israel engagement coordinator for Hillel of Greater Toronto, argued that campus anti-Israel motions are unfortunate, but they don't represent the views of most students and are essentially symbolic votes without any tangible impact on universities or students.

Krafman said it's important to focus on proactive efforts, not reactive ones.

"The anti-Israel movement is not as appealing as it used to be. It's a dying movement," he said. "The more attention we give to it, it's giving it oxygen."

Shapiro agreed with these sentiments, arguing that while they may be unsettling for some students, annual Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) activities on campuses across the country are limited in their effectiveness.

"My advice to the students is always that it's not about stopping other people and denying their freedom of speech, it's about presenting our argument in an effective way," she said.

"If there's a strong Israeli Apartheid Week, make sure you have a strong Israel Week," she added, referring to efforts on some campuses to counter IAW.

Krafman said anti-Israel events should be allowed on campuses, because universities are known as bastions of free speech. Banning groups or speakers isn't effective, he said, although pro-Israel students should mobilize if events become anti-Semitic.

Yet banning a group is exactly what Josh Morry was able to accomplish at the University of Manitoba last year. He was moved to act after seeing posters advertising Israeli Apartheid Week that depicted caricaturized Jews pointing bazookas at Palestinians.

Outraged, he decided to tackle the issue head-on.

"Students who go to class just need a 10-second snippet of something hateful in order to be convinced," Morry said. "I've seen it myself… It's not only dangerous, but I think it has convinced a number of students to have some bizarre opinions on Israel and Jews."

In April, as a representative of the University of Manitoba Students' Union (UMSU), he submitted an ultimately successful motion to prevent the campus group Students Against Israeli Apartheid from receiving UMSU funding and from using campus facilities.

Although he supports freedom of speech on campus, he said there are limits. He thinks campuses are similar to workplaces, where some conduct isn't tolerated.

Morry said the atmosphere at many universities is hostile to pro-Israel students.

"What we're dealing with on college campuses is a group of organized bullies who pick on us because of what we believe and who we are… If we don't take a stand and tell someone to make it stop – in my case I told UMSU council and they did [stop] – the bullying will only continue," he said.

Thinking of going away for school? Try Ottawa

Guest Voice

Arielle Ellis

"Ottawa? Who even goes to school in Ottawa? Are you really going to Ottawa?"

As a Jewish girl from Toronto, that's what I heard when I told friends I was venturing off to Canada's not-so-far-away capital city.

My younger brother is now finishing his final year of high school. When he has friends over for Shabbat dinner, my family is sure to prod them about their options.

"So, where are you thinking of going to school next year?" we ask.

"Oh, you know, Queen's, Western, McGill."

"Of course," I think to myself.

While there is nothing wrong with these very reputable institutions, I'm here to let you in on a secret: there are other choices.

Canada's beautiful capital holds the key to any Jewish girl's fantasy: ripe with opportunities to meet the Jewish boy of your dreams, make new friends, expand your horizons, get involved politically, and have your pick of some of the best internships.

We may not have the largest Jewish student body (yet), but it's definitely close knit.

Last September, I came to the University of Ottawa with incredibly low expectations. I was closed off socially, thinking, "I'm here strictly for my program, and whenever I'm bored, I'll go on the 1-1/2-hour journey to Queen's to visit my friends."

It never occurred to me that one year later, I would be the city-wide president of Hillel Ottawa.

My first week settling into this new environment, I found myself missing my fellow members of the tribe. My mom, who, naturally, subscribed to Hillel Ottawa's newsletter almost a full year before my arrival, informed me of Hillel's annual welcome back barbecue. And, as any good Jewish mother does, she insisted I go at least for a little bit and see what Hillel is all about.

I entered that barbecue as a reluctant first-year, expecting a socially awkward and uncomfortable evening of small talk.

I could not have been more wrong.

Seconds after my arrival, I had already been warmly greeted by multiple students who were genuinely happy to meet me. These other students actually welcomed me into their group of friends, and took me under their wings. It was uncanny how friendly and down to earth everyone was.

That was a turning point in my university experience. The friends I have made since then are genuine, warm and also diverse.

Now, I am incredibly proud to say I am the student leader of the organization that makes that possible. I know how Hillel shaped my social life here in Ottawa. At every event we have, be it at our Shabbat dinners, formals, Jews&Brews, Jews&Java, speed-dating, or any of the other events we put on throughout the year, I know there is always someone there in the same place as I was when I walked into my first Hillel barbecue, and we consistently put forth our best efforts in making everyone feel welcome.

You don't have to be religious to come to Hillel events. You just have to be open to new experiences and meeting new people.

That's the reason we have these events – to give each student the same chance I had to turn around their university experience.

Arielle Ellis is the city-wide president for Hillel Ottawa.

It's not the 'December dilemma'

Class Act
Daniel Held

Waiting for the train at a Singapore subway station, a young, smiling Asian woman asked if she could take a picture with our daughter. We weren't surprised – it must have been the 10th time someone asked to take a picture with our bubbly, blond-haired, blue-eyed two-year-old. In Singapore she was treated as a celebrity and approached like Mickey Mouse at Disney World. The woman took the picture, thanked us and walked away smiling as she reviewed the picture on her phone.

Travelling in Singapore was the first time I felt like a minority.

In Singapore, majority culture is a misnomer. Walking the downtown streets in mid-November, endless rows of stores and malls were already decked out for Christmas. Electronic reindeer and Santas adorned the shops. Christmas trees were decorated and holiday greetings were in neon lights. And yet few Singaporeans are Christian. Christmas shopping has become a universal norm.

Being a minority can at once be empowering and estranging.

At this time of year, we confront the "December dilemma:" How do we react to young Jewish children who envy their friends' celebration of Christmas? Often we say, "Christmas is for Christians. Chanukah is for Jews," and "Christmas is only one day, but Chanukah lasts eight nights!" But these arguments don't hold much water. No matter how much longer Chanukah may be (or how many more gifts a Jewish child may be entitled to), the celebration of Christmas permeates throughout the shopping season in ways Chanukah can't (and, perhaps, shouldn't).

In jest, my Facebook wall is filling with pictures of friends' children sitting in the laps of shopping mall Santas (often wearing a Chanukah shirt). We, and the media, have promoted Chanukah to be the Jewish minority's response to Christmas – a task at which it cannot succeed.

Saying Chanukah is for the Jews can only be part of the response. In order to shape a strong Jewish identity, we must invest in Chanukah and in Purim and in Passover and in Rosh Hashanah and in Sukkot and in Shabbat and in Israel and in tikkun olam and in all the other aspects of Judaism that shape our identity. Devoid of a strong, pre-existing sense of self, Chanukah cannot be an inoculation against the overwhelming presence of Christmas.

Similarly, Judaism cannot be a reaction to majority culture. We cannot light a chanukiyah because our neighbours are decorating their tree or give Chanukah presents because our neighbours have wrapped boxes sitting under the tree. Doing so undermines the meaning of our holiday and what sets us apart from majority culture.

My daughter is too young to understand why so many people bent down to take a picture with her. If anything, she enjoyed the attention of strangers and the opportunity to say "cheese." As she grows up as a Jew in Canada, however, the questions of minority identity will shift. She will ask about Christmas and parties on Friday nights. She will question going to shul and keeping kosher.

The "December dilemma" is a misnomer. While the Christmas carols playing in malls highlight the issue, forming a strong minority identity is a year-round challenge.

Is it good or bad to be stiff-necked?

From the Bimah
Rabbi Yael Splansky

Many times over our Torah describes the Jewish People as "*am k'shei oref*," a stiff-necked people. What does that mean?

Usually when a person has a stiff neck, it's through no fault of his own, and he's the one who suffers. Taken literally, "stiff-necked" could describe the Jewish People after an injury was inflicted upon them. However, most of our commentators throughout the ages understand "stiff-necked" to refer not to the body of the Jewish People, but its character. It's not a condition imposed upon us from the outside, but a circumstance of our own choosing. Our teachers are divided as to whether being stiff-necked is an ugly trait to be reviled or a sign of strength to be admired. Does it bring danger or protection? Is it a sign of arrogant irreverence or admirable faith and loyalty?

A Negative Trait: After the building of the Golden Calf, God refers to the people of Israel as "*am k'shei oref*." Despite the warnings and rebukes from Moses and the prophets who follow, this stiff-necked people proves to be susceptible to idolatry and too stubborn to change their ways. But Nachmanides suggests that "God is in the midst of the people because they are a stiff-necked." Throughout the years of wandering in the wilderness, the people of Israel were like a rebellious child, and like a loving and concerned parent, God drew even nearer to keep a watch on us.

Karen Minden, founding director of the Pine River Institute, helps parents better understand the risky behaviours of their teenagers. She teaches that rebelliousness is linked to immaturity, but when redirected, can lead to great inner strength. In his 19th-century commentary, *Eitz Yosef*, Rabbi Chanoch Zundel of Bialystok similarly concludes that God's tireless devotion to Israel during its teenage years of rebellion in the wilderness eventually paid off. The negative character trait became positive at Sinai. "Once the Israelites committed themselves to the Torah, they would stubbornly resist any attempts to turn them away from it." Once the covenant was struck, stiff necks kept us kept us from bowing down to false gods. At Sinai, fierce resistance turned to fierce loyalty.

Aging parents rejoice when they live to see their most rebellious child become their most attentive child. Jewish teachers laugh when they live to see the most rebellious student grow up to become a rabbi. A stubborn streak can become a rare and honourable mark of loyalty. "A stubborn people may be slow to acquire a faith, but once it has done so, it never relinquishes it" (Gersonides on Exodus 34:9).

An Admirable Trait: Rabbi Yitzchak Nissenbaum lived and died in the Warsaw Ghetto. He saw that the virtues of stubbornness far surpass its detriment. Rabbi Nissenbaum imagines Moses defending his people before God, saying: "True, they once built the Golden Calf, but now they are prepared to surrender their very souls for God and Torah. There will come a time when they will suffer torture, they will have to withstand severe trials, but because of their obstinacy, they will not relent" (Aaron Yaakov Greenberg, *Itturei Torah*).

One of life's secrets is knowing when to be tenacious in our convictions and when to bend. We see in everyday relationships how stubbornness leads to nothing but a pain in the neck. We are taught that to be a Jew means to constantly look to the right and the left, to consider every angle of possibility, to be flexible and adaptable to new realities. On the other hand, it can be argued that a loyal kind of obstinacy has been the secret of our survival throughout the millennia, and that to be a Jew means to "stick your neck out" for what you believe is right. As we prepare for the coming generations, let us "lift up our heads" (Psalm 24:9), look all around and as far out as we can see, then choose wisely.

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Jewish (mis)information quiz

Jewish & Digital
Mark Mietklewicz

Last week, we looked at how to spot rumours and hoaxes that are circulated (and re-circulated) on the Internet. Now it's time to play a little quiz. See if you can determine fact from fiction.

Rumours:

1. Around the time of the 2008 presidential campaign, a billboard outside a "Beth Sholom Synagogue" read "Happy New Year! Please vote for the [Yiddish term for a black person]."
2. YouTube has been removing videos posted by the Israel Defence Forces.
3. An Egyptian cleric once called for a boycott of Starbucks because he said its logo portrays Queen Esther.
4. Tom Green's MTV show was canceled after he taped a sketch in which he appeared at a bar mitzvah dressed as Adolf Hitler.
5. Sex expert Dr. Ruth Westheimer served as a sniper in Israel.
6. Steven Spielberg wrote to Mel Gibson taking him to task for his anti-Semitic remarks. "I am one Jew who doesn't accept your apology."
7. Continuing on the Gibson beat, Mel's daughter, Mary-Catherine Regina Gibson, converted to Judaism to marry Ezekiel Sharon, a devout Jewish record producer.
8. Students in Tennessee are collecting six million paper clips for a memorial to Jewish victims of the Holocaust.
9. Actress Natalie Portman made a $50-million donation to an Israeli hospital.
10. As a teenager, former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell learned Yiddish while working at a Jewish-owned store in New York.

Truth:

1. **False.** The "photo" was created by a website that allows people to insert what looks like authentic-looking text into images. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor18]**
2. **False.** The IDF spokesperson continues to maintain a page on the video site. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor11]**
3. **True.** Most see the logo as a mermaid, but not Egyptian cleric Safwat Higazi, who called for a boycott of the chain. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor12]**
4. **False.** As the debunking website Snopes.com puts it, "The rumour isn't true, but people were apparently willing to believe it because it fit their image of Tom Green." **[http://bit.ly/jrumor13]**
5. **True.** In 1944, Westheimer, then Karola Ruth Siegel, 16, joined the Haganah as a lookout and sniper. "I could hit the target smack in the centre further away than anyone could believe… Even today I can load a Sten automatic rifle in a single minute, blindfolded." **[http://bit.ly/jrumor14]**
6. **False.** The letter is a fabrication and a forgery. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor15]**
7. **False.** Don't believe what looks like "news" especially if it's from humour sites like The Onion or in this case, The Daily Currant. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor16]**
8. **True.** The award-winning documentary *Paper Clips* tells the story of the students and their memorial to victims of the Holocaust. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor17]**
9. **False.** Portman once appeared at a ceremony in which Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital announced it had raised $50 million. Inaccurate and persistent rumours have tied her to the donation. **[http://bit.ly/jrumor19]**
10. **True.** Powell's family moved to a largely Jewish neighbourhood in the Bronx, where he picked up some Yiddish while working at Sickser's baby equipment store. Powell once admitted, "Well, yes, I do understand a *bissel*." **[http://bit.ly/jrumor20]**

So how did you do?

- 0-3 correct: you understand a *bissel* about hoaxes.
- 4-6 correct: rumour has it you're learning.
- 7-8 correct: you're an urban legend.
- 9-10 correct: email maven!

highway@rogers.com

We must honour our sages

Sephardi Window
Rabbi Ilan Acoca

Probably the most popular story in the Talmud is the story of the modular oven (Baba Metzia 59b) whose parts were connected by sand so that it functioned as a unit, but whose parts remained somewhat independent of each other. The question before the sages was whether this should be considered a finished vessel and, therefore, subject to the rules of purity and impurity, or whether it was technically under construction and, therefore, not subject to these rules. The principle was that an unfinished vessel does not have the potential to become impure until it has reached its finished state.

The sages declare that it is indeed finished enough, while Rabbi Eliezer disagrees and says that it's not. At this point, the fireworks begin. Rabbi Eliezer has a number of parlour tricks that he invokes in order to prove that his opinion is correct. Streams are twisted around, carob trees jump several football fields, the walls of the beit midrash begin to collapse, and finally, a heavenly voice descends and announces: "The law always goes according to Rabbi Eliezer!"

None of these "proofs" impress his colleagues, not even the heavenly voice. Quoting from the Torah, they say, "It [the Torah] is not heaven," and "after the majority one must incline."

Later, one of the sages sees Elijah the Prophet in the marketplace and asks how the Holy One reacted to the seeming impudence of the sages, and Elijah replies, "God smiled and said, 'My children have defeated me! They have defeated me!'"

How is it possible for God to declare that His children defeated Him? What was God intending to teach us through this story?

God wanted to emphasize how important it is to have *emunat chachamim*, trust in our sages, and how we have to respect them.

The Talmud (Shabbat 23a) instructs us to light Chanukah candles and recite the blessing, "Who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us to kindle the Chanukah light." The Talmud poses the following question: "But where in the Torah did God command us to light the Chanukah candles? The Talmud answers, "Rav Avya said from the verse 'You shall not deviate from the words that they [the rabbis] will tell you' (Deuteronomy 17:11), Rav Nechemiah said from the verse 'Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders and they will say to you'" (Deuteronomy 32:7).

This idea reminds me of my father, who passed away 19 years ago. He was someone who had such *kavod* for the Torah and *chachamim*. Whenever a *chacham* walked by, my father stood up in awe and trepidation. It didn't matter who the *chacham* was – my father had to show respect to the Torah by standing.

I often ask myself where my father and his generation got this respect from? I believe it's something they got from their childhoods. It's something they saw their parents do, and they continued with this magnificent tradition.

Let's all remember this teaching and continue living and perpetuating it into the next generation.

Obama vows to veto any new sanctions

Iran holds war games as nuclear talks resume

The Times of Israel

The Iranian Air Force was set to launch large-scale drills Dec. 20 as part of "annual exercises aimed at testing indigenous air defence systems, improving the units' combat readiness and displaying the country's military might and achievement," according to a report in Iran's semi-official *Fars* news agency.

The drills involve "different types of interceptor fighters, bomber fighters, transport aircraft and reconnaissance planes," the air force's deputy commander, Brig.-Gen. Alireza Barkhor, told Fars.

The exercises "seek to send a message of peace, friendship and security to the regional countries," he added.

Mohammad Javad Zarif *[Wikimedia Commons]*

The drills came just as expert-level representatives from Iran and the P5+1 world powers were expected to resume nuclear talks in Geneva on Dec. 20 for a second day of negotiations.

On Dec. 19, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators introduced new sanctions legislation that the Iranians warned could "kill" its interim nuclear agreement with the six world powers reached last month in the Swiss capital.

The bill, which came as talks over the implementation of the interim agreement resumed after a nearly week-long hiatus, would impose sanctions that will come into effect should Iran violate the interim deal or fail to reach a final agreement.

The Obama administration has campaigned heavily against such legislation, arguing that it would make a comprehensive deal with Tehran more difficult to achieve.

The White House vowed to veto the legislation if it passes. Speaking an hour after the senators announced the bipartisan Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act, White House spokesperson Jay Carney slammed the legislation, describing it as potentially "damaging and destructive to the diplomatic effort."

Carney implied that lawmakers were out of step with American voters in proposing legislation, which he claimed "will undermine our efforts to reach a diplomatic solution and greatly increase the chances for military action.

"I think that there is overwhelming support in the country and in this congress for a diplomatic resolution to this conflict," Carney added.

Characterizing the legislation as "unnecessary," he said that "if it passed, the president would veto it."

Earlier on Dec. 19, days after the Iranian government withdrew from the expert-level talks over the recent nuclear deal in protest at continued U.S. punitive measures, the sides returned to the table in a bid to get talks back on track.

The negotiations, brokered by representatives of the United States, China, Britain, France, Russia and Germany, revolve around on-the-ground implementation of the guidelines established in the Nov. 24 interim agreement.

While the talks were scheduled for Dec. 19-20, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Abbas Araqchi told *Fars* that the meetings would continue two more days if necessary.

The Iranian officials last met with representatives from the six world powers on Dec. 12 in Vienna. However, following a decision by the U.S. government to blacklist 19 companies for evading Iranian sanctions, the Iranian delegation cut the meetings short and flew back to Iran a day before negotiations were set to end, stating that the U.S. move violated the interim agreement.

Days later, top Iranian officials reiterated their commitment to diplomacy.

"The process has been derailed, the process has not died," Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told *CBS News* Dec. 15. "We are trying to put it back and to correct the path and continue the negotiations, because I believe there is a lot at stake for everybody."

Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was also quoted last week as saying Iran is ready for a final agreement.

Under the interim agreement signed in Geneva last month, the world powers must ease sanctions against Iran while Iran is required to scale back its nuclear program over the course of six months. While the deal was heavily criticized by Israeli officials, the United States and the other world powers remain optimistic it will pave the way for a permanent agreement with the Iranian regime.

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UN urged to remove Falk for genocide remark

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Canada has condemned remarks by UN envoy Richard Falk accusing Israel of genocide, and called on the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to remove him as its special rapporteur for the Palestinian territories.

At the same time, UN Watch, a non-governmental organization based in Geneva, urged the United States to use its clout to remove Falk "and his unjust mandate" from the Human Rights Council.

"Canada completely rejects and condemns the appalling remarks made by Richard Falk... in which he accused Israel of 'genocidal' intentions," Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird said in a news release last week.

"Canada has previously called for Falk to be fired for his numerous outrageous and anti-Semitic statements, and these comments underscore once more the complete and total absurdity of his service as a UN special rapporteur," he said.

"Not only do these comments undermine the fundamental values of the United Nations, they also belittle the terrible genocides that have tragically taken place throughout history and around the world," Baird added.

David Sharma, Australia's ambassador to Israel tweeted: "Appalled by reported Richard Falk comments on Israel: disgraceful and not befitting a UN special rapporteur."

Falk, professor emeritus of international law at Princeton University, sparked the latest round of condemnations when he told *Russia Today* that Israel is, "in effect, nurturing a kind of criminal intention that is genocidal."

Falk has made other statements that landed him in hot water. Following the Boston Marathon terrorist attack, he was criticized for calling it blowback for U.S. policies and added: "As long as Tel Aviv has the compliant ear of the American political establishment, those who wish for peace and justice in the world should not rest easy."

Hillel Neuer

He has repeatedly compared Israel to Nazi Germany, leading to accusations he could not fairly carry out the duties as special rapporteur. And he has suggested that the United States was behind the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Responding to Falk's latest excess, Hillel Neuer, executive-director of UN Watch, wrote to U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power, calling on her to condemn "Falk's odious warrant for terrorism" and to demand that the HRC remove him.

"The United States is the leader of the democratic faction, and if they don't take action on this, nothing will happen," he told *The CJN*. "Falk is answerable to the council."

Neuer said "there have been Jews throughout history who are anti-Semitic," responding to a tweet from the PLO's negotiating affairs division that questioned whether Falk, a Jew, could be anti-Semitic. "Falk uses his Judaism as a shield," Neuer said.

Neuer noted that a U.S. diplomatic cable revealed through Wikileaks cited Palestinian diplomat Imad Zuhairi as calling on Falk to resign over his continued references to Hamas in his reports and his use of the Holocaust to criticize Israel.

Neuer said Falk's comparison of Israel to Nazi Germany can be used to justify terrorist attacks. "I think the implications are clear. It is a modern warrant for terrorism," he said.

Neuer also criticized mainstream organizations for continuing to invite Falk to address audiences, despite his controversial public statements. "He spoke this week in Ulster, Northern Ireland, at the Transitional Justice Institute. It's despicable that they would invite him," he said.

Native American studies group backs boycott of Israel

JTA

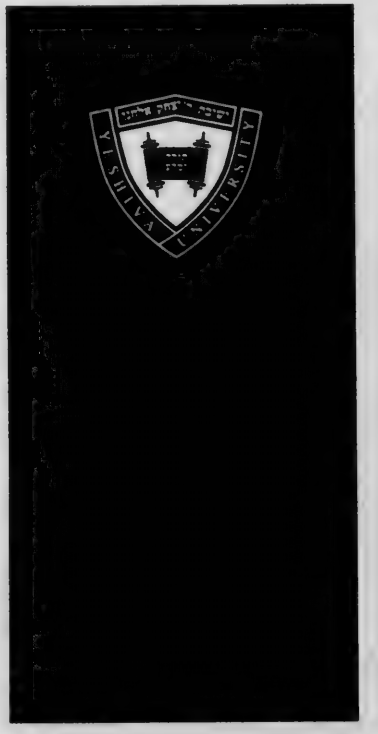
WASHINGTON, D.C. — A Native American studies association is the third U.S. academic body this year to recommend its members boycott Israeli universities.

In a Dec. 15 announcement, the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association said it "encourages NAISA members to boycott Israeli academic institutions because they are imbricated with the Israeli state, and we wish to place pressure on that state to change its policies."

The statement urged "generous dialogue" on the issue and said the boycott is open to discussion at the group's national conference in May in Austin, Texas.

Like the American Studies Association, which announced its own boycott last week, the NAISA boycott doesn't target individuals and isn't binding on members.

The Asian American Studies Association approved a similar boycott last April.



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Swedish county plans circumcision ban

JTA

STOCKHOLM — A county in Sweden is planning to ban non-medical circumcision of boys, its commissioner said.

Per-Ola Mattsson, commissioner of Blekinge County, said he would move ahead with plans to ban ritual circumcision by bringing the subject up in February with the county's health board, according to an article published Dec. 19 by the *Sydöstran Daily*.

Mattsson, who is also chairman of the Public Health Board of Blekinge, reportedly said he opposed the practice because minors "have no possibility to say no to the surgery and therefore the county should not perform these procedures."

Located in southern Sweden, Blekinge County has a population of about 150,000.

In Sweden, non-medical and medical circumcision may be performed only by licensed professionals, as per legislation passed in 2001.

Under the law, Jewish ritual circumcisers, or mohelim, in Sweden receive their licenses from the country's health board, but a nurse or doctor must still be present when they perform the procedure. Representatives of the country's Jewish community told *JTA* they're pleased with the arrangement, as it does not prevent them from performing the ritual.

In recent years, Scandinavian countries have seen an intensification of efforts to ban ritual circumcision by activists who say it violates children's rights and by anti-immigration nationalists who seek to limit the effect the Muslim presence is having on Swedish society.

In September, the rightist Sweden Democrats Party submitted a motion in parliament in favour of banning ritual circumcision.

In October, the children's ombudsmen of all Nordic countries – Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway – released a joint declaration proposing a ban on circumcision.

Neo-Nazi party loses funding

JTA

ATHENS — The Greek parliament has voted to cut off state funding for the neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic Golden Dawn Party.

The move is part of an ongoing crackdown against the ultra-nationalist party, whose leaders have been arrested and charged with running a criminal organization. Party leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos has publicly denied the Holocaust, as have other members of the organization.

On Dec. 18, lawmakers voted to 241 to 26 to suspend state funding of $1.2 million, which the party had been eligible for after 18 members were elected to parliament last year.

As part of efforts to combat Golden Dawn, a new law was recently introduced that would bar funding for parties whose leaders are charged with involvement in a criminal organization or terrorism.

DEEPENING TIES: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke at a joint press conference in Jerusalem Dec. 18. Netanyahu called on the world to prevent Iran from producing nuclear weapons. China, a major buyer of Iranian oil, has been a staunch backer of Iran and has resisted heavier sanctions on Tehran. The press conference was the highlight of a visit aimed at deepening diplomatic and trade ties between the two countries.
[Noam Moskowitz/Flash90 photo]

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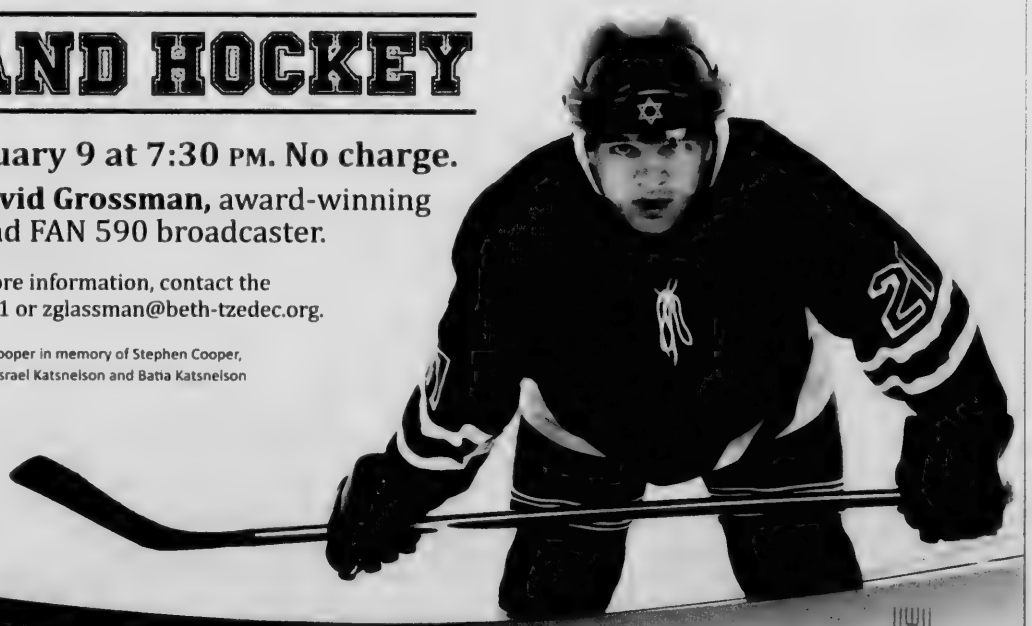

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Filmmaker documents time when Jews were welcome in Egypt

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

There's more than a little irony in the fact that a contemporary filmmaker who bears the name of the pharaoh who is believed to have presided over the biblical Exodus has made a documentary film lamenting the forced departure of Jews from Egypt in the 20th century.

Amir Ramses braved an attempted government ban to tell the story of the Egyptian Jewish community in the first half of the 20th century. His documentary, *Jews of Egypt*, runs counter to the prevailing "official" narrative in which Jews are seen as the country's enemies.

"I grew up in a society where, when you say the word 'Jewish,' it is always combined with 'Zionist' [or] 'Israeli' and of course as soon as you say these words, hatred appears," said Ramses.

Ramses recently told his story via Skype to Congregation Darchei Noam as the first part of its five lecture series on the history of Jews in Arab lands.

Contacted via email by *The CJN*, Ramses, 34, said Egyptian society since the 1970s has grown more "chauvinist and xenophobic" and "is trying to give a very narrow identification to what an 'Egyptian' is. I made this film to defend the diversity that Egyptian society once represented."

In the early part of the 20th century, Egypt was a cosmopolitan country in which "Muslims, Christians, Jews, atheists lived next to one another in full tolerance," he explained.

But that all began to change around the time Israel became an independent state.

According to the Justice for Jews in Arab Countries (JJAC), an advocacy group that calls for recognition of the fate of Middle Eastern Jews, in 1948 Egypt was home to 75,000 Jews. By 1958, that number had dwindled to 40,000 and in 1968 there were only 2,500 Jews in the country. Today, there are fewer than 100 Jews in the entire country.

Their forced departure parallels similar events across the Arab world, which saw the Jewish population in 10 countries plummet from 856,000 to fewer than 5,000.

Amir Ramses

Many Jews were forced out of Egypt following the 1956 joint Israeli, British and French attack in what is known as the Suez conflict. Jews were forced to sign a declaration that they would not return and "they're still banned from entering the country," even after the peace treaty with Israel, Ramses stated.

"I think ever since 1956, official media have been forcing a certain perspective of the Jews...Then of course came the radical religious movements in the 1970s who used the Palestinian-Israeli situation to get recognition from the Arab societies so they used a rather racist anti-Jewish speech, like the famous ex-president [Mohammed] Morsi's speech, which was a common Muslim Brotherhood declaration that the Jews are the descendants of monkeys and pigs and that we have to breastfeed our sons with their hatred."

Despite those prevailing attitudes, Ramses felt a fascination to Egyptian Jews who had made significant contributions to the country, in particular its arts scene. He admired singer Laila Mourad, musician Mounir Mourad, comedian Elias Moadab and left-wing political activist Youssef Darwish, a Karaite Jew who converted to Islam.

"I had the luck of being born in a secular family where there were no preconceived notions about the Jews, but the surrounding media and society had a different perspective. Let's say I was always struggling against the concept society was trying to impose, with what my family had put into me since childhood."

Prior to the documentary's release last year, "the ex-government tried to ban [it] after it got media attention...When it became famous and had a theatrical release they tried to ban the screening 24 hours before it came out, and we went to a media war where they finally had to let go and release it."

"I think the film was very well received in Egypt. Through our social media, we received thousands of messages that were really positive. And the big funeral of Carmen Weinstein, the ex-president of the Jewish community (she died in April at age 82), where hundreds of Egyptians wanted to come and be part of it was also very significant of the film's importance to me. It was then I realized that we really did something."

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Watch this space for weekly updates on

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Deadline to be included in this space is 10 days prior to issue date.

Tech firm provides web accessibility for disabled people

Paul Lungen
Staff Reporter

Gabriel Israel has had lots of experience bridging the differences between Canadian and Israeli business cultures.

As a longtime employee of Amdocs, a U.S.-based software company founded as an offshoot of an Israeli firm, he was thoroughly familiar with the way the company's DNA was infused with Israeli brashness and creativity. Having lived and worked in Canada for 12 years, he's come to understand the methodical and organized way tech business is done here.

In Vision2Mission, the local tech company he created, he's taken the mission of bridging gaps into a new direction – he's offering a solution to the difficulties faced by people with disabilities in accessing and employing computer technology.

The solution he provides was developed in Israel by User1st and, like many products that originate in startup nation, it has applicability everywhere.

"It provides website accessibility for people with disabilities," he said. "It puts a virtual veneer between the user and the computer."

The solutions are many and varied, depending on the disability being addressed. For some, who can't use the mouse, a single click can "change the entire interaction so you use the "tab" and "enter" keys to operate the entire computer."

Another is geared for people who are visually impaired. It employs screen readers to verbally describe everything on the screen. The solution can do this in such a way that "everything is in proper context," he added.

There is a solution for people who suffer from epilepsy, to eliminate screen flashes that might trigger an episode.

All the solutions comply with WCAG 2.0, international guidelines that set standards on accessibility issues, as well as with Ontario law, Israel said.

Israel donated the technology to the MukiBaum Accessibility Foundation, which in the autumn became its first user in Canada.

The User1st technology employed by Vision2Mission is an out-of-the-box solution that its competitors can't match. Other companies can make the interface easier for disabled and elderly people to use, he acknowledged, but to do this they provide web developer toolkits that entail rewriting code, a time-consuming and hence expensive proposition.

Vision2Mission provides a more inexpensive solution with "automatic mapping" in which the software "looks at the existing page and with one tool makes it accessible to the new user.

Gabriel Israel

"Users simply click a button and they are presented with the accessible website layer. Each end user has the ability to select his or her predefined profile of personal limitations. With the User1st cookie and a one-time download of a script, the user will receive the accessible version of the website each time it is accessed," Israel explained.

There are thousands, if not millions, of potential clients who need to make their websites more accessible. "Every single company that has a website is a potential client," he said, adding that Canada is one of 100 countries regulated by law to address accessibility.

Vision2Mission acts as a sort of broker, leveraging its relationships with Israeli tech firms to offer Canadian and international companies the technology.

"I create the business development, sales and contacts and overseas account management to make sure the contract is being properly managed according to an agreed schedule," Israel said.

Clients pay a licensing fee as well an annual maintenance charge, he added.

Vision2Mission also offers consulting services, working with management teams in small- to medium-sized businesses, "realizing their potential, changing their structure, processes, help them grow and achieve profitability," he said.

Making a go of his two-year-old company is a challenge, but "I like challenges. That's part of who I am," Israel said.

A countdown is ticking on his cellphone: 44 days to go toward his next big challenge, though it's not one connected to his work.

When the time runs down, Israel will begin his climb up Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's tallest peak. It's an eight-day ascent and a two-day descent along Lemosho, the mountain's most scenic route.

Along the way, he'll be snapping photos and selling them to benefit the MukiBaum Accessibility Foundation.

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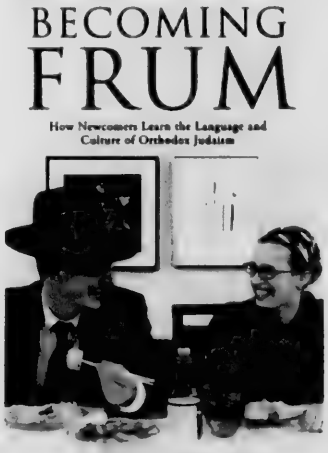
'Frumspeak' can be a barrier to understanding

Views & Reviews
Martin Lockshin

Becoming Frum:
How Newcomers Learn the Language and Culture of Orthodox Judaism
Sarah Bunin Benor
Rutgers University Press

In this book, Sarah Bunin Benor explores the kind of English that you sometimes hear in Orthodox Jewish settings in North America. Some call it "Frumspeak," from the Yiddish word "frum" (religious).

Benor shows how, when speaking among themselves, religious Jews pepper their English with loan words from Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish. Even



their English syntax can be influenced, as in the sentence "I live here already eight years." Standard English uses the present perfect tense ("I have lived here for eight years"), but Yiddish conveys the idea of the present perfect through a present tense verb plus the adverb *shoyn* ("already"). Thus the sentence in Yiddish is "*Ikh voyn do shoyn akht yor.*" Even if they don't know Yiddish, some Frumspeakers use this syntax in their English.

I enjoyed some of the examples in this book and learned a few things about the English that I hear in some Orthodox settings. But I was not as impressed by the lengthy socio-linguistic analysis of religious Jews, both the newly observant, who learn Frumspeak as adults, and those born into religious families. Many population subgroups have their own unique way of speaking English. When doctors talk about medical issues or senators at my university discuss government initiatives on education, the in-group members use acronyms and jargon that exclude speakers of standard English.

That Jews develop their own version of "gentile" languages is not news. For the last 2,000 years, whenever Jews spoke German, Spanish, Arabic or French within their communities, they always "Hebraized" that vernacular language.

The real news is that most North American Jews speak and understand only standard English, since they have no direct or indirect influence of any Jewish language, and do not live or gather in Jewish enclaves where a patois like Frumspeak makes sense.

For rabbis and educators this situation presents a dilemma: do you speak in the special language of your in-group, thus bolstering group identity and pride, or do you take pains to speak English that is accessible to all, hoping that your message might interest even those outside the in-group? Conservative and "Open Orthodox" educators generally opt for the second model, even if they happily speak Frumspeak in an insular setting. Frumspeak can become a real liability when its speakers do not even realize they are excluding others.

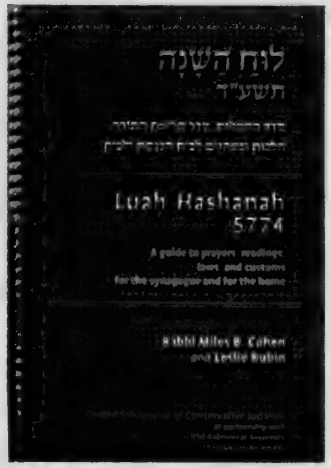
Benor's book does not address this issue directly, but it got me thinking about whether religious Jews make Jewish observance accessible to the non-expert. We have a proliferation of user-friendly prayer books with English translations and detailed explanatory notes. But one publication that I consider essential for religious Jewish life, the *luach*, (calendar) has always been written in the most obscure Hebrew imaginable.

Every fall I dutifully buy a copy of the Ezras Torah *luach*, an inexpensive publication that gives detailed ritual instructions for each day of the Jewish year. The *luach* tells you the precise Torah reading for Purim morning; for home use, it tells you what *Kiddush* to say on the seventh night of Passover. I find the book indispensable. But very few people buy it, because the Hebrew is so inaccessible that only someone who has spent years in a yeshiva can understand it. Non-standard acronyms are on every page. How many Jews can decipher what *vav-bet-lamed-tzade-gimel* stands for? (Hint: it's the abbreviated name of a prayer recited toward the end of the weekday morning service.) Ezras Torah has started to publish an English version, but navigating that book also requires expert knowledge.

This year I discovered a *luach* that is accurate and still user friendly—*Luah Hashanah 5774: A guide to prayers, readings, laws and customs for the synagogue and the home*, by Rabbi Miles B. Cohen and Leslie Rubin. Rabbi Cohen is an accomplished scholar of Hebrew who has managed to rise above Frumspeak to produce this day-by-day guide to Jewish practice that can be followed by any reader of standard English. Leslie Rubin, his wife, contributes her significant professional editing skills, and the result is beautifully laid out with helpful coloured printing and drawings (even coloured pictures that show how to set up and light candles each night of Chanukah).

Published by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the book is primarily aimed at a Conservative Jewish audience, providing page numbers for the Conservative movement's most commonly used prayer books. I did not find many significant liturgical differences between this *luach* and the old-fashioned one. The most significant difference was that the Cohen/Rubin *luach* recognizes that Israel Independence Day (Yom Ha'atzmaut) requires liturgical changes in the prayers while Ezras Torah treats it as just another weekday. The vast majority of modern Orthodox synagogues do observe Israel Independence Day, but they use the antiquated non-Zionist *luach* of Ezras Torah, and improvise when Yom Ha'atzmaut comes around.

Rubin and Rabbi Cohen have shown



that it is possible to present the intricacies of religious Judaism, bolstering Jewish (and Zionist) knowledge, identity and pride, while writing a book that is esthetically pleasing and accessible. Their book serves as a fine example of how members of an in-group can issue a welcoming invitation to those who might consider joining.

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Playing Annie is a dream role for local actor

Cara Stern
Staff Reporter

Jenny Weisz thought that at age 21 she was much too old to fulfil her dream of playing little orphan Annie.

So she was thrilled when she found out her first job after graduating from theatre school would be to play that role in a Young People's Theatre version that uses adult performers in all of the roles.

"I didn't believe it when my agent called and called me 'Annie,'" she said. "I freaked out.

"I was always drawn to her spunk and her adventurous creativity and, of course, her optimism," the Thornhill, Ont., native said. "We all can relate to a character like this who sits at home and dreams and wishes and hopes for those things she wants to come true."

Not only was the character one of her dreams – so was the venue. Weisz recalled seeing shows every year at the Young People's Theatre, and she dreamed of working there.

Casper the golden retriever is seen as Sandy and Jenny Weisz plays the title role in *Annie* at Young People's Theatre.
(Cylla von Tiedemann photo)

"It had a huge influence on what I do, and it inspired me to do what I love," she said, adding that she thought performing there would be a goal she would have to work toward over many years.

The performance, which runs until Dec. 29 at the Young People's Theatre, has updated the show about an 11-year-old orphan who escapes an orphanage hoping to find her biological parents, to match a more modern, urban audience. Artistic director Allen MacInnis told the *Toronto Star* he wanted to inject more depth into the characters and the story.

"What really got me thinking was that I discovered there used to be an orphanage on Front Street right opposite the theatre, and knowing that the real presence was so close got me thinking about putting more reality into the show," he told the *Star*.

Weisz said the fact that the performers are all trained actors rather than little kids allows them to explore that depth a bit more and bring more life to what can sometimes be seen as a two-dimensional script.

"It raised the stakes, seeing as we're all capable of going into the deeper places, really following your dreams and sticking up for what you believe in," she said.

After each show, there's a question and answer period, and kids are frequently shocked to find out she's not 11 years old, she said, attributing it partly to her looks – she said people often think she's in high school or early university – but also to the show's direction and the children's belief in the story.

She said it's been a great experience working at the theatre, doing the show with two-time Juno Award nominee Sterling Jarvis and Tony Award-nominated actor Louise Pitre, who Weisz said has given her lots of advice, as well as a recent pep talk.

"She was very confident in telling me I have a future [in theatre], I'm professional and deserve to be where I am," she said, "Hearing it from someone like her was astounding."

Although she doesn't know what's next for her, Weisz said she's hoping this gig will pave the way to many more musical theatre shows in the future.

TECHNION - ISRAEL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Dr. Lior Gepstein – "What is new and exciting about our research is that we have shown that it's possible to take skin cells from an elderly patient with advanced heart failure and end up with his own beating cells in a laboratory dish that are healthy and young – the equivalent to the stage of his heart cells when he was just born."

STEM CELL RESEARCH AT THE TECHNION

For the first time, scientists have succeeded in taking skin cells from heart failure patients and reprogramming them to transform into healthy, new heart muscle cells that are capable of integrating with existing heart tissue. Dr. Lior Gepstein, together with Prof. Itskovitz-Eldor and Dr. Michal Amit, has coaxed embryonic stem cells to develop into heart cells and subsequently into beating heart muscle.

Possible cures—once the stuff of science fiction—may be on the horizon thanks to stem-cell research.

The Technion has been at the forefront of embryonic stem cell research. Today, it is one of a select group of academic institutes and companies worldwide—and the only one in Israel—approved by the National Institute of Health for US federally funded stem cell research.

And there are many more breakthroughs at the Technion. As one of the world's leading universities in science, technology and medicine, the Technion is the major source of innovation that drives Israel's economy and contributes to the health and well-being of people around the world.

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FOUR NEW EXHIBITS OPEN AT ISRAEL MUSEUM

Earlier this month, the Israel Museum in Jerusalem launched four exhibitions that spotlight a roster of internationally acclaimed and emerging artists from Israel.

Collecting Dust in Contemporary Israeli Art examines the work of 15 artists active in the fields of painting, photography, installation and video, who transform dust into contemporary works of art exploring temporality, memory and Israel's environmental landscape. (This show somehow seems appropriate coming from the land that gave the world that memorable phrase "from dust to dust.")

A retrospective of the works of Israeli artist **Gideon Gechtman** (1942-2008) explores how art can act as a posthumous memorial. After undergoing open-heart surgery at 31, Gechtman began an intense exploration of issues relating to illness, mortality, bereavement and memory; his artistic output stands as a personal mausoleum, designed to preserve his work and self after his death.

A solo exhibition by **Mika Rottenberg** consists of six video works that examine the role of women in society and the repercussions of an increasingly digital world. Rottenberg creates strange assembly lines in which actresses become part of an absurd manufacturing process that produces a variety of nameless products using substances such as sweat, hair and cosmetic powder.

The Israel Museum is also presenting *Out of Body: Fragmentation in Art*, an exhibition that focuses on works that were created as distinct parts of the human body, from ancient Egyptian amulets to contemporary works by Israeli artists. All four exhibitions remain on view until April 5, 2014.

• • •

Films of Steven Spielberg: Film critic **Shlomo Shwartzberg** presents *Defining Greatness: Director Steven Spielberg*. This is a close-up examination of the powerful legacy of arguably the most famous filmmaker in the world, from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* to *E.T. The Extraterrestrial*, *Jaws* to *Lincoln*. Series of eight lectures. Miles Nadal JCC, Mondays Jan. 20 to March 17, 7 to 9 p.m. $90 for series, $11.25 drop-in, $6 for students and Toronto Jewish Film Society members. Please call 416-924-6211, ext. 0, to register.

• • •

Yiddish Cinema: Friends of Yiddish presents a screening of *The Yiddish Cinema*, a documentary narrated by **David Mamet** about the flourishing Yiddish film industry in eastern Europe between the two world wars. The film traces the decline of Yiddish films and Yiddish itself. It also discusses the Holocaust's decimation of European Jewry, Stalinist suppression of Jewish culture and the New World's demands for assimilation. Introduced by film maven **Shlomo Schwartzberg**.

Free admission. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. between Sheppard and Finch. Sunday, Jan. 12, 2 p.m. Please RSVP by Jan. 8 to Sandy at 416-458-1440 or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca

• • •

Shanghai Story: Playwright-director **Brenley Charkow** has written and directed *On The Other Side of The World*, a play about the Jewish refugees who fled to Shanghai, China, to escape the Nazi stranglehold of Europe. The play focuses on **Ursula Blomberg**, a young Jewish girl whose family sought shelter in the large Chinese coastal city. On stage at Factory Theatre Main Stage, 125 Bathurst St., from Thursday, Jan. 9, to Sunday, Jan. 19. Tickets $15. www.fringetoronto.com, 416-965-1062.

IS YOUR PRIZED POSSESSION WORTH A FORTUNE?

***Four Rooms*, a new weekly CBC-TV series, premiers Jan. 5. The show features Canadians who want to sell possessions they think could be worth a fortune to four of Canada's top art, antique and memorabilia buyers, each ready to spend big money. Seen is one of the buyers, Montreal-based Eddy Rogo, who has more than 25 years of experience buying and selling fine antiques.**

Travelling deep in cotton country

Nancy Wigston
Special to The CJN

When movie locations were being scouted for *The Help*, Greenwood, Miss., was the obvious choice.

"Greenwood still looks like it did in 1963," says guide Paige Hunt, "whereas Jackson – where the book takes place –has changed. That's Skeeter's place [the writer played by actor Emma Stone]," Hunt announces, pointing out a white-columned house familiar to the fans of the smash-hit film.

We're deep in cotton country, in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, and by no coincidence, the place where American blues was born. The maids in the film lived over in Baptist Town, an 1848 African-American community, where houses are less than palatial. During the days of segregation, the bosses summoned residents to the cotton fields, where the working day lasted from "cain to cain't" (from the time when you can see the sun, until the time that you can't).

"That's terrible," a woman from Saskatchewan says when told that children regularly "hid out" when the bosses came.

"But that's what made the blues," responds our guide, Sylvester Hoover. "A fifth of the world's cotton was traded out of Greenwood," continues Hoover, who remembers working beside his mother as a three-year-old. Cotton is still big in these parts – its straight rows surprisingly lovely – but machines do the picking these days.

When he's not running his corner store, Hoover guides tourists on the seven-year-old Mississippi Blues Trail, where markers fill in history about musicians and the places they made famous. Local legends include bluesmen Robert Johnson, Sonnyboy Williamson, Furry Lewis and Pinetop Perkins.

A natural showman, Hoover spins riveting tales about Jim Crow days while showing us around a room-sized museum, a jumble of everything from the long bags used to collect cotton – he dons one for photographers – to a painting of Robert F. Kennedy. The Kennedys are revered by African-Americans in the South. In 1967, RFK visited these parts, shocked by the conditions he saw, and very sympathetic to change.

Today the Delta welcomes a steady stream of visitors who come for the music – with Oscar-winning movie locations as an added bonus. After Hoover shows us the "authentic" grave of Robert Johnson –there are three in total, so vast is the man's legend – we return to town, crossing the Tallahatchie Bridge, the one made famous by Bobbie Gentry, a local girl who sang about a boy named Billy Joe McAllister and his mysterious fate.

The trail attracts an international group, including visitors from England, Holland and Scandinavia, music fans who cross oceans to see the places where their heroes played, the many men and women first inspired by the call-and-response singing of their ancestors toiling in the fields.

The town of Clarksdale is close to the "crossroads" where Highway 49 meets Highway 61. Its near-mythic status is owed to young bluesman Robert Johnson, who wrote and recorded a 1936 song about standing here, hoping in vain for a ride, a song that was covered 30 years after his demise by bands including British super-rockers Cream. Somnolent Clarksdale is also home to the actor Morgan Freeman, who owns Ground Zero, a "juke joint" across the street from the Delta Blues Museum.

Jimmy "Duck" Holmes plays Good Morning Blues in the Blue Front Café in Bentonia, Miss.

At our first stop, in Bentonia, Miss., we pulled up at the Blue Front Café, founded in 1948 by the parents of the genial man seated on the porch. This man turned out to be famous blues guitarist Jimmy "Duck" Holmes. As the morning light streamed in through the window, Holmes casually pulled up a chair and sang *Good Morning Blues* for his northern visitors. "This is Bentonia-style blues," he explained, a form unique to the area. Last month, Holmes performed in Norway, his second trip there this year.

For some, Delta music becomes a life-defining passion, like the Dutch musician nicknamed "the boogie-woogie man," who runs a private Rock and Blues museum chock-full of all sorts of memorabilia, in downtown Clarksdale. The guest book at the more official-looking Delta Blues Museum records names from Australia to Wales. In the sunny street outside the museum, a tough-looking but friendly group of Louisiana motorcyclists pose for pictures outside Ground Zero, where Morgan Freeman's bodyguard works when the star isn't in town.

Among the biggest names to emerge from this part of the world is Elvis Presley, who began his career as a crossover artist recording blues and gospel numbers as well as a new thing called rock 'n' roll. A poor boy who spent his first 13 years in Tupelo, Miss., Elvis saw the two-room house where he was born repossessed, his sharecropper father sent to jail (for changing the amount on a cheque from $4 to $14), and his mother's successful petition to reduce her husband's sentence from three years to eight months. In 1948, the family moved to Memphis, hoping for a fresh start.

All this and more can be gleaned at the splendid Elvis Presley Birthplace in Tupelo, run by the State of Mississippi. The state moved the original Presley house here, as well as the chapel that Elvis attended as a child. Fans of the Coen brothers' *O Brother Where Art Thou?* will recognize the music that influenced Elvis as a child. At the other extreme, a flat-screen TV in the Ladies' Room shows late-period Elvis performing live in Las Vegas.

A statue of the 13-year-old Presley highlights the grounds, and the main building features Elvis memorabilia as well as an auditorium for live performances. Downtown, the hardware store where Mrs. Presley bought her 10-year-old son his first guitar – he had wanted a gun but changed his mind – is still in business.

On spotting a young European visitor sporting the Elvis look, I'm reminded of the terrific 2002 documentary, *Schmelvis*, featuring an Orthodox Elvis impersonator from Montreal, a rabbi and a doggedly funny investigative team on the trail of the King's maternal Jewish roots. They discover warmth rather than prejudice in Elvis fans, rather like the lively inclusiveness we find in Tupelo.

In the words of Mississippi-born blues artist Muddy Waters: "The blues had a baby and they called it rock and roll." And there's nowhere better to visit that baby's birthplace than the Mississippi Delta.

If you go: www.visitmississippi.org; www.visitgreenwood.com; www.msbluestrail.org; www.elvispresleybirthplace.com.

In Greenwood, The Alluvian Hotel and Spa oozes charm: www.thealluvian.com; Sylvester Hoover's tours; deltablueslegendtours@yahoo.com, 662-392-5370.

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More news for young Jews @ heebonics.ca
HEEBONICS

Award-winning poet struggles with rare disorder

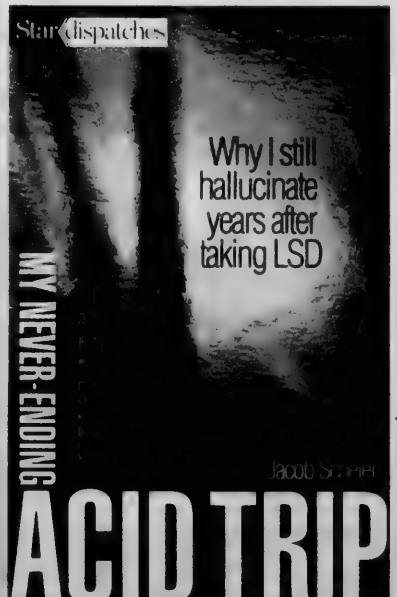
Jacob Scheier

Sheri Shefa
Staff Reporter

Being the youngest Governor General's Literary Award winner for poetry is an impressive feat in and of itself. But having written the award-winning poetry collection shortly after suffering a mental breakdown and being diagnosed with a rare disorder is that much more impressive.

Jacob Scheier was 28 when he published *More to Keep Us Warm* in 2008, a collection that explores themes including love, loss and religion and was inspired by the death of his late mother Libby Scheier, a Toronto poet, who died in 2000.

Just three years before getting the literary award, Scheier found himself in a psych ward struggling with a rare psychiatric disorder called hallucinogen persisting perception disorder, or HPPD – a condition that nearly caused him to kill himself. It was the start of an ongoing journey that he chronicled in his latest project, a *Toronto Star* ebook titled *My Never-Ending Acid Trip: Why I still hallucinate years after taking LSD.*



"When I was a teenager I did a lot of hallucinogenic drugs, especially a lot of LSD… it was a recreational thing," he said in an interview with *The CJN.*

In his ebook, he wrote about his eight-hour trips, how the acid "made my thoughts more interesting, reality more layered and colourful… As interesting an experience as it is, eight hours is about all people can handle. This is because there is one thought people tend to have on acid that can send them spiralling into a bad trip: what if I never come down? Everyone has heard the urban legend about the kid who never stopped tripping. I'm that kid."

Scheier explained that in 2005, he was diagnosed with clinical depression, and as a result he also suffered from anxiety, for which he was given a small dose of an antipsychotic medication along with his antidepressant.

He said within a few days of taking his medical cocktail, "I began to have hallucinatory experiences quite reminiscent of being on LSD…"

He began to see green lines, facial distortions, trails and afterimages.

"Clinically speaking, I have been on a ceaseless visual acid flashback for eight years, brought on (according to several psychiatrists) by hallucinogen use in combination with little-known side effects from one or more commonly prescribed psychiatric medications," he wrote.

Scheier said that his condition, HPPD, is very rare, "and in my case, it was a rarity within a rarity because I did all that LSD and I stopped when I was 18 or 19, and I didn't have flashbacks, or have any visual oddities… Fast forward eight years later and I take this medication and it triggers it."

He said he managed to reduce the severity of the symptoms with one of the drugs he was prescribed for his anxiety, but it didn't completely alleviate the symptoms.

"I would sort of be tripping, you could say… I was having very severe and constant visual disturbances… As the [ebook] chronicles, I had a total mental breakdown. I was in a psych ward, it was a total nightmare," he said adding that at his lowest point, he nearly killed himself.

"I didn't know what was wrong with me for a long time, it took a long time to get that diagnosis. I thought I was schizophrenic or something. It took me about a year of acceptance and then a year of getting back to normal life."

Although HPPD appears to be a chronic illness, Scheier said the symptoms have alleviated over time.

"But I still have mild visual disturbances. I still see trails when objects pass me… all the time. I'm acclimatized to it," he said.

"I don't think too much about it. But when I decided to write about it, I started to notice the visual disturbances all the time again, because it set off an attention mechanism and so it's like, the more you think about it, the more you see it."

He says based on his experiences and own research, he describes himself as being quite critical of psychiatry.

"I think the profession that people usually turn to, to help them is not as informed as they present themselves to be about what may be going on in the brain… and they are equally as unsure about how the medications they prescribe work and they don't know what to do when they don't work in the way they're supposed to," Scheier said.

"I think [psychiatry is] founded on the best of intentions but I don't think it's very honest with people about its limitations… People should be informed about what they're taking and why."

He said psychiatrists present drugs for mental illnesses "as though SSRIs [selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors] were the equivalent of insulin for diabetes and that is just false. That is a mythology and they shouldn't propagate that mythology. They should say, 'This drug might make you feel better. I don't really know how it works, I don't really know what's going on in your brain, but you might want to take this.'"

Scheier added that as someone who does still take psychotropic medication to treat his symptoms, he also goes to therapy and exercises, in an attempt to find an alternative treatment to drugs.

"I wouldn't tell anyone that they shouldn't be on medication. I definitely think people should be given the correct information… and people should do what works for them."

He said he hopes his ebook, which is available for download for $2.99 at stardispatches.com/starstore, will stimulate discussion about medication.

"It brings up important questions and I hope people will read it."

Videos, events and more on heebonics.ca

Deadline reminder: The CJN is not publishing an issue on Jan. 2. The deadline for the issue of Jan. 16 is Jan. 6. All deadlines are at noon. Phone 416-391-1836, ext. 269; email whatsnewcjn@gmail.com.

Sunday, Jan. 5

ROSH CHODESH NIGHT OUT

The Chai Centre shows the film *Does God Still Make Miracles?* at 8 p.m. at 1089 Spadina Rd. Email info@thechaicentre.com.

Monday, Jan. 6

VISION IMPAIRED CLUB

The Jewish Club for the Vision Impaired meets 7:30 p.m., Bernard Betel Centre, 1003 Steeles Ave. W. Lifts can be arranged. Call **Bess,** 905-508-2892.

Tuesday, Jan. 7

THE OTHER SON

Beth Tikvah Synagogue shows the film *The Other Son,* 2 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 8

BOOK CLUB

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian by **Marina Lewycka** will be discussed at the Beth Tikvah women's book club, 1:30 p.m. RSVP **Raizie Jacobson** 905-707-7377, or email rjacobson91@gmail.com.

MORASHA CLASSES

Barrie Wilson teaches a class on "Reading Paul's Letters through Jewish Eyes," 11:15 a.m., **Jan. 8-Feb. 5,** Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner teaches a class on "Giants of Sephardic Jewry," 10 a.m., **Jan.8-Feb. 5,** Beth Emeth Synagogue. Call **Loretta** to register, 416-789-7400.

Upcoming Events

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Learn how to cope with stress, and learn healthy habits, yoga and more. Tuesdays, 2-3:30 p.m., **Jan. 14-Feb. 11,** Circle of Care, 4211 Yonge St. To register, call **Revital** at 416-635-2900, ext. 463 or ext. 592.

HEBREW CLASSES

Temple Sinai offers Hebrew classes for adult beginners (starting **Jan. 14**) and intermediates (starting **Jan. 9**). Call 416-487-3281.

Conversational Hebrew ulpan method with **Yael Lev** is offered at Pride of Israel Synagogue. Learn modern vocabulary and discuss current events, for intermediate students (Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.) and advanced students (Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.). Call 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

SHABBAT SHIRAH CONCERT I

Cantors **David Edwards, Tibor Kovari, David Rosen** and **Eyal Bitton,** accompanied by a live band, perform Israeli and chassidic melodies for Shabbat Shirah, **Jan. 12,** 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $10/$15. For tickets call 416-221-3433 or 416-633-3838.

SHABBAT SHIRAH CONCERT II

Kyra Folk-Farber and **Cantor Benjamin Maissner** present *A Yiddish Recital: Tears and Laughter* **Jan. 12,** 7:30 p.m., Holy Blossom Temple. $36 416-789-3291, ext. 224.

BAT MITZVAH CLUB

Chabad of Markham's bat mitzvah club begins **Jan. 12.** To register, call 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

LASER TAG

Canadian Young Judaea welcomes students in grades 9 to 12 to a night of laser tag, food and fun, **Jan. 18.** Email anniegamliel@gmail.com.

FAMILY LAW WORKSHOP

Lorne Fine discusses "Division of Assets," **Jan. 22.** Call the legal information service of Act to End Violence Against Women at 905-695-5374 or email info@acttoendvaw.org. Free.

BOOK REVIEW

Marilyn Herbert reviews *The Best Place on Earth* by **Ayelet Tsabari, Jan. 14,** 8 p.m., Adath Israel Synagogue.

BUTTER

Temple Har Zion shows the film *Butter,* **Jan. 14,** lunch at noon, movie at 12:30 p.m., Free.

THE YIDDISH CINEMA

Friends of Yiddish show the film *The Yiddish Cinema,* **Jan. 12,** 2 p.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Film will be introduced by **Shlomo Schwartzberg.** RSVP **Sandy,** 416-458-1440, or email yiddish18@yahoo.ca.

SHORESH FOOD CONFERENCE

Register now for the Shoresh Food Conference, **Feb. 2,** 10 a.m.-6 p.m, Miles Nadal JCC. Join rabbis, farmers, foodies and activists to explore the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary food ethics. www.shoresh.ca.

Continued on page 41

UJA.is York Region.

UJA Federation is the backbone of the Jewish community in the GTA. It is the organization that funds many of the social programs that help sustain and grow our community. If you or someone you know was assisted by JIAS Toronto, Jewish Family & Child, or Jewish Vocational Services, you were touched by UJA. If your child attended J.Academy, J.Roots or the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp, you were touched by UJA. If you participated in programs at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus, you were touched by UJA.

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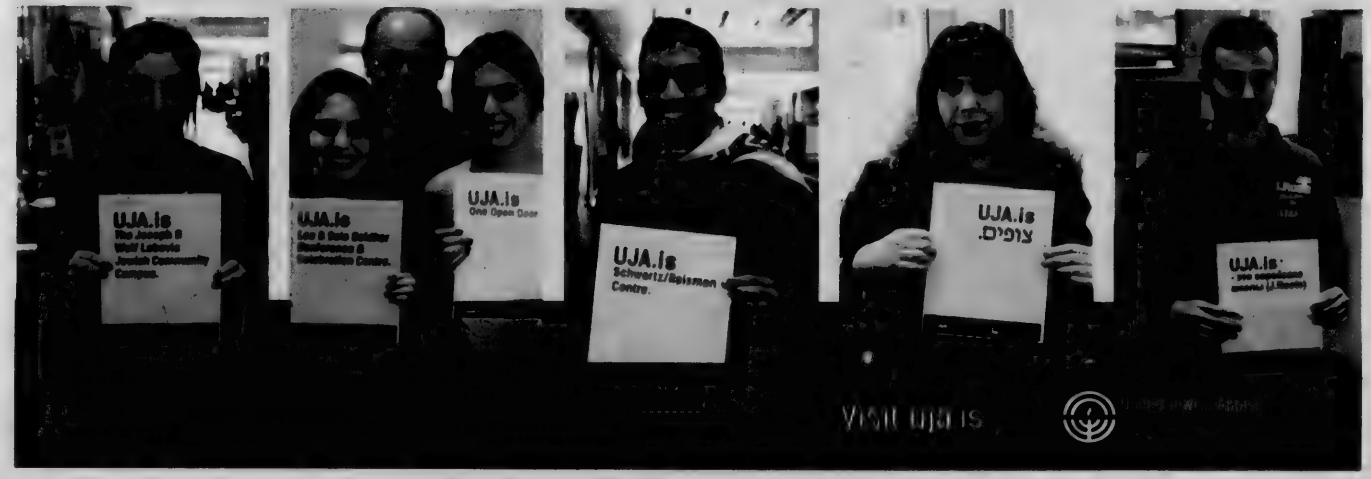

Continued from page 40

STEM CELL PUZZLE

Weizmann Canada presents **Dr. Jacob Hanna** discussing "Revealing a Piece of the Stem Cell Puzzle," **Jan. 13,** 7:30 p.m., The Beer Academy, 75 Victoria St. For tickets call **Esther** 416-733-9220 or www.weizmann.ca/sot2014.

JEWISH REFUGEES

Mordechai Kedar discusses "The Untold Story of Almost a Million Refugees," **Jan. 25,** 7:30 p.m., Darchei Noam Congregation, as part of a series on Jewish refugees from Arab lands.

JEWISH ETHICS

"Jewish Ethics vs. Society's Ethics: The Talmud's Most Controversial Cases" is the topic of a panel discussion with rabbis **Yehoshua Weber, Mordechai Torczyner** and **Mordechai Scheiner, Jan. 12,** 7:30 p.m., Clanton Park Synagogue, 11 Lowesmoor Ave. 416-633-4193.

SKATES FOR SINAI

Temple Sinai is collecting gently used skates and helmets to donate to the children of Flemingdon Public School. Drop off your donation at the temple, or email social_action@templesinai.net.

SONGS OF THE SEPHARDIM

Musicologist **Judith Cohen** will perform traditional songs of Morocco and the former Ottoman lands. Her daughter, dancer and singer **Tamar Ilana**, will add traditional flamenco vocal repertoire, **Jan. 9,** 7:30 p.m., Temple Sinai.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Have you been through the mental health system? Would you like to be a peer support to others going through the system and soon to be discharged from the hospital? Baycrest is starting a new support program. For more information, contact **Janis Sternhill** at 416-785-2500, ext. 2575, or email jsternhill@baycrest.org.

YIDDISH PROGRAMS

David Gale leads a Yiddish theatre workshop focusing on "Broadway Goes Yiddish," 7-9 p.m., **Jan. 23-March 27.**

New beginners, and ongoing intermediate and advanced Yiddish classes to improve conversation, reading and writing skills begin **Jan. 12.** Yiddish culture for kids though arts and interactive activities, Sundays, 9:30 am.-noon. Classes held at Beth David Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.

To register for programs, visit www.committeeforyiddish.com, or call **Barbara** 416-631-5843.

SHABBAT SHIRAH WORKSHOP

Adam David discusses "Middle Eastern and Afro-Latin Influences on Modern Jewish Music," at a Shabbat Shirah brunch, Beth Emeth Synagogue, **Jan. 12,** 10 a.m.

SILK PAINTING WORKSHOPS

Paula Miller leads a 7-part series on painting on silk. Create something special for your home for Shabbat. Starts **Jan. 14** at Beth Emeth Synagogue. $30/$35. Call 416-633-3838.

YIDDISH VINKL

Sara Waxman speaks in Yiddish about Jewish food traditions, **Jan. 9,** noon at the Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. $18 (includes buffet lunch). Email www.yiddishvinkl.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

GROUPS & WORKSHOPS

Registration is required for all programs. Classes are open to all members of the community, and fee reductions are available. Call **Shawna Sidney** 416-638-7800, ext. 6215, or visit www.jfandcs.com. All classes at the Lipa Green Centre, 4600 Bathurst St., unless otherwise noted.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group for parents of children aged two to 10. Starts Jan. 27, 7 p.m.

Mind-Body Connection for Women: An 8-session group for women to learn mindfulness and meditation. Starts Jan. 29 at 35 Madison Ave., 2 p.m. or Jan. 30, Lipa Green Centre, 7 p.m.

Beyond the Chupah, Becoming a Couple: A 5-session marriage-preparation group for couples getting married in the coming year. Starts Jan. 29, 7 p.m., Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

BEREAVED JEWISH FAMILIES

Bereaved Jewish Families of Ontario regularly provides 8-week self-help groups to bereaved parents. Call **Beth Feffer** at 416-638-7800, ext. 6244, or email bfeffer@jfandcs.com.

FOR SENIORS

Adath Israel Congregation. Wednesday afternoon socials. Bridge, mah-jong, Rummikub. Call **Sheila,** 416-665-3333 or **Marcia,** 416-932-1229.

Shaar Shalom. Play bridge Mondays, 1:30 p.m. Lessons, 12:30 p.m. 905-889-4975.

Beth Emeth. Experienced mah-jong and Rummikub players meet Mondays and Wednesdays. 416-633-3838.

Temple Har Zion. Play mah-jong Wednesday afternoons. Email lisakatisa@yahoo.com.

Bridge Club at Forest Hill Library is looking for new members. Call **Lea,** 416-487-7630.

Beth Tzedec Haverim. Author **Rona Arato** discusses her book *The Last Train,* Jan. 6, 1:30 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 232.

Adult 55+, Miles Nadal JCC Tu b'Shvat celebration Jan. 23, 1:30 p.m. with JNF shlichah **Hadar Epstein.** Pre-registration required by Jan. 13, 416-924-6211, ext. 0 or email lisar@mnjcc.org.

Charming Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park (60+). Valerie, 416-395-7881. Barber/hairdresser Jan. 9, 10 a.m. Casino Woodbine, Jan. 22. Tuesdays, seniors chair exercise, 10 a.m. (resumes Jan. 7); Tuesdays and Thursdays, social bridge, 12:30 p.m.

New Horizons is a Jewish Hungarian seniors club that offers kosher food and is looking for new members. Call **George,** 416-256-1892.

Senior Social Club Hadar is looking for new members for conversation, exercise and games. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. Thornhill. Call **Phyllis,** 905-889-5722 or **Etka** 416-663-8270.

PROSSERMAN JCC

Sherman Campus, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-638-1881, www.prossermanjcc.com.

Special classes: Dec. 26, family Zumba 11 a.m.; Dec. 31, family yoga 11:30 a.m.; Jan. 1, family Zumba 10:30 a.m.

Registration for the Jack and Pat Kay Centre Camp is now open. Call 416-636-2267, or register online at centre-camp.ca/register.

Women-only fitness classes now offered. Cycling, yoga, Zumba, core conditioning. Email sandra@prossermanjcc.com, or ext. 4103.

Register now for winter programs: **Beverlee Swayze** discusses "The History of Symphony," Jan. 21, 1 p.m.

Osnat Lippa presents "Treasures of the Guggenheim," Feb. 11 and Feb. 18.

Iain Scott discusses "Four Jewish Operas," starting Jan. 16.

Learn to play mah-jong. Beginners program runs jan. 13-Feb. 24, 7-9 p.m.; or Jan. 15, 1-3 p.m.

To register, call ext. 4235.

MILES NADAL JCC

750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211, www.mnjcc.org

Register now for winter fun and learning. Pottery classes start Jan. 8; Klezmer ensemble begins Jan. 14; Hebrew travel skills workshop Jan. 19 , Jan. 26; Hebrew Institute begins Jan. 20; fiction and poetry workshops start Jan. 20.

Aviva Chernick hosts a symposium and celebration in honour of Shabbat Shirah featuring local musicians and leaders of prayer, Jan. 12, 1-6 p.m., $15/$20. For tickets, call ext. 0.

Subscribe now to the Toronto Jewish Film Society 2014 season. $100/$60. Call ext. 139, or email joellem@mnjcc.org.

Times and Toys, paintings by **Rob Croxford,** is on display in the gallery until Jan. 23.

Register now for film studies with critic **Shlomo Schwartzberg** focusing on the work of **Steven Spielberg.** Mondays 7-9 p.m., Jan. 20-March 17.

Klezmer Music Ensemble conducted by **Eric Stein** meets Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. Call ext. 0 to register.

Got Shabbat? Shabbat program (songs, games and stories) for children ages 0-4 with an adult starts Jan. 10. Ext. 388.

The women's chorus meets Mondays 7:30 p.m.; daytime choir meets Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

Michael Bernstein Chapel holds services Thursdays at 7:15 a.m.; Sundays at 8 a.m. Call **Coleman Bernstein,** 416-968-0200.

SCHWARTZ/ REISMAN CENTRE

Lebovic Campus, 9600 Bathurst St. 905-303-1821.

The Daring Independent Film Festival shows Israeli movies **Dec. 29.** Some of the films shown are *Strangers No More, Welcome Home, Dolphin Boy, Red Nose, 804 Machal,* and *Out in the Dark.* Register by Dec. 25 at comeseethediff@gmail.com.

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www.mazoncanada.ca

How to make a kosher dinner for 4,000

Kosher Living
Richard Rabkin

The Jewish National Fund's Negev dinner honouring Prime Minister Stephen Harper has rightfully received much attention. But what has received less attention are the details of the dinner itself, and specifically of interest for us, how does one go about providing kosher supervision for what was reported to be the largest kosher dinner in Canadian history?

To sum it up in one word: preparation.

More than a year ago, Rabbi Tsvi Heber, director of community kosher at COR-Kashruth Council of Canada received a phone call from the talented folks at PR Creative Caterers informing him that at the end of 2013, they would be catering a function for approximately 4,000 people at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (MTCC). We knew that this would require a herculean effort and, therefore, needed to begin planning immediately – a year in advance.

A meeting was set up at the MTCC between PR, COR and the MTCC staff. Many of the MTCC staff didn't even know what kosher was, so Rabbi Heber gave a "Kosher 101" seminar explaining the basics. Can you imagine – these people have never had a good piece of brisket? So sad.

Three months before the event, Rabbi Heber, COR senior mashgiach Rabbi Mendel Brogna and COR event specialist Moshe Meyer Mrvic had another meeting with the PR and MTCC staff to map out the entire event from a kosher perspective, including what the menu would be, how many cooking utensils would need koshering and how many mashgichim would be required. At that meeting, they also met with representatives from Exclusive Affair Rentals. Remember, it's not just the food that needs to be kosher – dishes do as well. Event venues don't have a stock of kosher dishes on hand, so the MTCC needed to rent kosher dishes. In fact, due to the sheer magnitude of this event, Exclusive themselves didn't have enough kosher dishes in inventory, so it needed to purchase additional stock. It's not every day that you have an event for 4,000 people.

During the week prior to the event, Rabbi Mendel Brogna set up shop at the MTCC. He had to be organized, so he put together a koshering schedule (koshering can be done in most cases through boiling water or a direct flame). In total, he koshered approximately 20 ovens, 50 table tops, 70 warming boxes, 50 Queen Mary banquet serving carts and 4,000 plate covers. He also had to supervise five mashgichim, 244 chefs and kitchen staff, and 415 waiters and bartenders. Rabbi Brogna's koshering schedule was so tight that he had to book a hotel downtown to stay for Shabbat so he could be at the MTCC koshering until candlelighting, and start up again as soon as Shabbat ended. Someone give that rabbi a raise!

The majority of the (spectacular) food was prepared in PR's kitchen at their head office prior to the event under the supervision of their working mashgiach – someone who is responsible for their kosher program, but also helps in the operations of the business. When the food left PR's premises, it was placed on their trucks and sealed with special COR seals that can only be opened by the mashgiach at the venue – in this case, the MTCC.

On the evening of the event, the six COR mashgichim were placed strategically throughout the venue. Now, there was a room designated for "VVVIPs." Yes, that's three Vs. We weren't sure exactly what that meant, but decided they deserved a very very very important mashgiach, so Rabbi Heber "volunteered."

As he was supervising in the "VVVIP room," Rabbi Heber bumped into – you guessed it – Harper himself. Rabbi Heber introduced himself as a rabbi from the Kashruth Council of Canada, and the prime minister responded that he knew about kosher food. Rabbi Heber asked if he could have the honour of giving the prime minister a brachah, and the prime minister agreed. Rabbi Heber proceeded to give Harper a lengthy blessing, that he should have the strength to continue his steadfast leadership of our country and support for the Jewish People around the world.

Perhaps a small offshoot of Harper's support for the cause of the Jewish People will be a strengthening of the cause of keeping kosher. Who knows? Maybe in the future, kosher dinners for 4,000 people will become a regular affair in Canada.

TV host travels the world celebrating wine and food

Susan Minuk
Special to The CJN

Toronto wine lover Jody Ness is passionate about great food and wine experiences. A longtime restaurateur and wine collector, he represents a new generation of wine lovers with his TV series *Wine Portfolio*.

Now entering its third season, *Wine Portfolio* celebrates luxury travel, unique experiences and expressions of culture.

"We started putting together the idea for *Wine Portfolio* in 2008 and began filming in 2009," said Ness, who serves as host and executive producer of the program.

The series' aim is to showcase wine-producing regions and places of world-class food and wine consumption such as exclusive restaurants and luxury hotels, as well as presenting first-class travel opportunities.

"I can honestly say I got into this business because I lost a bet," Ness told *The CJN*. "My business partner, Kevin Fox, has a company called ReSource Media, and was asked to do a show about wine. Not knowing where to go with that, he came to me with the thought that the show would encompass wine, food and travel. His first approach to me was, 'Would you consult on a project?' I declined, as my plate was full.

"His second attempt was, 'Would you like to host the show?' Again, I said no. I like building companies and doing projects from behind the scenes as an entrepreneur.

"Finally: 'How would you like to be partners in an entrepreneurial business and we can build this up together with your wine expertise and my filming expertise?' That sparked my interest.

"However, Kevin had one catch: he insisted I host the show. So the bet was on. I told him if he could give me one good business reason that I couldn't refuse as to why I had to be the host, then I would be the host.

"After a beat, he said, 'Jody, if it is your face around the world that people see, then when you make your business call you will receive a more immediate response. As a known person, you will be heard.'

"With a smile, I responded, 'Looks like you found your host.'"

Wine Portfolio is viewed in 40 countries globally, reaching 300 million households. Produced in high definition on location around the world, the program is designed to inspire global audiences to eat, drink, travel and enjoy the best the world has to offer.

"We will never do a show about a country when we are not *in* that country. We have travelled to at least 20 countries, often visiting more than once. For example, you can travel to Italy 20 times and film in different locations.

Wine Portfolio films 13 episodes a year. "It's fair to say we are in at least 13 countries a year," Ness said.

Social media are the bonding that let people have the ability to be part of what you're doing as you are doing it in real time, he said.

"We're out on the road and will tweet, use Facebook. *Wine Portfolio* has a Twitter following of 80,000, and, in real time we get a fair number of responses. Followers even suggest places for us to check out. Depending on our schedule, we might shoot a piece and take photos and re-tweet back [about] a great winery or restaurant. It's an interactive point of view that social active media brings to the table," he explained.

"I taste at least 50 different wines every single week, year in and year out. That's over 2,500 wines a year.

"Every place we travel, we post several videos of what that show would be like on our website."

Discussions are now being held about doing a *Wine Portfolio* show in Israel.

To learn more visit www.wineportfolio.com,

STICKY ZUCCHINI SPEARS

3 medium zucchini unpeeled, cut into spears
Preheat oven to broil. Broil on high for 8-10 min. Remove from oven; toss roasted zucchini with sweet and pungent sauce until well coated.

SWEET-AND PUNGENT SAUCE
4 tbls. oil • 2 onions sliced in rings
2 cloves garlic, crushed • 8 stalks celery, thinly sliced
2 10 oz. jars (approx 2¼ c) apricot jam • 2c ketchup
6 heaping tbls. brown sugar

Sauté onion for 5 min. Add garlic and celery; sauté for additional 3–5 min. Add apricot jam, ketchup, brown sugar; mix well. Pour over zucchini spears. Serve warm.

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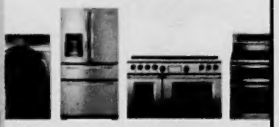

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Kids Can Cook

Sue Epstein
Special to The CJN

Children can begin helping in the kitchen at the age of five or six, starting with simple things like stirring and mashing. They can go on to work with simple tools, bake, and eventually, cook on the stove top. If you've ever seen the TV show *Master Chef Junior*, you know what they're capable of!

I have a friend who has seven children ranging in age from seven to 23. She starts them off early with simple things like scrubbing the potatoes and peeling hard-boiled eggs. As they get older, their jobs become more challenging, according to their abilities. They play music in the kitchen while they are working and sing along to it. The children think helping in the kitchen is fun, not a chore, and that washing dishes is a privilege (it's all in how you present it). By the time her children reach their teens, they're accomplished cooks who enjoy what they're doing.

The main rule to remember when kids are in the kitchen is to keep it simple. Be realistic about children's abilities. Don't let a five- or six-year-old use a food processor. To save arguments, before you start cooking or baking, define which steps you'll do and which ones they'll do.

Only put out the ingredients called for. Children can get carried away, and if a recipe calls for one cup of chocolate chips, they'll think three cups would be even better. Remember that what seems obvious to an adult isn't to a child who's new in the kitchen.

Buy your child his/her own cookbook and help him/her make the recipes from it. There are some wonderful cookbooks designed for children.

As they mature, children can begin to work with small electric appliances, as long as they are supervised. If you have a bread machine, they'll love experimenting with different breads and feel a great sense of pride in showing off the finished product. Teach them a variety of cooking skills and techniques. They can learn how to make salads, main courses and desserts, as well as snacks. Your children will not only learn to enjoy cooking, but it will take some of the burden of preparation off of you.

Allow time for mishaps and don't get upset about them. Spills are easy to clean up, and mistakes can often be rectified. Keep the atmosphere light and hold onto your sense of humour – otherwise it won't be fun for anyone. And keep in mind that these will be tomorrow's memories for your children.

Passing on your family's favourite recipes or customs is a wonderful gift to your children, one they'll treasure long after they're grown and have left the nest.

Children not only love to cook, but take a great deal of pride in what they produce in the kitchen. Here is a simple recipe to get your children started in the kitchen.

PIZZA PINWHEELS

1 flour tortilla
1/3 cup shredded cheese
pizza sauce

Place flour tortilla onto a microwave-safe plate. Sprinkle with shredded cheese. You can top it with sliced mushrooms or other favourites. Heat on high for 20 seconds or until the cheese melts. Carefully roll up tortilla. Cut into pieces and serve with pizza sauce for dipping.

For more recipes, go to cjnews.com

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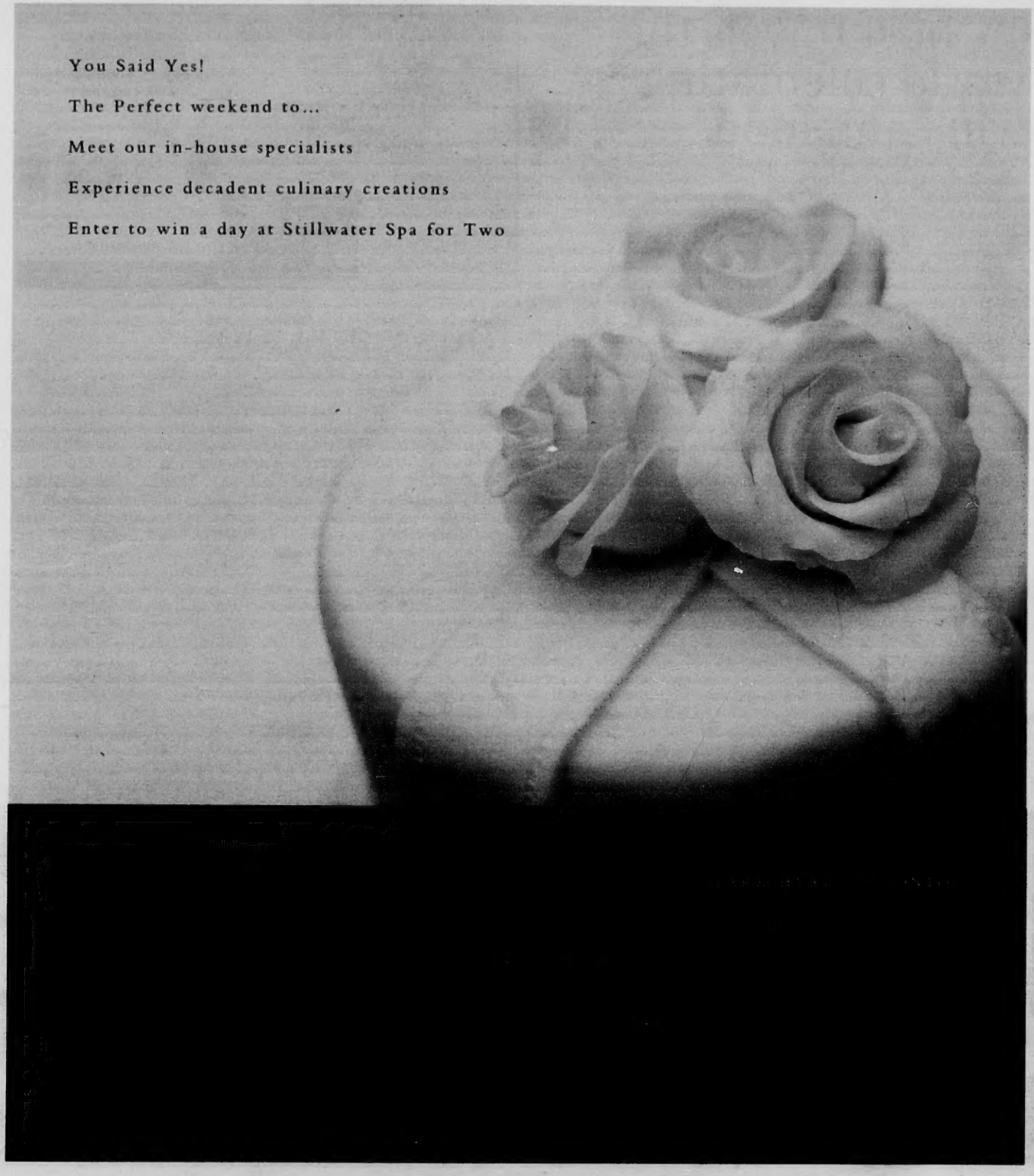
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